

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Calgarians are passionate about amateur sport. Through sport activities, Calgarians have fun, learn and develop skills, are physically and mentally active and are involved in their community. Indeed, approximately 320,000 sport participants actively engage in 85 different sport activities that are administered by over 400 sport organizations in Calgary. And, participation is growing.

To further advance the benefits of amateur sport in the city and address future facility needs, the Calgary Sport Council in conjunction with The City of Calgary developed a Strategic Plan to establish priorities for sport facility development and enhancement over the next ten years.

To identify critical issues affecting sport in Calgary, a comprehensive public engagement and consultation process was employed involving 202 Calgary sport organizations, 47 sport facility operators, 46 provincial and national sport governing bodies, 12 secondary and post secondary school organizations, 13 sport development organizations and 1,500 general citizens. The ideas and perspectives provided through these stakeholders established a foundation for developing strategies that will advance amateur sport for all Calgarians.

Issues to Address to Further Develop Sport in Calgary

Sport Participation Increases, Facility Development Has Not Kept Pace

- Although there are approximately 85 sport activities that Calgarians are involved in, 80% of sport participants engage in thirteen of these activities. Facilities that support these activities include gymnasia, ice arenas, outdoor and indoor rectangular fields, ball diamonds, golf courses, curling rinks and track and field facilities.
- Over the past decade, sport participation has reflected population growth within the city and is expected to continue over the next decade. This increase has put pressure on sport facility use in Calgary, principally as the numbers of facilities that have developed in the city to support sport have not kept pace with the growth in population, especially in new communities. These challenges have caused some sport organizations to adopt registration cap methods that limit participation.

Sport Organizations are Challenged to Develop, Operate and Use Facilities

- The City's current recreation facility development model (e.g. partner organizations required to raise capital for facility development and commit to operating and maintaining the facility without assistance from the City) is not feasible for most volunteer sport organizations. Sport organizations do not have abundant resources and rely heavily on volunteers to administer and deliver programs.
- Many facilities used by sport lack specifications and standards to fully support sport activities. Some facilities address many different recreation and leisure purposes or have other intended uses that are not related to recreation and sport (e.g. educational purposes). Also, many of the most recent facility investments in the city have been developed to address recreational purposes in regional areas and, as such, have inhibited opportunities for sport use. Further, there is a lack of facilities that meet national and international standards to accommodate competitions and tournaments.

There is a Need to Enhance Access to Sport Facilities

- Facility needs of sport organizations serving lower numbers of participants have been overshadowed by those of larger, more prominent sport organizations. While there are many reasons for this partiality, some of the historical booking systems employed to schedule use of facilities may have impeded fair and equitable access.

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- Some facilities that are used for sport in Calgary are aging and require upgrades and lifecycle investment to continue providing opportunities to sport. As well, many of these facilities are single purpose (e.g. only serve one sport activity) and could further benefit sport activities by becoming more adaptable to sport requirements and uses. Further, it is difficult at times to maintain natural turf fields at city athletic parks due to demand on these facilities.
- Schools facilities such as gymnasiums and sport fields are important resources within the sport facility inventory in Calgary. Access to these facilities by sport organizations has been encumbered by changes in school activities and initiatives, rental costs and standards of development.

All Calgarians should have Opportunities to Participate in Sport

- Some Calgarians lack awareness of sport opportunities available to them within the city. Some of these are disadvantaged citizens who are impeded by the cost of registration fees and equipment costs.
- Calgarians perceive the need for sport facilities to accommodate a variety of needs, interests and levels of skill/ability (for introductory to high performance and able and disabled bodied athletes).
- The current focus on high performance winter sport has limited exposure to summer sport opportunities among Calgarians.

Funding has been Announced for Major Facility Initiatives

- Government agencies (e.g. Alberta government and The City) have recently announced major recreation and sport facility funding initiatives (e.g. funds attributed to recreation and sport facility development through the Municipal Sustainability Initiative) and there is a need to advance sport opportunities within the city through establishing priorities for facility development, enhancement and accessibility.

Strategies to Advance Sport in Calgary

To provide direction and guidance for future facility development and sustainability of sport resources in Calgary over the next decade, measures and initiatives have been developed to advance sport opportunities in Calgary for its citizens.

Vision and Purpose

The overall vision of the 10 Year Strategic Plan is to enable Calgarians to experience and enjoy involvement in sport to the extent of their abilities and interests. Ultimately, the Strategic Plan will foster strong sport delivery systems and establish sport facility priorities in Calgary.

Guiding Principles

A set of guiding principles was developed to establish context for identifying priorities and strategic objectives for facility development and enhancement.

- Provide opportunities for Calgarians to participate within their sport of choice.
- Establish significance of sport such that investment in sport is a priority to The City.
- Support multi-sport design in facilities to accommodate the diversity of sport needs.
- Ensure sport involvement in recreation infrastructure investment decisions
- Optimize use of existing sport infrastructure.
- Ensure effective distribution of new facilities throughout the city.
- Promote ease of access to facilities through a range of travel modes.
- Support facility operating sustainability with consideration that cost should not be prohibitive to sport participation.
- Foster equitable access to facilities for all sport.

Strategic Intent of the Plan

Complexity within the sport delivery system has often challenged the distribution of opportunities and benefits for all sport stakeholders in Calgary. As such, the overall intent of the Strategic Plan is to foster collaboration among stakeholders within the sport delivery system and coordination of resources among stakeholders.

Facility Development Criteria

To further enhance collaboration and coordination of resources, a set of criteria were developed to establish priorities for facility development and enhancement. These criteria are presented below in order of priority:

- **Adaptable Design**
 - Developing adaptable spaces to address various sport and future opportunities
 - Serving the functional needs of numerous sport activities at one location
- **Community Wellness**
 - Benefiting the health, well-being and social development of the community (particularly children and youth)
 - Contributing to the urban design of the community
- **Accessibility**
 - Maximizing utilization of spaces
 - Considering number of users
- **Sustainability**
 - Ensuring economic sustainability of facilities
 - Planning for lifecycle and maintenance of facilities
- **Availability**
 - Distributing facilities effectively throughout the city
 - Ensuring new sport opportunities are accommodated
- **Activity Coverage**
 - Supporting all performance levels of play and tournaments
 - Contributing to the excellence for sport organizations and the city

Facility Type Priorities

A prioritized list of facility types has been established to provide guidance for the Calgary Sport Council and The City of Calgary to address the needs of sport and reduce or eliminate gaps in the supply of facilities within the community. While all facility types have some level of need for further development within Calgary, the prioritized list will help manage and employ resources to address sport needs and reduce gaps. The primary facility types will receive greater emphasis than the secondary or tertiary facility types when applying the facility development criteria, and the strategic objectives for facility development, enhancement and accessibility.

Facility Type Priorities		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Gymnasia - Large Gymnasia - Small/Medium Indoor Fields - Rectangular Indoor Ice Arenas Indoor Tracks Multi-Purpose Rooms Outdoor Fields - Diamond ABC Outdoor Fields - Open Spaces Outdoor Fields - Rectangular ABC Outdoor Tracks	Aquatic - Open Water Curling Rinks Flat Water Pool - 25 Metre Flat Water Pool - 50 Metre Indoor Field - Diamond Outdoor Fields - Ovals Outdoor Fields - Rectangular D Outdoor Rinks Racquet Facilities - Badminton Courts Racquet Facilities - Indoor Tennis Courts	Aquatic - Dive Tanks Bowling Lanes - Pin Boxing Gyms Cycling BMX Cycling Velodrome Golf Courses Lawn Bowling Outdoor Field - Diamond D Racquet Facilities - Outdoor Tennis Courts Racquet Facilities - Racquetball Courts Racquet Facilities - Squash Shooting/Archery Ranges Ski/Sled Facilities

Strategic Objectives

The following strategic objectives were established by the Strategic Planning Committee to strengthen collaboration and coordination in advancing sport for all Calgarians:

Guiding New Facility Development

- **Identify Alternative Sport and Recreation Facility Development Models** - That the Calgary Sport Council work with The City to investigate new sport and recreation facility development capital and operating funding models that are both viable and sustainable.
- **Partner in New Facility Development** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City work to maximize the potential of all proposed recreation facility development in the city to accommodate the needs of sport.
- **Demonstrate Market Demand for New Facility Development** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City ensure that a market driven approach is used to plan all recreation and sport facility development in the city, including community, district, regional and city-wide facilities, such that decisions regarding specific facility components or types of facilities to be developed are clearly based on a comprehensive analysis of supply and demand.
- **Address Population Growth in New Communities** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City ensure that the planning of any new facilities that accommodate sport are sensitive to current patterns of population growth in the city and that facility development adheres to recognized principles of community design. Of particular importance in this regard is transportation access, including access via public transit.
- **Encourage Adaptable Design in Sport Facilities** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City ensure that in the planning and development of new sport facilities consideration is given to the development of a full range and spectrum of facilities such that participants will have the opportunity to progress from entry levels to high performance in a variety of sport (e.g. multi-sport, adaptable design).
- **Enhance Sport Opportunities at New Calgary School Facilities** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City work with the school boards and the Provincial Government to determine if the development standards for school gymnasias and sport fields can be enhanced to better reflect the needs of the sport community.
- **Foster Access for All Sport Activities** - That the Calgary Sport Council ensure that the facility needs of sport organizations that serve a small number of participants and those of developing sport are addressed, where feasible, in the planning and development of all new sport facilities in the city.
- **Incorporate National and International Facility Standards in New Facilities** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City ensure that national and international facility development standards are clearly identified and given consideration in the sport and recreation facility planning and development process.
- **Examine Opportunities to Extend or Expand Use of Sport Fields** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City explore the feasibility of developing artificial turf sport fields at strategically located athletic parks throughout the city.
- **Serve as a Resource for Sport Development Opportunities** - That the Calgary Sport Council serve as a resource to those developers and planners who are considering the development of recreational or sport amenities enhancements in their new communities. The Calgary Sport Council would provide advice on the requirements, standards and specifications of proposed sport facilities and the types of facilities that may be of most benefit to the residents.

Enhancing Existing Facilities

- **Examine Opportunities for Upgrading and Expansion of Existing Facilities** - That The City and the Calgary Sport Council identify opportunities for upgrading/expanding facilities to better accommodate existing uses or repurposing/converting to accommodate other uses when changes to existing public sport and recreation facilities are required.
- **Address Facility Lifecycle and Upgrade Needs** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City continue to work with those community associations and sport organizations with leases of public land that have recreation/sport facilities to ensure that their facility lifecycle and upgrade needs are being effectively addressed.
- **Involvement in School Closures** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City develop a clear protocol and procedure for ensuring the needs of the sport delivery system are considered as part of the school closure process.
- **Upgrade School Sport Fields** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City work with school boards on strategy and process for upgrading of existing sport fields at select high school sites throughout the city.

Improving Facility Access

- **Review Booking Procedures** - That The City, with the assistance of the Calgary Sport Council, undertake a comprehensive review of all policies and procedures associated with the booking of City and school facilities with a clear focus on providing fair and equitable access to all sport organizations, ensuring that facilities are being used for the appropriate activity and performance level and that time allotments are appropriate.
- **Enhance Access to School Gymnasias** - That the Calgary Sport Council and The City work develop a process and procedure for maximizing use of existing school gymnasiums by both sport organizations and other likeminded groups (e.g. The Calgary Children's Initiative) during non-school hours, including a review of options for reducing rental rates.
- **Enhance Access to Post Secondary Institution Facilities** - That the Calgary Sport Council work with the major post secondary institutions in the city in an effort to maximize the use of their existing sport and recreation facilities by the sport community.

Enriching Sport Delivery

The following initiatives were also highlighted for consideration by the Calgary Sport Council and The City of Calgary to further enrich the sport delivery system in Calgary. These initiatives reinforce existing strategies that already exist in the Civic Sport Policy.

- **Communicate Sport Benefits and Opportunities to the Public** - That the Calgary Sport Council in developing their communication plans and strategies ensure that the public is informed of the benefits of sport and of the significant opportunities to participate in sport in Calgary.
- **Promote Calgary as a World Centre for Sport** - That the Calgary Sport Council, The City and the Calgary Sport Tourism Authority work together to bring a variety of sport events to the city (e.g. both summer and winter sport) that will help establish Calgary as a world class centre for sport.

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- ***Promote Sport Registration and Equipment Assistance Programs*** - That the Calgary Sport Council work with social agencies and organizations providing sport registration fee assistance and equipment subsidies to Calgarians to ensure that the programs being offered are both complimentary and comprehensive and that they are being effectively communicated to those in need.
- ***Facilitate Education and Training Opportunities for Sport*** - That the Calgary Sport Council continue to facilitate and promote education and training opportunities for coaches and officials in an effort to help address the significant needs of sport organizations in this regard.

In conclusion, amateur sport has a promising future in Calgary. At the heart of this future is the sport community, which through the efforts of its volunteers has the enthusiasm and commitment to ensure that amateur sport achieves its potential. This Strategic Plan is intended to build team spirit among sport stakeholders and enhance infrastructure and resources to benefit the delivery of sport within the city.