

what we heard

The Alberta Sport Plan Consultations



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Summary

The renewal of the Alberta Sport Plan has provided a number of Albertans the opportunity to share invaluable information about the priorities for sport in the province, now and into the future.

Throughout the process feedback identifying opportunities, suggestions, gaps and challenges has been shared through a series of public consultations which include:

1. The Alberta Sport Plan Survey
2. The Alberta Sport Forum
3. Eight Regional Conversations
4. Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan Draft for Consultation

What We Heard: The Alberta Sport Plan Public Consultations provides an overview of each piece of the public consultation process, an explanation of each phase of the analysis and highlights opportunities, suggestions, gaps and challenges within the data.

What We Heard: The Alberta Sport Plan Survey

The Alberta Sport Plan survey, *"It's Your Call"*, was launched by Dr. Richard Starke, Minister of Tourism, Parks and Recreation on August 27, 2013. The survey was available for approximately seven weeks closing on October 11, 2013. The purpose of the survey was to gather information and develop a better understanding of how Albertans perceive sport and their priorities for sport within Alberta. In order to gauge priorities for sport, Albertans were asked to allocate 200 points among six areas of sport.

- 1. INTRODUCTION TO SPORT** – Canadians have the fundamental skills, knowledge and attitudes to participate in organized and unorganized sport.
- 2. RECREATIONAL SPORT** – Canadians have the opportunity to participate in sport for fun, health, social interaction and relaxation.
- 3. COMPETITIVE SPORT** – Canadians have the opportunity to systematically improve and measure their performance against others in competition in a safe and ethical manner.
- 4. HIGH PERFORMANCE SPORT** – Canadians are systematically achieving world-class results at the highest levels of international competition through fair and ethical means.
- 5. SPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT** – Sport is used as a tool for social and economic development, and the promotion of positive values at home and abroad.
- 6. PHYSICAL LITERACY** – Physical literacy provides the foundation for optimal participation in each of the sport contexts and is one of numerous essential conditions for quality participation in sport.

In addition to the point allocation, respondents were provided an open comments section where they could further elaborate on their priorities for sport in Alberta.

In total, 4807 Albertans completed the survey allocating points and providing 130 pages of open ended comments. The qualitative and quantitative results from the survey are provided below.

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data, based on the respondent's 200 point allocation, was aggregated and the average point allocation was calculated. The average for each area is represented Table 1.

An overview of the additional information collected during the survey (i.e. age, gender, region, household income, level and type of sport participation, role, and barriers) is represented in Tables 2 through 12.

Please note that not all respondents completed the demographic sections of the survey and the data on the following pages is representative of the information received.

Table 1. Average Point Allocation per Context of Sport

Average Number of Allocated Points

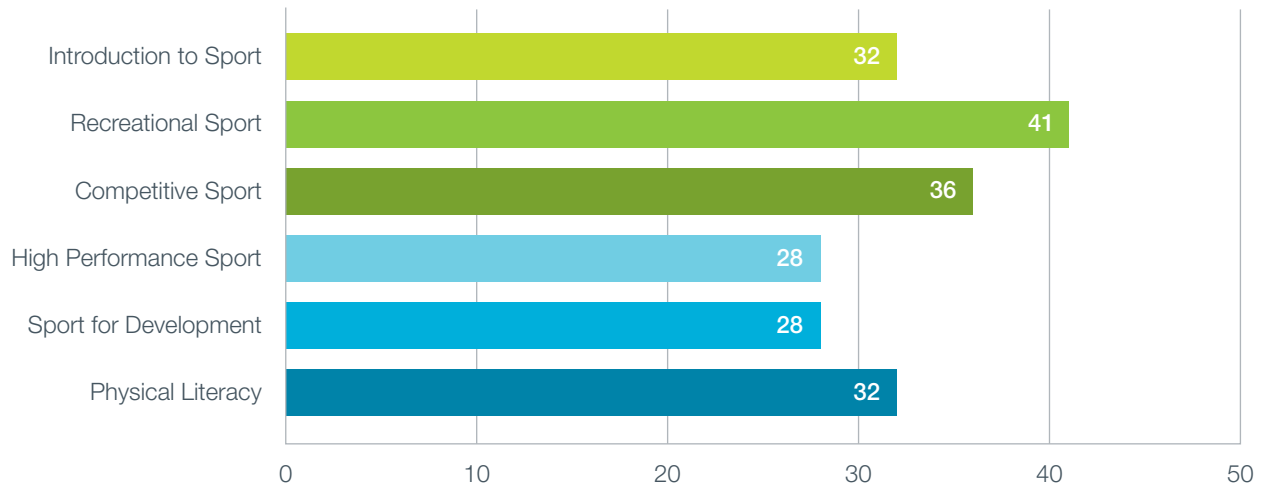


Table 2. Breakdown of Ages of Survey Respondents

Age of Respondents

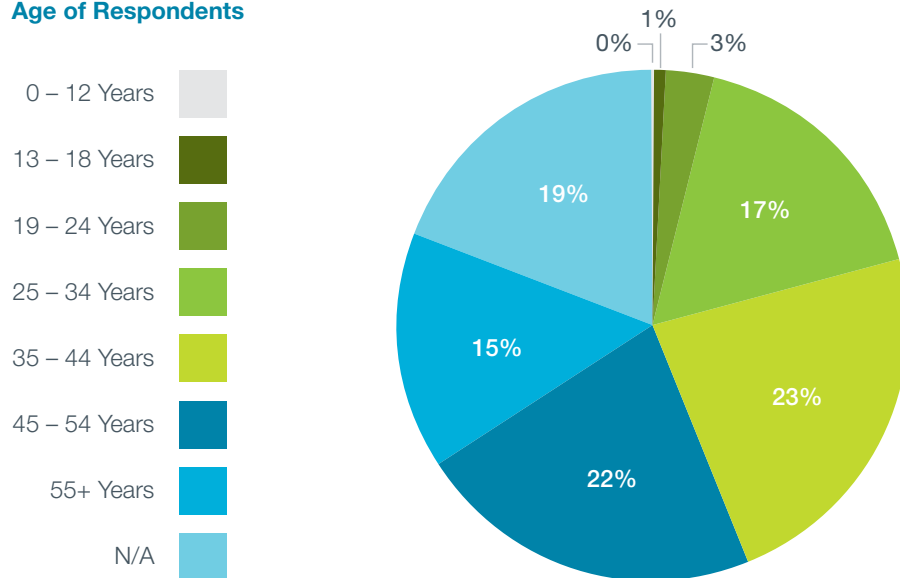


Table 3. Gender

Gender of Respondents

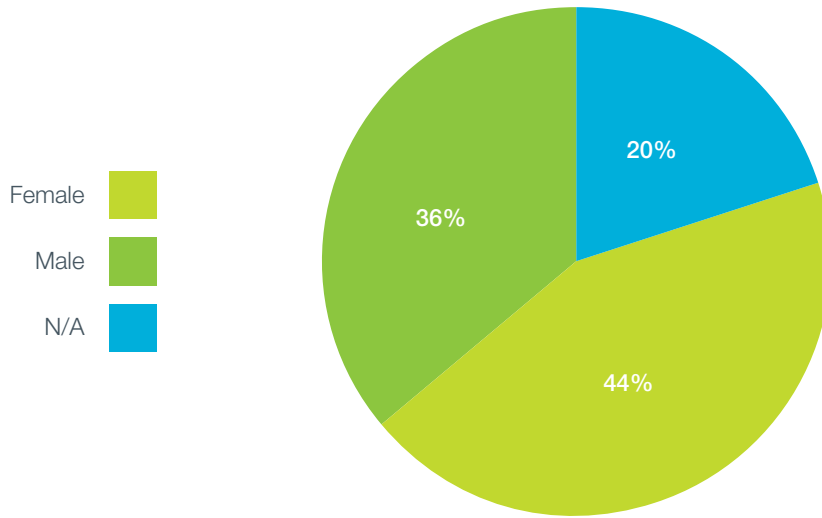


Table 4. Region of Alberta

Region of Alberta

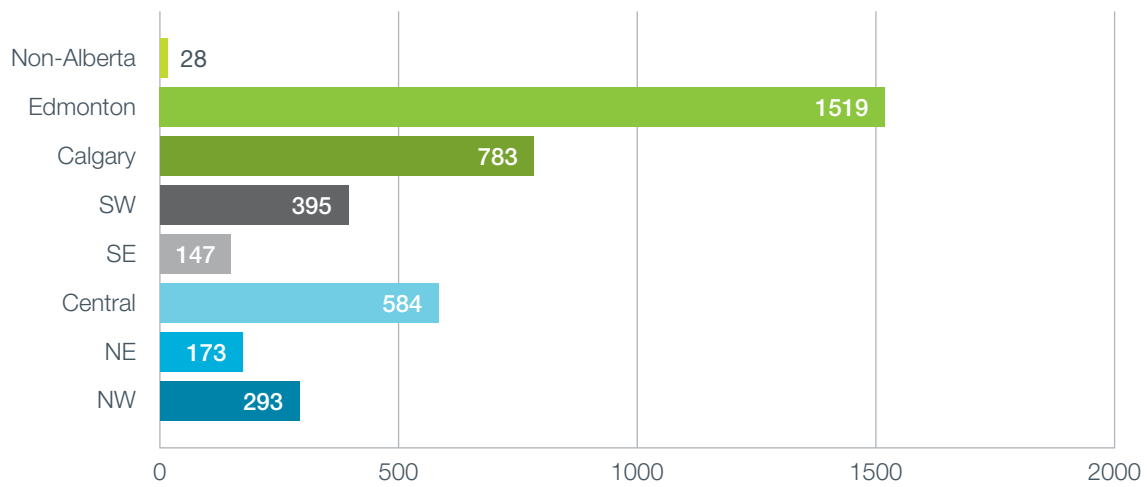


Table 5. Community of Residence (Urban or Rural)

Urban and Rural Respondents

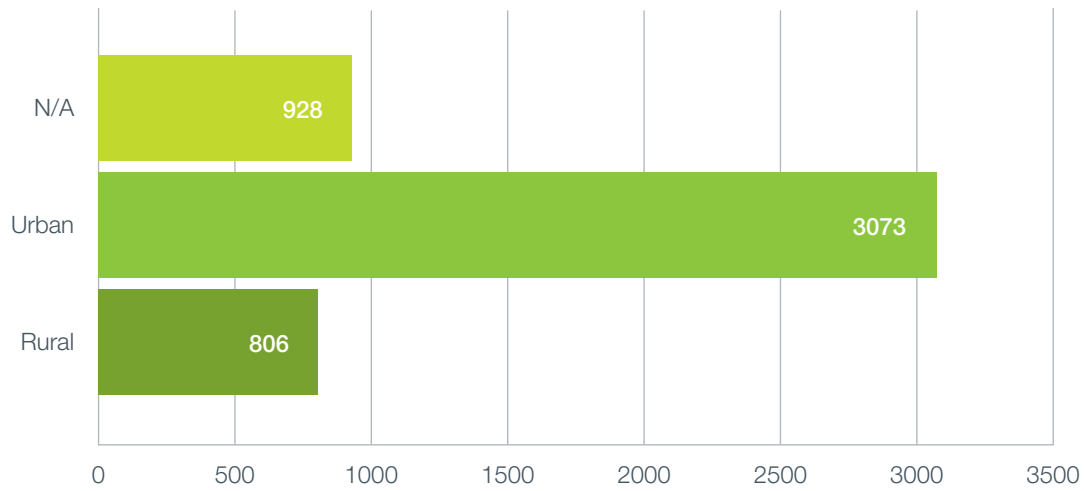


Table 6. Household Income

Household Income

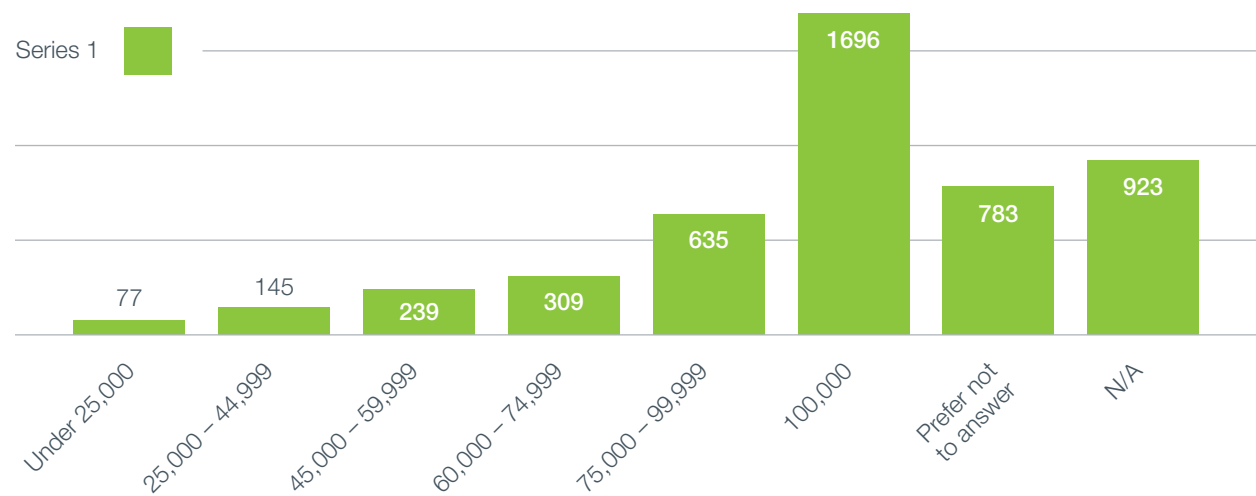


Table 7. Involvement with a Sport Organization

Involvement with a Sport Organization

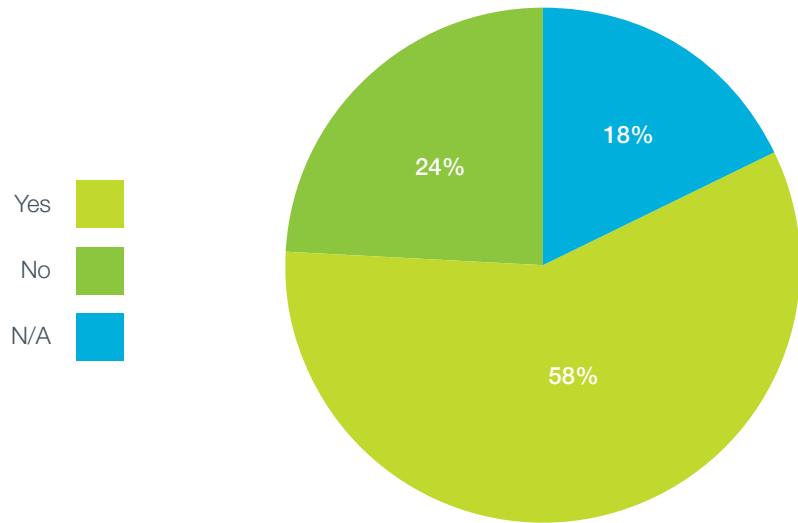


Table 8. Level of Sport Participation

Level of Sport Participation

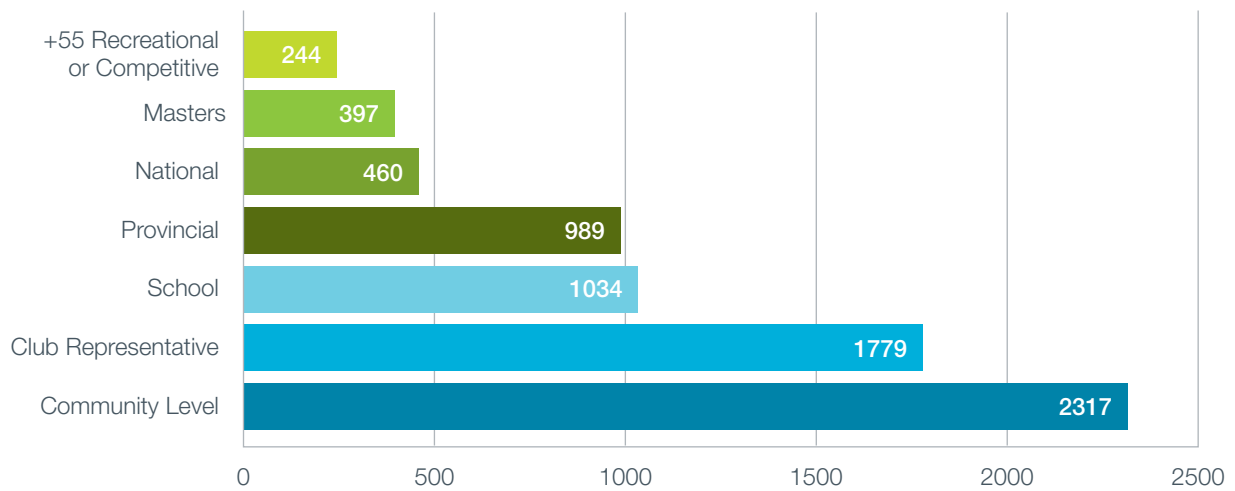


Table 9. Type of Sport Participation

Type of School Sport Activity

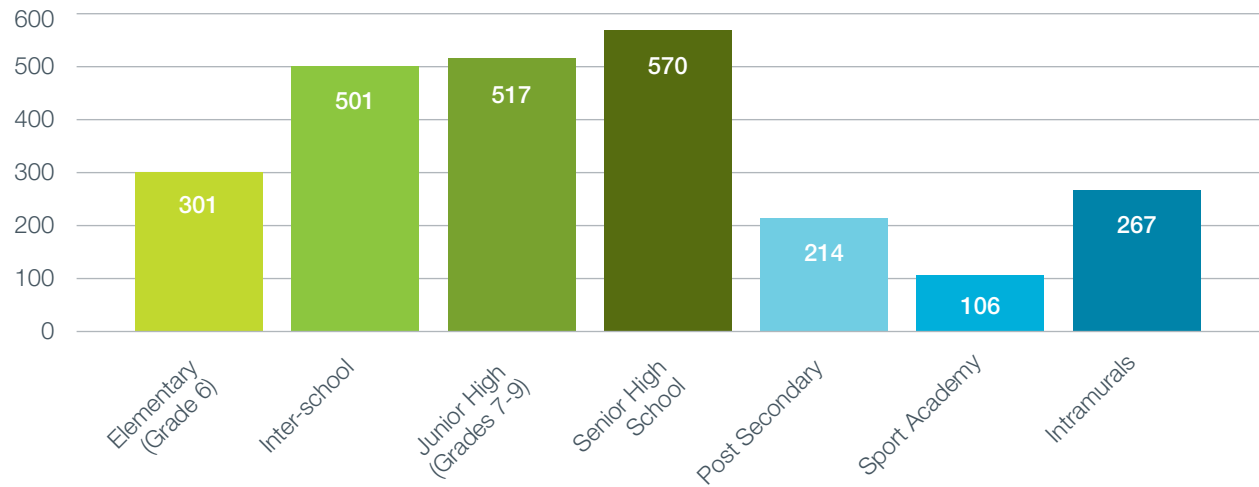


Table 10. Participation in Introductory and/or Recreational Setting

Do you participate in sport in an introductory and/or recreational setting?

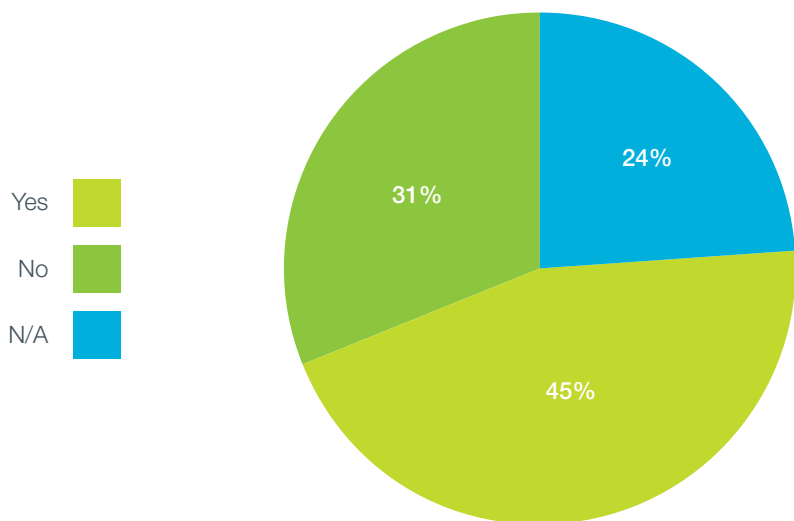


Table 11. Role in Sport Organization/Group

Role

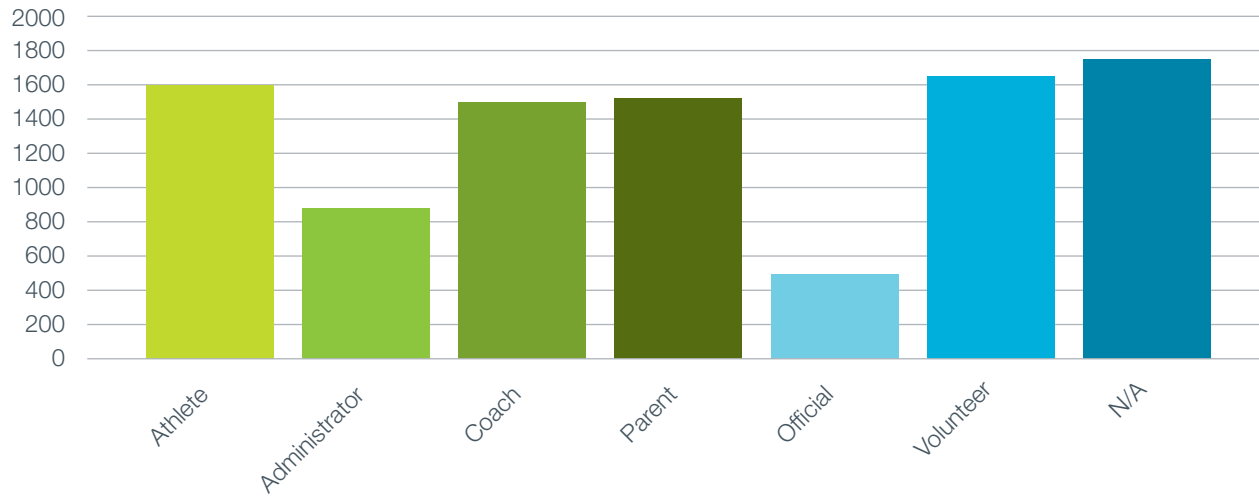
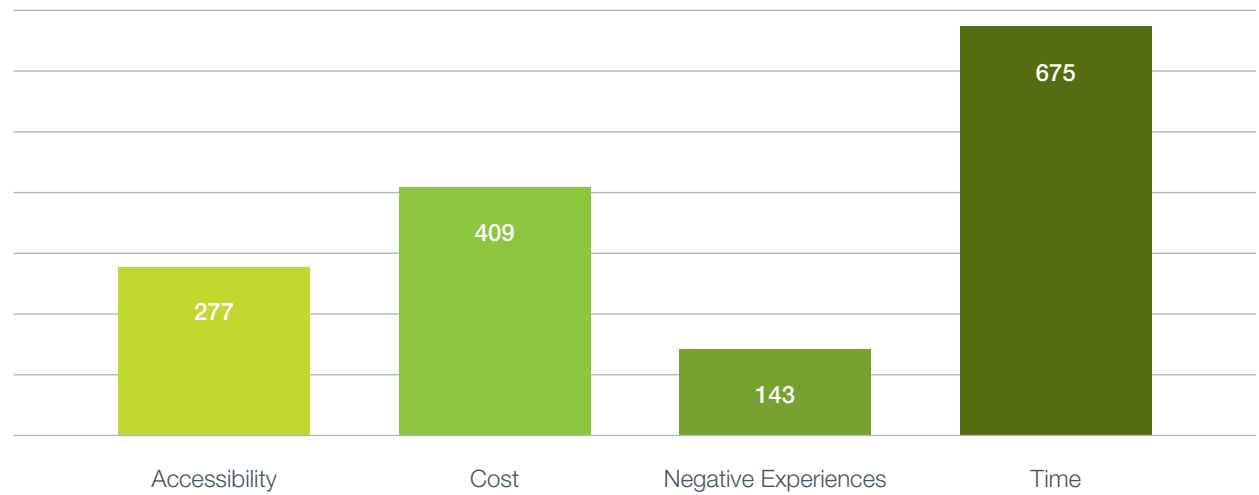


Table 12. Barriers to Participation

Reported Barriers to Participation



Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data collected from the survey included 1437 open comments.

The data from these comments underwent two types of analysis:

1. A thematic analysis conducted by Recreation and Physical Activity Division Staff
2. A frequency analysis using software managed by Alberta Parks.

The results of both analyses were consistent and included themes related to:

- » Benefits
- » Participation
- » Resource allocation
- » Coordination
- » Responsibilities

A breakdown of the themes and sub-themes that emerged within both the thematic analysis and the frequency analysis are provided below. Examples of the comments taken from the open ended comments are also provided.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis resulted in five major themes. These themes include:

1. Benefits
2. Coordinated System
3. Sport for All
4. Skill Development
5. Resource Allocation

Within each of these themes a number of sub-themes also emerged. A description of each of the themes and sub-themes is provided on the following pages.

Benefits

Benefits as reported by survey respondents include reasons why sport is important and how being involved contributes to various outcomes at the individual, community and societal levels. Overall, the data in this category provides the context for why Albertans value, invest in and participate in sport.

When examining the data, four sub-themes emerged within this category. Each is described below and specific examples for each are provided.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Individual Benefits represents how sport contributes to the psychological, physical, social and emotional development of individuals.</p>	<p>“Adult recreational sport is critical to my overall health and well-being”</p>
<p>Community Benefits describes how sport has the ability to increase cohesion, influence belonging and engagement, as well as build social capital and capacity at the community level.</p>	<p>“Creating social connections for at-risk, or under-poverty-line youth is a fantastic way of instilling in them a sense of community and belonging.”</p>
<p>Societal Benefits describes how sport contributes to a number of universal issues and has direct impacts on other areas including justice, health care, and quality of life.</p>	<p>“It has been proven by research that at risk youth and populations can reduce their risky behaviours if they become involved in inclusive recreational activities. This not only reduces immediate social problems, but reduces the financial burden of fixing these social problems long term (justice, child welfare, addictions, mental health, physical health, domestic violence).”</p>
<p>Indirect Benefits speaks to the ways in which sport has the ability to inspire, motivate, and influence individuals, community and society.</p>	<p>“Ultimately, we need to promote sports across the entire spectrum: At the pinnacle of achievement, we provide role models for success.”</p>

Coordinated System

Coordinated system as described by the survey respondents represents the need to ensure all partners involved in the provision of sport coordinate and work together. Partners, as identified by the data, included both stakeholders with a sport specific mandate, as well as, stakeholders who are may not have a sport specific mandate, but have a role to play in the sport system.

When examining the data, four sub-themes emerged within this category. Each is indicated below and specific examples for each are provided.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Holistic View describes how respondents indicated that all aspects of sport are vital and contribute to the development of a strong sport system.</p>	<p>“All aspects of sport are essential - all parts of the overall whole. Albertans will range in their ability so some need high performance support (our athletes) while others will need lower levels of sport opportunities (for ‘regular’ people).”</p>
<p>Connectedness references the need to consciously identify synergies and ensure strong relationships and communication by all stakeholders in the system.</p>	<p>“A greater need to create a synergy among all sports is required.”</p> <p>“Recognize the close connection between sport and recreation.”</p>
<p>Education, Awareness and Training describes the need to ensure all Albertans are aware of the value of sport participation, the benefits and the opportunities that are available. Additionally, data in this category highlights the need to ensure coaches, officials, leaders and teachers have the skills necessary to provide quality programming that is safe, fair and ethical.</p>	<p>“Trained physical educators are needed and it must go well beyond the staff convenience of playing dodge ball.”</p> <p>“They too often leave the development of a ‘sport conscience’ to coaches who are often undertrained in sport philosophy and attitude. Keeping coaching certification in mind is always beneficial in developing well-rounded persons with a healthy sport background.”</p>
<p>Roles and Responsibilities recognizes the various stakeholders within the system and highlights how each has an specific role to play.</p>	<p>“There should be more focus on physical education in our schools as we are raising a generation of kids that are more interested in sitting in front of technology than getting outside and moving”</p>

Sport for All

Accessibility as described by the survey respondents recognizes the need to reduce barriers to sport participation and ensure quality opportunities are available across Alberta.

When examining the data three sub-themes emerged within this category. Each is indicated below and specific examples for each are provided.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>“Non-Competitive“ Participation emphasizes the need to increase involvement in recreational sport. Data within this category also recognizes that competitive and high performance sport can be exclusive limiting the number of individual’s able to participate. As a result, recommendations in this category were to focus more on areas where everyone, regardless of age, ability and circumstance have the opportunity to participate.</p>	<p>“Recreation sports need to be available for all ages and given support so that all levels of income have access.”</p> <p>“I believe it is vitally important not just to encourage team sports, but also individual fitness for those that aren’t good enough to make the team. None of your categories really captured that. We can’t leave out kids that aren’t good enough to be on a team sport.”</p> <p>“Sport” (a rather restrictive term - better would be “physical activity”) needs to be inclusive and universally accessible. When we focus on competition or elitism, most of the population is excluded by lack of opportunity/funds/supports to attain the required level of competency required to compete; or by lack of skill to compete at the required level. “Sport” then becomes a spectator activity rather than participatory.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Affordability describes the need to address cost as a barrier to participation in sport at all levels. This includes a) ensuring activities are affordable and b) programs are in place to help mitigate barriers associated with costs.</p>	<p>“Some sports are incredibly expensive. For average people the financing needed to fund kids involvement in high level programs is beyond or at the top of their reach. This leaves kids without the ability to pursue these sports at all or families in financial deficits in order to give their kids to the opportunity to pursue the sport. Options do not seem to exist that subsidize these programs and so families need to be rich in order to fund or fund and leave themselves always in deficit.</p> <p>“Affordable recreational sport activities throughout the Province for all age groups allows for growth, development and healthy participation within the chosen sport(s)”</p> <p>“Also support programs that help reduce costs to introduce kids of low income families to sports. Many programs are expensive - all kids need a chance to play, learn and experience sports.”</p>
<p>Ability emphasizes the need to ensure all individuals, regardless of ability, have opportunities to participate in and develop in sport. Additionally it references the need to provide programming that allows for skill development at all ages.</p>	<p>“A large proportion of young individuals cease to participate in sport activities because they are not among the 30% or so that physically competitive.”</p>

Skill Development

Skill Development recognizes the need to ensure opportunities for development are available at all levels and for all ages. When examining the data three sub-themes emerged within this category. Each is indicated below and specific examples for each are provided.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Physical Literacy as a Foundation recognizes the need to focus on developing the fundamental movement skill as building blocks to future development and lifelong participation.</p>	<p>“Physical Literacy is the foundation for all sports, our children need to be more active and challenged in a variety of ways to improve their overall athletic ability.”</p> <p>“All of the areas are important. However, physical literacy is the gateway to enjoying all sport as develops the fundamental body mechanics needed to play, which makes play easier and more enjoyable. When the play is more enjoyable, more people are likely to stick with a sport and play to their desired level, whether it is recreational, competitive, or highly competitive.”</p>
<p>Exposure to Sport refers to the importance of providing Albertans with the opportunities to participate in and experience a variety of sports in both a recreation and competitive setting.</p>	<p>“Priority should be getting kids comfortable with... the basics of several sports so that they have the skills and confidence to choose to be active in a variety of ways for the rest of their life.”</p> <p>“All important and difficult to prioritize. But ensuring introduction to and exposure to sports is key.”</p>
<p>School Sport references the importance of school sport and the skills developed as a result of participation. Data within this category separated school sport from the other contexts and highlights the need to approach it differently.</p>	<p>“School sport helps to keep students active and engaged in school community. It builds their leadership qualities, their sense of belonging and their self-esteem.”</p>
<p>Improved Performance highlights the need to continue to strengthen the competitive and high performance programs ensuring that Alberta’s athletes are able to progress within their sport ultimately reaching higher levels of competition.</p>	<p>“Alberta has grown some really great athletes... It would only be right to take them to the next level”</p> <p>“Alberta has tremendous high performance facilities, but without investment into programming to support athletes at a higher level than Canada Games, then athletes may choose to train in other provinces rather than Alberta in the future.”</p>

Resource Allocation

When examining the data in relation to resource allocation, alignments with the contexts of sport identified in the Alberta Sport Survey can be observed. This data will be provided with the quantitative results of the survey.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Introduction to Sport includes all comments that reference the need to fund the grassroots and early stages of sport and skill development.</p>	<p>“Sport at the recreation and development level are important. Not all children will make it to competitive or high performance so more allocation of resources should be available to ALL children and youth where the need is.”</p> <p>“Absolutely critical to get an early start for the widest portion of our population, so thus the largest allocation for Physical Literacy and Introductory Sport.”</p>
<p>Recreational Sport includes all comments that reference the need to focus on programs that impact the largest percentage of the population and provide programming for individuals of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.</p>	<p>“Recreational sport is a priority for me because it includes the largest amount of people.”</p> <p>“A true provincial sport plan will view community and recreational sport as the developmental core of the sport system. We need to invest in Albertans as a whole not just the small population who are Athletes- which has been how investments have traditionally been allocated.”</p>
<p>Sport for Development references the need to focus on sport as a way to teach psychosocial skills and foster community development.</p>	<p>“Programs like Right to Play are critical in bringing youth up to a benchmark that other kids take for granted. It provides them a platform to launch leadership skills, development, teamwork etc.”</p> <p>“A sport system is not complete with resources allocated to every level from Playground to Podium. We need to invest in Sport that is positive, establishes lifelong attitudes early on in life and has serves a purpose for the greater benefit of the community and Province we live in.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Competitive Sport references the need to focus on competitive programs and training supports.</p>	<p>“Recreational sport is important but we need to progress to the next level, competitive sport.”</p> <p>“I would encourage the Alberta Government to do everything it can to support sports in Alberta, especially competitive sport.”</p>
<p>High Performance Sport references the need to focus on developing Alberta’s elite athletes and ensuring the supports are available to help them compete at the highest levels.</p>	<p>“Not nearly enough money is spent assisting athletes that have the talent to be able to train full time to get to the Olympics.”</p> <p>“All levels are valuable. I’ve allotted the most points for the highest performance sports. High performance requires large resources in striving for excellence.”</p>

New Suggestions for Resource Allocation

In addition, other considerations for resource allocation were discussed. These comments didn’t fit specifically within the contexts above and therefore new themes highlighting suggestions for resource allocation were developed.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Holistic View references the need to fund activities that impact the greatest number of people.</p>	<p>“Proportional amounts of funding should be considered when allocating funds. This means programs that don’t cost as much require less money.”</p>
<p>Facilities references the need to specifically focus on facility development across the province.</p>	<p>“Recommend strongly that consideration be given to full size indoor soccer facilities.”</p> <p>“A combination of provincial/regional and national training centers are needed.”</p> <p>“More and more “rec centers” are being built which have pools for play, but less emphasis on competition worthy pools which can host events or provide a good basis for training programs.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>School Sport references the need to focus on strengthening the school sport system.</p>	<p>“School sport is the most underrated program that exists for kids today. School sport should be the front runner in Alberta to introduce and organize sporting opportunities for all kids.”</p>
<p>Extreme Sports references the need to include extreme sports such as skateboarding in provincial and municipal agendas.</p>	<p>“Skateboarding is a sport that is largely overlooked. We need more emphasis on safe places to skate.”</p>
<p>Rural Programs references the need to invest more in rural programs, facilities and communities.</p>	<p>“Need to support sport clubs and facilities in rural Alberta.”</p> <p>“Recreational activity in small northern communities is vital to the growth and development of youth, and contributes to a healthy self image and role within the community... I would have afforded all 200 points to recreation but the system didn’t seem to allow it.”</p>
<p>Examine Other Funding Sources includes data that suggests the province should focus monetary funds in other areas and that it is largely a federal and private responsibility to fund high performance sport.</p>	<p>“Should individuals want to compete an international levels then the cost should come from sources other than provincial governments. This is a personal choice. Literacy however and child participation is essential to a healthy and sound community.”</p> <p>“Alberta should look predominately after the citizens of Alberta to be more active. An important venue is competitive sport from young to older age groups. Development of provincial level athletes would also be important before they go on to National level sport which should mostly be supported by the federal government”</p>
<p>Need to Fund Sports Proportionally references the need to recognize that funding within sports should be examined and the allocations for specific sports potentially changed. It also suggests that non-traditional organizations such as scouts and scuba diving receive greater attention.</p>	<p>“Some sports like hockey... receive a disproportionate amount of funding and other support. While interests, and demographic profile, of those living in Alberta has changes, it does not appear as though funding or support for other sports or activities reflect funding changes or support congruent with that demographic or interest change.”</p>

Frequency Analysis

Doing a frequency analysis allows us to see how often words and phrases are mentioned in the open ended comments. We were able to employ guided machine learning and natural language processing techniques to objectively and quickly group text into meaningful aggregations. Using a text mining software, the data in the open ended comments were structured into numeric representation. This provided a summary of the comments by extracting the information from unstructured data (i.e. textual information) to uncover themes and concepts. Additionally, it provided the opportunity to discover previously hidden patterns and associations within the text.

A summary of the information obtained is in the table below.

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
12.1	+‘physical activity’ +activity +healthy +lifestyle +health benefits +physical +society activities +care +physically +population adults active +life	Health benefits of physical activity	Physical activity and recreational sports are vital to health promotion initiatives and prevention of chronic diseases in children/youth down the road (obesity, diabetes, hypertension, etc). Every child should have affordable access to recreational sports.
9.3	play kids playing fun parents skills +learn +team life sports soccer families adults +school hockey	This cluster is about Children-focused and family oriented opportunity for play for purpose of learning life skills such as team play. This group also seems to want more opportunity and affordable recreational and team based sports. Some commented this will help keep kids out of trouble.	It’s so important that all kids have access to sports, regardless of financial situation or physical location. I was helped by a program like that when my daughter was younger; it enabled her to play soccer. All kids should be able to participate and be part of a team.

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
9.3	+Alberta +team 'at all' national +province +government +professional +plan +great +work sports +fitness Canada +Albertans +afford	This cluster is about Government responsibilities	I believe Canadian government is responsible for the development of national athletes. The provincial government need to help concentrate on growing healthy children and supporting programs that being it sport development and keeping children healthy (even if the \$\$ come from the national government.).
8.1	+ 'high performance sport' + 'high performance' +high +performance funded +competitive Canada 'competitive sport' points +allocate athletes funding +government +sport national	This cluster tends to strongly support allocating funds for high performance sport/athletes. But this doesn't mean they don't also want balanced support at all levels.	If we want to produce national and international champions who will be good role models and excite kids to participate, we need to support high performance programs.

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
7.6	'physical literacy' +literacy +physical +introduction +development +sport +'recreational sport' +'high performance sport' +performance +recreational +competitive areas skills +number +recreation	This cluster stresses that physical literacy is important and requires introductory sport opportunities. Focusing on the core—getting kids active and involved at early ages.	Introduction to sport will hopefully foster future interest and development in sport.
7.4	+people +recreational +'recreational sport' involved +participation +important +sport 'at all' +Albertans +good +focus life resources sport +health	Recreation is for everyone for life	It is important for people to be active for life. In order to do this we need programs and services for all ages. More variety and better facilities is important to facilitate lifelong participation.
7.2	levels higher lower +help communities funding +community +level resources individuals allocated +ensure emphasis funded +encourage	Support communities with more resources (e.g. funding)	I think the upper levels of sport should be funded by corporate sponsorships. As a government, our priority should be to fund those who need a hand up, and provide opportunities for all, regardless of income level.

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
7.0	'elite athletes' athletes elite +support +level +athlete funding +Olympic +world +money national +expensive programs spent +encourage	Although elite athlete support (i.e. funding) is important, it is trumped by the needs for other activities and opportunities	<p>It's important to introduce sporting activities early, so making different activities available is necessary. The main impact should be in keeping people active, so having a variety of recreational, developmental and competitive levels is a must. Though it is important to support and train our elite athletes, on the whole, the percentage of those able to compete at this level in any sport is much smaller.</p> <p>Another example comment: Alberta needs to focus on two areas of sport... Active start/ fundamentals and train to compete. We first need to teach our children the basic skills necessary. Then we need to focus on our emerging athletes as they try to make the jump from elite provincial play to the national and international stage. A lot of \$\$ is provided to Olympic level athletes, but the athletes just below those are ones that require monetary/ technical assistance.</p>

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
6.3	+money +survey points spent categories allocated +'more money' areas +spend +point +category +allocate +area +ensure +system	This cluster contains general comments about this survey, assigning of points and concerns with how to allocate funds.	No example comment.
5.7	+'early age' +'young age' +age +early +young younger +continue +allow +encourage +important ages children +life +competition sports	Importance of sport at an early age	I believe that it is very important to start the basics of sports in the earlier years of a child's growth to promote and enhance them to carry on and enroll in the years to come.
5.6	city +indoor +space Calgary facilities pools +facility soccer Edmonton +swimming hockey fields swimming +build public	Need indoor city facilities (pools, soccer fields, hockey)	The province should be putting more money into upgrading sports facilities, there needs to be time/space allocated for adults to participate in sports.
5.1	'physical education' +education +school schools students +physical +system +activity programs +'more money' trained +'physical activity' +spend public +literacy	Physical education in the school system needs attention/funding.	We need to be proactive when it comes to sport in this province. The only way we can have competitive sport is if we spend the time building the fundamental movement skills that students and children should be able to do first. We need to look at the big picture, schools, PE specialists from K to 12 and the importance of the comprehensive school health approach to education and communities!

CLUSTER SIZE (%)	KEYWORDS	SUMMARY	EXAMPLE COMMENT
4.9	opportunity opportunities +participate children +afford +learn +compete +building +confidence +expensive +child families emphasis activities +cost	This cluster was about wanting more opportunities (esp. affordable ones) for children’s activities.	I am concerned about “access” to sport opportunities because many activities are expensive and families are challenged by affordability.
2.8	keep keeps trouble keeping active +stay +good involved +physically +health years +healthy +youth +cost +allocate	This cluster has overlap with others, but there it contains the concept of the benefits of accessible youth physical activity programs. Those benefits are a healthy lifestyle and keeping kids out of trouble. Affordability is also a factor to this cluster.	Sport should be made accessible and encouraged to all youth, regardless of financial situation. Sport is one of the key keys to keeping youth active and out of trouble!
1.7	‘athletic therapists’ +‘athletic therapist’ +injury +therapist injuries therapists athletic +prevent +care trained +proper +plan +ensure +health +athlete	This cluster is concerned with having proper instruction of sports that includes learning about safety and injury prevention. It’s a very small cluster of people who brought in some argument of “health and safety” when it comes to kids learning or participating in sports.	I think that sports are extremely important in all stages of development. It is critical that we have quality coaches at each level as well as qualified personnel to manage injuries, particularly with contact sports.

What We Heard: The Alberta Sport Forum

The Alberta Sport Forum was held on November 1st and 2nd at the Donald School of Business in Red Deer, Alberta. A total of 90 invited stakeholders were present at the forum. Stakeholders in attendance provided representation for the different areas of sport (e.g. Introductory, Physical Literacy, Recreational, Competitive, High Performance and Sport for Development) as well as health, post-secondary education, municipalities, education, schools, recreation, and active living.

The Sport Forum provided an opportunity to have facilitated conversations with the intention of setting the priorities of amateur sport in Alberta. In an attempt to facilitate these conversations a discussion paper titled ***The Alberta Sport Plan Discussion Paper: Based on a Thematic Analysis*** was developed. The discussion paper was based on an analysis of the Canadian Sport Policy 2012 and the Active Alberta Policy and outlined key themes, as well as related objectives consistent across both policies.

Questions were developed utilizing the framework outlined in the discussion paper. These questions were presented at the forum and included:

- » What are we doing well in achieving these goals and objectives?
- » Where do we struggle or have challenges in achieving these goals and objectives?
- » Looking at the objectives, are there any missing that should be there (gaps)?
- » What ideas/ strategies need to be considered in an Alberta Sport Plan to help us achieve these goals and objectives? What role do you see different players in sport delivery taking?

Prior to the Provincial Forum, the discussion paper and facilitated questions were vetted by TPR's Staff Committee as well as the Alberta Sport Plan Advisory Committee.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the Alberta Sport Plan Forum underwent a thematic content analysis. The analysis was conducted by Recreation and Physical Activity Division Staff and resulted in the below themes:

- » Participation (opportunities and development)
- » Capacities (Human and Financial)
- » Facilities
- » Schools
- » Systems and Collaboration

The themes were also cross referenced with other policy documents to ensure consistency within the sector. The data from the analysis is presented in the tables on the following pages.

Participation (Opportunities and Development)

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Alberta Games</p> <p>Canadian Sport Institute</p> <p>Rural athlete development is strong</p> <p>» Have more rural athletes on national teams because of multi-sport opportunities and fewer hovering parents</p>	<p>Athlete support and retention</p> <p>» Talent identification not coordinated</p> <p>» Cost of travel not supported</p> <p>» Athletes move to other provinces</p> <p>Size of athlete pool is decreasing</p> <p>We are reluctant to redesign games competition models</p> <p>Hasn't been buy-in that physical literacy sets the foundation for both excellence and active for life</p>	<p>Develop a better system for tracking athletes</p> <p>Re-evaluate the team Alberta culture</p> <p>Examine if the Alberta and Canada Games are the best way of measuring sport excellence</p> <p>Competition model needs to be reviewed—should support athlete develop and move away from competition too early</p> <p>Need to support the transition of athletes through all stages</p> <p>Critical that we increase the size of the athlete pool</p> <p>Can't view the stages as a continuum</p> <p>» each athlete path is different</p> <p>» What is consistent is it starts with Physical literacy</p> <p>We need to redefine excellence so it is more inclusive and covers excellence at all stages</p>	<p>Increase the number of years between games</p> <p>Podium AB funding targeted at athletes just below the Federal Card</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Provincial sport organization's do a good job of skill development</p>	<p>Provincial sport organization's not living Canadian Sport for Life principles</p> <p>Limitations with specialization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Only develop sport specific skills not sport for life skills » Driven by a profit model » Emphasis on competition over participation » Not investing in the basics <p>Provincial sport organization's don't understand the importance of physical literacy and therefore no support on how to implement Canadian Sport for Life</p>	<p>Recognize the important role of unstructured activity</p> <p>Integrate Canadian Sport for Life</p>	<p>Specific sport groups should shorten their seasons so kids can play multiple sports</p> <p>Tie funding to physical literacy outcomes to decrease specialization</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Wide variety of sporting opportunities</p>	<p>Still a number of barriers for a large % of population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Cost » Transportation <p>Major gap in opportunities for young and middle aged adults</p> <p>Continue to only engage the already engaged</p> <p>Limited engagement and programs for marginalized populations</p> <p>Affordability and accessibility</p>	<p>Develop strategies to engage those that aren't engaged and reduce barriers to participation</p> <p>Address inequalities of marginalized populations</p> <p>Better promote programs and resources</p> <p>Focus on how we can increase participation</p> <p>Develop a framework for participation</p> <p>Need to ensure we have opportunities that individuals to participate longer</p> <p>Need to ensure increased and sustained participation</p>	<p>Tax credit for sport participation</p> <p>Train Be Fit For Life leaders in cultural literacy</p> <p>Municipal subsidy programs need to be promoted and simplified</p> <p>Add Physical Literacy education to ESL courses</p>

Capacities (Human and Financial)

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
Capacity	<p>Have a diverse provincial network with many human resources</p> <p>Alberta is a wealthy province</p>	<p>Organizational capacity is limited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Part-time staff » Low-wages » Limited funding » Increased demand for volunteers <p>Funding models are not consistent for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » % of municipal, provincial and federal funding varies » No model <p>Sector is asked to do more with reduced funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Funds are spread too thin <p>Although we are a wealthy province resource allocation is questionable</p> <p>Compete with each other for resources</p> <p>Staff turnover rate is high</p> <p>Clubs rely on membership revenue</p>	<p>Increase the how sport practitioners are viewed as professionals</p> <p>Examine the capacity of each organization in the system</p> <p>Clearly articulate funding model and criteria</p> <p>Outline exactly what Provincial sport organization's need from government</p> <p>Find more resources and other money opportunities</p> <p>Long term planning and budgeting—orgs need to know more than one year in advance what funding will be</p> <p>Need to address the lack of coordinated funding at the municipal, provincial and federal levels</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Have a strong volunteer base</p>	<p>Volunteer recruitment, retention, and succession planning doesn't exist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Boards don't change » Burn out <p>Due to decreases in organizational capacity there is an increased demand on volunteers</p>	<p>Re-examine volunteer recruitment and training</p> <p>Develop new board criteria</p>	<p>Develop sport administration/ governance PD courses</p>
<p>Have leaders in the sport system in coaches, athletes, researchers</p> <p>Have role models and champions at the community level</p>	<p>Sport isn't valued politically at the provincial level</p> <p>Lacking leadership at the organizational level</p> <p>Direction from Government and the Alberta Sport Connection is severely lacking</p> <p>No alignment among leadership</p>	<p>Examine how we can better develop leaders in our field</p> <p>Increase the how sport practitioners are viewed as professionals</p> <p>Need an attitude change</p>	

Facilities

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Development of facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Municipal » Venues for major events 	<p>Facility usage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Cost » Sports are fighting for time and space » Often big venues after major events are under utilized <p>Lack of facility development in rural areas</p>	<p>Develop separate strategies for urban and rural communities</p> <p>Develop a framework for infrastructure</p> <p>Develop an event hosting attractions strategy</p> <p>Facilities need to be family friendly</p>	

Schools

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Have an increased awareness of the benefits of physical education and physical literacy in schools</p>	<p>Schools are a missed opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Teachers and school boards don't value physical education and physical literacy » Have unqualified staff, young staff that are qualified are not getting jobs » Resistant <p>Can't access school space</p> <p>School sport is expensive and limited</p> <p>School sport is hesitant to change</p>	<p>Determine how we can influence curriculum development</p> <p>Develop a strategy to re-introduce physical education or physical literacy specialists</p> <p>Examine school facility usage policies—need joint use</p>	<p>Train specialists in Fundamental Movement Skills by developing a Diploma</p> <p>Have provincial sport organization's and clubs run programs directly in schools</p> <p>Have unstructured play instead of sport after school</p> <p>Have a sport presence at teachers conferences</p> <p>Increase number of after school programs by modeling Australia's sport support after school programs</p> <p>Ensure advocacy on school boards by doing presentations and informing parents</p>

Systems and Collaboration

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>The sector understands we are disconnected</p> <p>The sector is willing to collaborate and change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Some groups already are » We have the Be Fit for Life, Alberta Sport Development Centre's, Sport Councils » Alberta Recreation and Parks Association Play Groups <p>Alberta Ambassadors Network</p> <p>Canadian Sport for Life has harmonized and brought many sectors together working at all levels of government</p>	<p>Have a severe lack of collaboration between Ministries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Don't have cross sector support » No funding for prevention <p>Resource sharing doesn't happen between groups</p> <p>Partnerships are only on paper</p> <p>Groups are fighting for funding dollars and sponsorship</p> <p>No alignment</p> <p>Alberta Sport Development Centre's don't work together</p> <p>Provincial sport organizations and clubs don't always work together</p> <p>Communication problems at all levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Leadership and gatekeepers hold information 	<p>Engage and gain support from other Ministries (Education, Health, Justice) and align better with their outcomes</p> <p>Increase the value of sport in the province</p> <p>Be transparent</p> <p>Develop a consistent vision for sport in Alberta</p> <p>Provide a coordinated plan for groups</p> <p>Better promote programs and resources</p> <p>Look at reducing overlap and duplication through a collaboration strategy</p> <p>Examine how to get rid of organizations that aren't contributing to the greater system</p> <p>Need to educate actors on the importance of collaboration and how to collaborate</p>	

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Recognize the importance of all stages (playground to podium) and have an initial system with some shared goals and shared language</p>	<p>Roles in the sector are not clear</p> <p>Not accomplishing system goals and objectives</p> <p>No measures or targets have been developed</p> <p>Don't know the impact of our efforts because we all report differently and information at the government level isn't utilized</p> <p>No accountability— Everyone wants accountability to be more effective</p> <p>Mass confusion about the influence of Active Alberta and Canadian Sport Policy on the Alberta Sport Plan</p> <p>If we have a sport plan why don't we have an active living and recreation plan?</p> <p>We have the commitment of a "crown Corporation" but no evidence that this is the best model</p> <p>Not aligned to National Objectives</p>	<p>Clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of all actors in the system</p> <p>Develop an accountability framework</p> <p>Develop shared goals and show clear links between goals and actions (what we want to do, how we are going to do it)</p> <p>Goals need to be specific, smart and measurable (short and long term)</p> <p>Identify measures and evaluation tools</p> <p>Develop a consistent vision for sport in Alberta</p> <p>Know who the plan belongs to</p> <p>Increase the value of sport in the province</p> <p>Work on lack of trust and transparency within the system</p> <p>Have an independent organization who's mandate is sport excellence</p>	<p>Use regional and local sport councils to develop a regional approach to support</p> <p>Measure retention, program demand</p> <p>Premiers Council for Sport (MLA involvement)</p> <p>Blue Chip panel for HP sport is a subgroup of the premiers council for sport</p> <p>Use best practices and models from other countries</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
		<p>Recognize that different strategies are needed at different levels</p> <p>Integrate research</p> <p>Recognize the system isn't fully functioning and do something completely different</p> <p>Identify who is responsible to coordinate and hold people accountable within the system</p> <p>Integrate Canadian Sport for Life</p> <p>Identify how this fits with Canadian Sport Policy and Active Alberta</p> <p>Address the municipality gap</p> <p>Need to be clear on the different streams (recreational and competitive/high performance) and be goal specific for each</p> <p>Simplify and clarify 2-3 main ideas or goals</p> <p>Accountability process for continuous evaluation and feedback</p>	

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
		<p>Identify strategic hubs and gatekeepers within the system</p> <p>Look to other models</p> <p>Need a coherent message</p> <p>Need a sense of urgency</p> <p>Sport System needs to be strengthened and integrated</p> <p>Need common messaging</p> <p>Grassroots— need to develop sport friendly Canadian Sport for Life communities</p>	
<p>Using more social media</p> <p>Perception of sport is shifting and being viewed as prevent</p>		<p>Develop better marketing and promotion of sport</p>	<p>Host an online forum for Provincial sport organization's</p> <p>Media list</p> <p>Provide tech support</p> <p>Promote sport</p>

What We Heard: Regional Conversations

The Alberta Sport Plan Regional Conversations were held in December, 2013 and January, 2014. A total of eight regional conversations were hosted across Alberta. The intent of the Regional Conversations was to ensure Albertans were provided an opportunity to discuss regional and rural challenges, and opportunities, as well as highlight local priorities for sport.

A total of 85 Albertans participated in the regional conversations which were held between December 10, 2013 and January 20, 2014 in the below locations:

Medicine Hat	December 10, 2013
Fort McMurray	January 6, 2014
Falher	January 7, 2014
Lac La Biche	January 8, 2014
Lacombe	January 14, 2014
Fort MacLeod	January 15, 2014
Leduc	January 16, 2014
Airdrie	January 20, 2014

Attendees at the regional conversations were asked:

- » What is working well in sport in your region?
- » How does this relate to what is happening provincially?
- » What are the needs and challenges for sport in your region?
- » What gaps are there in the sport system?
- » Describe your vision (preferred future) for sport in Alberta? What does success look like?
- » What needs to be done (regionally and provincially) to work towards this preferred future in sport?

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the Regional Conversations underwent a thematic content analysis. The analysis was conducted by Recreation and Physical Activity Division Staff and resulted in the below themes:

- » Participation (opportunities and development)
- » Capacities (Human and Financial)
- » Facilities
- » Schools
- » Systems and Collaboration

The themes were also crossed referenced with other policy documents to ensure consistency within the sector. The data from the analysis is presented in the following pages.

Participation (Opportunities and Development)

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Developing more multi-sport athletes</p> <p>Strong interest in hosting events</p> <p>Athletes are over performing despite having a lack of support and resources</p> <p>Continue to produce athletes at local and national stage levels</p> <p>Alberta is wealthy in that it has experts in various sports areas</p> <p>Research around athlete development is increasing</p>	<p>Athletes moving to urban centers</p> <p>Early specialization is forcing kids to choose too early</p> <p>Have two extremes with participation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specialize to early 2. Don't participate <p>Cost to participate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fees » Travel <p>Decreased enrollment in local sports</p> <p>Talent identification Rural athletes excluded</p> <p>Alberta/ Canadian Games are not promoted rurally</p> <p>Abilities are different in different zones</p> <p>Rural kids miss a lot of school to travel</p> <p>Calgary produces the most high performance athletes due to the facilities available</p> <p>Why did the Government of Alberta split sport and recreation when Canadian Sport for Life says we need to work together more often?</p> <p>Research in our sector can be good but it can also be manipulated</p>	<p>Subsidizing athletes should be done by Provincial sport organization's</p> <p>Alberta needs to become the national leader in sport development and performance</p> <p>Need to look at the development of the whole person</p> <p>Need to examine how to transition kids to advance within the levels of sport and need clear definitions about who is responsible for what</p>	<p>Hold regional try outs for provincial teams</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Increased awareness of the importance of skill development over competition</p>	<p>Provincial sport organization's structure doesn't work at the rural level</p> <p>No support in rural areas from provincial sport organizations</p> <p>Provincial sport organizations have lost clout and club structures are becoming independent</p>	<p>Provincial sport organization's need to take a greater leadership role and be more accountable</p>	
<p>Some free municipal programs (swimming and skating)</p> <p>Access to jumpstart and kidsport</p> <p>Number of sports being offered</p> <p>People use sport opportunities as social time</p> <p>More opportunities to participate in a large number of sports when live in a rural setting and don't specialize early</p> <p>Sports that are doing well have strong support from Provincial sport organization's</p> <p>Strong local tournaments</p> <p>Access to Alberta Sport Development Centre's</p> <p>Less organized activities are emerging (Pond hockey, softball) which is increasing participation</p>	<p>Missing local opportunities for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » People with disabilities » Females » Adults ages 20-40 <p>Sports are viewed as "white spots" for first nations populations</p> <p>Communication and marketing of provincial opportunities is limited</p> <p>No exposure to elite sport</p> <p>Cost to participate in sport is a major barrier</p> <p>The geography of Alberta doesn't allow for equal opportunity</p>	<p>Needs to engage adults</p>	<p>Sport organizations should offer levels a, b, c, d so people can compete at their level</p>

Capacities (Human and Financial)

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Local businesses are sponsoring sport</p>	<p>Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » How to find and apply for grants » # of grants available » Grassroots funding is limited <p>No succession planning for staff</p> <p>Funding and budgets in Governments are continuing to decrease</p> <p>Government continues to only fund new and innovative programs—no sustainability</p> <p>Money is spent on elite stream and not grassroots—impacts less people</p> <p>No funding for playgrounds</p> <p>Same sponsors all the time—worried they will stop</p>	<p>Need to determine better ways to raise funds</p>	

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
Increasing awareness of best practices (healthy child development, Canadian Sport for Life)	<p>Coach deficiencies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of coaches » Quality of coaches <p>Parents are often filling the roles of coaches as unqualified volunteers</p>	<p>Need to provide better education and standards for coaches</p> <p>Need to look at ways to overcome travel, costs, time</p> <p>Need a way to hold coaches accountable</p> <p>Need succession plans for coaches and officials</p> <p>Need to treat coaching as a profession</p>	<p>Examine two day workshop models</p> <p>Examine online courses</p> <p>Develop a coaches governing body</p> <p>Develop mentorship programs</p>
Have community level champions and volunteers	<p>Demand on volunteers is too much</p> <p>Volunteer burnout</p>	<p>Need to shift to more professional coaches and sport leaders</p> <p>Volunteer tax incentive program</p>	<p>Elite and funded athletes should have a mandatory community service component – Receiving but not giving back</p>

Facilities

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Some affordable facility rental costs</p> <p>Use the rural facilities that are available.</p> <p>Local facilities are overall good</p> <p>Facilities are developing agreements between users to cost share (i.e. capital or operational)</p>	<p>Age of rural facilities</p> <p>Facilities don't think about year round multi-sport use (e.g. retrofitting the rink)</p> <p>Can get grants to build facilities but no operational funds</p> <p>Revenue model for facilities increases price and decreased access</p> <p>New sports require community space and accommodations that aren't available</p> <p>Facilities are being built that do not meet the competitive specifications</p>	<p>Need to develop more accessible facilities</p> <p>Need to avoid focusing solely on facility development and look at individual community needs</p>	

Schools

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Increasing number of school sports offered</p> <p>More professional development for school coaches</p> <p>There are a number of private school designed for sport excellence</p>	<p>Teachers are coaching less in schools</p> <p>Community groups can't access schools</p> <p>Limited school district engagement</p> <p>Schools don't have adequate physical education</p> <p>School sports are too expensive</p> <p>School sports don't travel because of liability issues</p> <p>Why is Alberta Education not funding school sport?</p> <p>Cost of school sport is extensive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Facilities » Uniforms » Insurance » Travel » Alberta Schools Athletic Association Membership » School Sub costs when teachers travel » Certify coaches 	<p>Trained physical education teachers and daily physical education</p> <p>Need to view physical education as important as math and science</p>	

Systems and Collaboration

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
<p>Locally people are committed to working together</p> <p>Sport councils are growing</p> <p>Increased growth in some sports due to community growth</p> <p>Great sport council leadership in some communities</p> <p>Sport is increasingly at the table with recreation</p> <p>Strong interest in hosting events</p>	<p>Individual sport groups work in Silos</p> <p>Communication about sport isn't ideal</p> <p>Misconnections between grassroots organizations and sport bodies</p> <p>Parents are not connected to the sport system</p>	<p>Need better communication between sports</p> <p>System needs to be more aligned</p> <p>Shouldn't look at sport and recreation separately—need to have one goal</p> <p>Alberta needs to become the national leader in sport development and performance</p> <p>Need to build on the successes</p> <p>Develop a system where every Albertan who is able to compete will compete in sport for life</p> <p>Need a willingness to change and urgency at the regional and the provincial levels</p> <p>Government of Alberta needs to listen to the sport experts</p> <p>Need to examine what is going on other provinces and countries</p>	<p>Have everyone reading from the same Canadian Sport for Life playbook. This should be our common language</p> <p>Sport policies that are accepted need to be implemented</p>

Things we are doing well...	But the related challenges are...	What should be done...	Examples of actions that can be taken...
	<p>Focus on outputs (numbers and dollars) not outcomes</p> <p>No joint effort to achieve goals or vision</p> <p>Major gaps in local—provincial—and federal activities and communication</p> <p>Club programs can't operate in one rural community (Need a regional approach)</p> <p>Lack of direction and leadership</p> <p>Communication and marketing of provincial opportunities is limited</p>	<p>Need Regional sport councils</p> <p>Need increased communication at all levels</p> <p>Hold people accountable</p> <p>Need to decide how we define success</p> <p>Need to develop metrics and accountability measures.</p> <p>Need to increase transparency</p> <p>Establish a framework based on honesty</p> <p>Need cross-sectoral integration and vertical and horizontal alignment</p> <p>Need to shift to more professional coaches and sport leaders</p> <p>If there is no new money we need to reallocate what we have</p> <p>Don't set goals for sport what we cannot reach</p> <p>Need to share resources and reduce duplication</p>	<p>Develop a Regional system with Regional supports and representatives</p>

Synthesis

Once all the data was analyzed, a synthesis of the emergent themes was conducted. The purpose of the synthesis was to combine the emergent themes and form conclusions based on comparisons between the data sets. Synthesis of the emergent themes within each data set revealed consistencies across the major themes below:

- » Sport Support
- » Sport Delivery
- » Accountability
- » Creative Solutions
- » Promotion
- » Capacity Building

Using the emergent themes a **framework** was designed to support coordinated action across Alberta's entire sport spectrum. This **framework** was represented in *Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation* and highlights the fact that the Alberta **sport system** is complex, dynamic, and ever changing.

Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation identified the need for all stakeholders—both new and potential—to define their roles within the Alberta **sport system** and strategically develop strategies, identify investment opportunities, and make decisions about actions and activities that will contribute to strengthening sport in Alberta.

Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan Draft for Consultation

Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation was released on May 1st, 2014. Albertans were invited to provide feedback on the draft document through an online survey which closed on May 30th, 2014.

A total of **396 individuals or organizations** provided feedback through the online survey or letters to Tourism, Parks and Recreation.

The qualitative data collected included **928 coded comments**. These comments underwent a thematic analysis conducted by Recreation and Physical Activity Division Staff. The analysis resulted in five themes related to:

1. General Feedback
2. Actions for Government
3. Areas of focus for implementation and investments
4. Additions to *Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation*

Within each of these themes a number of sub-themes also emerged. A description of each of the themes and sub-themes is provided on the following pages.

General Feedback

General feedback related to how Albertans felt about *Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation* included both positive and negative comments. These comments represent initial reactions and opinions about the document.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Positive Comments</p> <p>A total of 193 comments were received which provide positive feedback about the document and how it will act as a guide for change moving forward. Within these comments, it was stated that the document appears to be a comprehensive document that if implemented properly could have a significant impact on Albertans who engage in sporting activities.</p>	<p>“My initial reaction is very positive. I think that the Alberta Sport Plan is on the right path and I applaud Dr. Starke and the Ministry for the work done thus far.”</p> <p>“Very valuable framework, to enable the GOA, ASC and partners to align initiatives related to sport and to allow efficient use of resources to advance sport in our province.”</p> <p>“It was very representative of the things we talked about at the regional forums.”</p>
<p>Negative Comments</p> <p>A total of 27 comments were received which indicated that the respondents were not satisfied and that there would be no benefit to having a framework for the Alberta sport system. Within these comments it was stated that the Government of Alberta and Alberta Sport Connection should leave the tactics to the sector and that the document provides nothing to align with.</p>	<p>“The plan provides no real direction or plan to align with.”</p> <p>“According to this current plan every sport organization is doing an amazing job.”</p> <p>“Well done on a feel good document that means absolutely nothing to the sector.”</p>

Actions for Government

A total of **249 comments** were received which highlighted that there is a need for the GOA to continue to build upon the plan, develop actions and identify investments within the newly developed framework. This was apparent in comments that indicated that a *call to action* wasn't enough and that leadership, government investment and accountability are essential. These comments indicated that the below three actions need to be taken by government for the implementation of the plan to be successful.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>1. Conduct a funding review and indicate how the GOA will invest in the realization of the framework.</p> <p>Feedback highlighted the need for a funding review to ensure that adequate resources are available and appropriate investments are made. It was also suggested that a comparative analysis of sport systems between provinces be done.</p>	<p>“It sounds good. Where will the \$s come from to make it work?”</p> <p>“I don’t see anything in there suggesting that the AB government will increase funding to sport in order to make all these things happen. In the end Alberta is not a leader in sport when it comes to funding they are the lowest in funding and that needs to change.”</p>
<p>2. Develop an implementation plan based on the priorities outlined in the framework.</p> <p>It was stressed that the action items that should be present in a plan are missing and that the GOA needs to develop an implementation plan to advance the framework. This implementation plan needs to include specifics on what will be done to realize change and how progress will be measured.</p> <p>Feedback also highlighted the need to identify roles and responsibilities, align actions and investments, and highlight mechanisms to ensure accountability.</p>	<p>“It is not a Plan! -the document is called “The Alberta Sport Plan” and then it is referred to as a “framework” (page 2). As a sport plan, we need to see specifics on what we will do different to realize change; what are the strategic issues that need to be addressed? What are the right things to do? What are the short term and long term actions that will be taken to achieve the objectives? What is the implementation plan that will excite and engage the stakeholders?”</p> <p>“What is the desired future and the directional priorities; what are the targets and how will we monitor our progress toward the objectives? need to have a parallel operational plan and a parallel financial plan if we expect to see any changes or progress to be made. If not, this becomes another plan on the shelf!”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>3. Examine Leadership</p> <p>Comments referenced that fact that leadership at multiple levels may be lacking in the Alberta sport system and as a result should be examined. The need for accountability was also stressed as something that needs to be a priority across the entire sport system.</p>	<p>“A call to action isn’t enough, we need leadership to make things happen, not just more discussions.”</p> <p>“Provincial Sport is run by either bureaucrats with very little performance metric applied to their positions, or by sport community elected committees that tend to come with a wide variety of qualities not desirable to implementing a plan such as this one. The perfect plan implemented poorly is worse than the so-so plan well run. Which one will this be?”</p>

Areas of Focus for Implementation and Investment

Recognizing that a funding review and an implementation plan will be necessary for the successful implementation of **Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024**, eight specific areas have been emphasized and should be considered when developing the implementation plan.

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Investments in the full spectrum of sport</p> <p>There were 92 comments which applauded the fact that the framework focused on the full spectrum of sport. This feedback also included comments which highlighted the need to invest in programs and activities that benefit the masses rather than competitive or high performance sport, which impact only a few.</p>	<p>“Recognizing that recreational sports are as important as high performance or competitive sports.”</p> <p>“The government finally recognizes that sport and health (physical and mental) are intertwined and are the incalculable benefits from participation in any sport. The government finally recognizes that it has an obligation of promoting amateur sport at the grass root level.”</p> <p>“There does need to be a greater global understanding of what physical literacy is and its importance to lifelong active living as well as competitive sports.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Investments in High Performance Sport</p> <p>In addition to the comments about the full spectrum of sport there were 20 comments that specifically indicated that an increase in funding around High Performance sport was necessary.</p>	<p>“I worry that there is not much said about increasing Alberta’s financial support of high performance sport, finding ways to encourage more corporate support and determining which sports we can afford to fund.”</p> <p>“High performance/competitive sport needs more nurturing than recreational sport.”</p>
<p>Include a strategy for engaging with schools</p> <p>There were 51 comments that highlighted the need to work with schools to ensure adequate support for physical activity and school sport. These comments referenced the need to work with School Boards and Alberta Education to ensure that physical literacy, physical education and school sport are adequately invested in.</p>	<p>“The document identified that schools are a crucial component to the sport plan. If financial and educational curriculum changes do not occur, it will be a hard plan to push through Albertans.”</p> <p>“It is also important to have PE specialists and the elementary level where so many of the fundamentals can be taught and are sometimes lost and then youth get to middle school and junior high and are developmental behind and the social stigma limits their potential to find a sport or activity they can love to do.”</p> <p>“Sport needs to be part of schools. The community is working on lifelong participation and yet schools are doing the opposite. I heard a teacher say that only one person can be a winner and everyone needs to find that out. This is not what school sports should be about. They should be a place where students can try a sport they have never done before in a safe environment.”</p>
<p>Coordinating the system and engaging all stakeholders</p> <p>There were 63 comments which confirmed the need for coordinated activities and efforts and highlighted the importance of an integrated approach.</p>	<p>“The coordinated approach seems like the most logical way to go but this can be hard to do as it often needs supports such as meetings and facilitation between groups.”</p> <p>“Support and delivery of sport requires all partners to synchronize and understand roles/responsibilities to ensure we get all Albertans active for life.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Volunteer, Coach and Official development</p> <p>There were 23 comments which stressed the need to invest in volunteer, coach and official support. It was stated that they are the backbone of the sport delivery system and not adequately supported or invested in.</p>	<p>“The gaps I see are related to funding of coaches not facilities, volunteer and coach fatigue, leadership training deficits.”</p> <p>“The current programs look good on paper as well, but are run by overworked and under-skilled volunteers.”</p>
<p>Investments in infrastructure</p> <p>A total of 56 comments referenced the need to invest in infrastructure across Alberta. While a number of different venues and sporting facilities were highlighted the need to invest in tennis facilities was referenced most often.</p>	<p>“I also hope that there will be resources in place to assist with appropriate venues both for training and sporting events, especially when the plan includes bringing sporting events to Alberta. Also, with the potential growth of sports and larger participation numbers clubs and communities will need better access to venues in order to give athletes a place to train.”</p> <p>“Infrastructure for world class athlete training is lacking.”</p> <p>“Tennis is the fastest growing sport in Canada and a sport for life but has insufficient facilities to support its growth in Alberta.”</p>
<p>Investments in ‘specific’ sports</p> <p>There were 15 comments which referenced the need to review what sports receive funding from the GOA as well as the need to begin to fund sports that haven’t traditionally been funded.</p> <p>Specific sports that were mentioned included cricket, disc golf, equestrian, pickle ball, taekwondo, tennis, and ultimate.</p>	<p>“I would suggest taking this plan out into the communities, especially the rural ones and also engaging non-mainstream sports that are falling through the cracks.”</p> <p>“I would like to see more funds allocated to emerging and non-traditional sports (disc golf, ultimate, cricket, pickle ball)”</p> <p>“To spread the funding out to sports like tennis which seems to be left out would be a great help to kids.”</p>

SUB-THEME	SURVEY COMMENTS (Verbatim)
<p>Increasing accessibility and decreasing the cost of participation</p> <p>There were 28 comments that referenced that fact that sport, as it currently operates, is very costly. It was stated that this should be addressed and that every Albertan should have the opportunity to participate in sport not just those who can afford the fees and the equipment.</p>	<p>“What is missing in the plan is some way to address the fact that if a child wants to be a competitive athlete, their parents need to be wealthy in order for them to support their child.”</p> <p>“Every Albertan should have the opportunity to participate in sport, at any level, at any age. This is very important.”</p>

Additions to Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan Draft for Consultation

A total of **96 comments** related to specific changes to the *Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan - Draft for Consultation* were recommended throughout the feedback. This feedback has been incorporated into the document and a summary of the changes are represented below.

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Vision</p>	<p>It was recommended in numerous comments that Alberta should strive to be “the” national leader in sport and that we should foster opportunities for “all Albertans.”</p> <p>These comments are reflected in the vision which now reads:</p> <p>Alberta is the national leader in sport with a coordinated and adaptive system which promotes excellence and fosters opportunities for life-long participation for all Albertans.</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Key areas of success</p>	<p>A number of comments referenced the need to ensure we are recognizing the full spectrum of sport and its impact on all of Alberta’s communities and individuals.</p> <p>The bullets on pages 3 and 9 have been changed to reflect these comments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Be recognized and valued as a key contributor to Albertans’ quality of life. » Be cohesive and aligned. » Have increased capacity across the entire sport system. » Invest in sport at all levels and increase opportunities for ALL Albertans to participate in sport. » Increase the number of Albertans participating in programs and activities in the developmental, competitive and recreational sport environments. » Have a greater number of local, provincial, national, and international sporting events hosted in Alberta.
<p>Government of Alberta Policy Alignment</p>	<p>A number of people commented on how the document shows alignment with the Canadian Sport Policy and the Active Alberta Policy but that other Government of Alberta policy documents should also be referenced.</p> <p>A section titled Other Government of Alberta Policy Alignments was added which reads:</p> <p>In addition to aligning with the <i>Canadian Sport Policy 2012</i> and the <i>Active Alberta Policy 2011-2021</i>, <i>Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024</i> aligns with a number of ministries and illustrates how sport can help achieve their complementary policy goals. Complementary goals are included in the <i>Social Policy Framework</i>, the <i>Strategic Approach to Wellness, Inspiring Education</i> and the <i>Tourism Framework</i>.</p> <p>It will be the responsibility of the Government of Alberta to model collaboration through deliberate engagement with relevant ministries as well as ensure strategic alignment with complementary policy goals when advancing the Alberta sport system with stakeholders.</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Alignment and Collaboration</p>	<p>There was recognition that while collaboration was present in the document, a successful sport system needs engagement, alignment and collaboration of multiple stakeholders from multiple sectors.</p> <p>In order to represent these comments a section titled Alignment and Collaboration was added to the framework.</p> <p>The areas of focus in Alignment and Collaboration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Cross-sector engagement » Alignment and collaboration with educational institutions » Alignment and collaboration with communities and municipalities » Alignment and collaboration across sports.
<p>Parent and Spectator Education</p>	<p>A need to ensure that parent and spectator education are represented in the document was expressed.</p> <p>Parents and Spectators was therefore added to the Training and Education section of Capacity Building. It highlights the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the benefits of unstructured play, physical literacy, and participating in quality physical activity and sports programs. » Develop tools that can be used to educate parents and spectators about acceptable behaviour at sporting events.
<p>Sport Delivery</p>	<p>The need to better articulate the various components of the sport delivery system was communicated. This included better representation of the various sporting environments, the role of coaches, volunteers, officials, instructors and leaders in each environment, the role of sport sciences, the importance of safety and ethics, and the different strategies necessary to increase participation at all levels and for all backgrounds. Sport Delivery now includes:</p> <p>DEVELOPMENTAL SPORT ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Community Programs</p> <p>Examine the role of municipal, local and club programs in the developmental pathway.</p> <p>Support programs that implement physical literacy and focus on the development of sport friendly CS4L communities.</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Sport Delivery</p>	<p>School Activities</p> <p>Recognize the importance of schools in the developmental pathway.</p> <p>Focus on integrating physical literacy into curriculum, examining the role of school sport and ensuring schools capitalize on partnerships with sports organizations and other stakeholders responsible for delivering quality sport and physical activity experiences.</p> <p>Increase Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Increase opportunities for participation in quality developmental programs and activities across ALL abilities and backgrounds and in safe environments.</p> <p><i>Different strategies will need to be developed with different demographics (e.g. Aboriginal, new Canadians, people with disabilities, girls and women, people living with a low-income).</i></p> <p>Coach and Official Support</p> <p>Develop strategies to recruit, recognize, support and retain quality coaches and officials in developmental programs.</p> <p>Volunteer Support</p> <p>Increase the number of volunteers in the developmental environment and examine volunteer recruitment, training, retention and recognition.</p> <p>Safety and Ethics</p> <p>Recognize the importance of safe and ethical participation in developmental programs and activities.</p> <p>Develop strategies to ensure participants, athletes, coaches, officials, instructors, teachers and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and resources to support safe and ethical participation.</p> <p>COMPETITIVE SPORT ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Athlete Support</p> <p>Examine the current tracking systems and funding programs for athletes.</p> <p>Coach and Official Training and Opportunities</p> <p>Develop strategies to recruit, recognize, support and retain quality coaches and officials in the competitive environment.</p> <p>Ensure coaches and officials have access to opportunities for engagement and advancement in the competitive environment.</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Sport Delivery</p>	<p>Volunteer Support</p> <p>Increase the number of volunteers in the competitive environment and examine volunteer recruitment, training, retention and recognition.</p> <p>Sport Science</p> <p>Ensure athletes and coaches have access to integrated support teams providing appropriate services (e.g. nutrition, strength and conditioning, injury prevention, rehabilitation and sport psychology).</p> <p>Multi-Sport Games</p> <p>Examine the current multi-sport games model and their alignments to the Long Term Athlete Development Framework.</p> <p>High Performance</p> <p>Recognize and examine the need for different collaborative approaches for high performance programs and infrastructure at provincial, national and international levels.</p> <p>Articulate the collaborative efforts of different partners with high performance sport delivery at the provincial, national and international level.</p> <p>Safety and Ethics</p> <p>Recognize the importance of safe and ethical participation in competitive programs and activities.</p> <p>Develop strategies to ensure athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and resources to support safe and ethical competition.</p> <p>RECREATIONAL SPORT ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Increase Participation and Engagement</p> <p>Increase opportunities for participation in quality recreational programs and activities across ALL abilities and backgrounds and in safe environments.</p> <p><i>Different strategies will need to be developed with different demographics (e.g. Aboriginal, new Canadians, people with a disability, girls and women, people living with a low-income, adults, and seniors).</i></p> <p>Leader and Instructor Support</p> <p>Develop strategies to recruit, recognize, support and retain quality leaders and instructors in recreational programs.</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Sport Delivery	<p>Volunteer Support</p> <p>Increase the number of volunteers in the recreational environment and examine volunteer recruitment, training, retention and recognition.</p> <p>Develop strategies to recruit, recognize, support and retain quality volunteer coaches and officials in recreational programs.</p> <p>Safety and Ethics</p> <p>Recognize the importance of safe and ethical participation in recreational programs and activities.</p> <p>Develop strategies to ensure participants, leaders, instructors, and volunteers have the knowledge, skills and resources to support safe and ethical participation.</p>
Roles and Responsibilities	<p>The need to ensure clarity around the various governments, institutions and organizations was discussed.</p> <p>Headings separating the various actors have been added and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Organizations » Educational Institutions
Definition of sport	<p>The need to ensure the definition of sport is consistent with the information in the document was discussed.</p> <p>There were two definitions of sport (i.e. The Canadian Sport Policy defined the full spectrum of sport and Sport Canada's defined organized sport activities). The definitions in the glossary have been updated to reflect the Canadian Sport Policy definition of the full spectrum of sport.</p>
Definition of Stakeholders	<p>The term stakeholders is used throughout the document however it was highlighted that this term is never defined.</p> <p>Stakeholder has been added to the glossary and reads:</p> <p>Anyone invested in or impacted by Alberta's sport system (e.g. Governments, organizations, educational institutions, athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, volunteers, parents, teachers, and participants).</p>

SUB-THEME	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
<p>Next Steps</p>	<p>The need to better articulate what the next steps will be based on the approval of this document was highlighted.</p> <p>The Next Steps has provided more clarity on the role of the Alberta Sport Connection moving forward and states:</p> <p>The Alberta Sport Connection is charged with implementing <i>Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024</i> on behalf of the Government and developing a complementary implementation plan that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Align with Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024. » Provide specific actions that the Alberta Sport Connection plans to accomplish in 2-5 year cycles. » Be based on a funding review to ensure the specific actions are accompanied by appropriate investments. » Take into account the trends that sport is facing locally, provincially and nationally. » Examine what is working in other jurisdictions and determine what could work best for the Alberta sport system. » Build in measures and indicators to ensure accountability as well as provide information that can be used to determine if we are meeting the needs of the Alberta sport system.
<p>Word and format changes</p>	<p>A number of word and format changes based on feedback were also incorporated into the document.</p>

Conclusion

The renewal of the Alberta Sport Plan has provided a number of Albertans the opportunity to share invaluable information about the priorities for sport in the province. The information collected during this process is represented throughout this document and provides the foundation for ***Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024***.

Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024 represents a new way of collectively advancing sport and identifies the coordinated efforts and activities necessary to promote collaboration, empower stakeholders and achieve a common vision.

For more information or to view ***Going the Distance: The Alberta Sport Plan 2014-2024*** please visit AlbertaSportPlan.ca

