

Government
of Alberta ■

Alberta



active
ALBERTA
2011 - 2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recreation, active living and sport are vitally important to Albertans. The activities they choose for enjoyment, where they live and take vacations, what they teach their children, and who they select as their heroes all demonstrate how important the sector is to the lives of Albertans.

The Government of Alberta has long recognized the importance of the sector, and has been deeply involved through the development of policies, the passage of legislation, the design of programs, through working with partners, and through the provision of funding.

Research clearly points to the importance of active lifestyles to the physical, social and emotional health and well-being of Albertans and their communities. The Government of Alberta recognizes this research and has drawn on this evidence to reflect its direction related to recreation, active living and sport. The following pages outline a ten year policy to refocus government initiatives, challenge partners, and encourage Albertans to become more active.

This new policy, Active Alberta, sets out a vision for recreation, active living and sport:

Albertans enjoy a high quality of life, improved health and wellness, strong communities, economic benefits and personal fulfillment, through recreation, active living and sport.

Active Alberta will inspire Albertans to become more active every day, through sustainable, province-wide activities that generate awareness and motivate action through collaboration.

This policy will ensure the Government of Alberta is maximizing the effectiveness of the funding of this sector because it links funding to achievement of outcomes. The following outcomes will guide the Government of Alberta and its partners as they design programs, deliver services and make investments related to recreation, active living, and sport:

Active Albertans: More Albertans are more active, more often.

Active Communities: Alberta communities are more active, creative, safe and inclusive.

Active Outdoors: Albertans are connected to nature and able to explore the outdoors.

Active Engagement: Albertans are engaged in activity and in their communities.

Active Coordinated System: All partners involved in providing recreation, active living and sport opportunities to Albertans work together in a coordinated system.

Active Pursuit of Excellence: Albertans have opportunities to achieve athletic excellence.

Under each of these outcomes, a set of strategic priorities are identified and some of the differences that are expected over the next 10 years are also described.

Implementation of this strategy will require coordination and collaboration among all government ministries involved in the sector, and with partners including other governments, educational institutions, non-profit agencies and the private sector.

Successful implementation will mean Albertans know what they are receiving from the significant investments made in the sector. More importantly, successful implementation of the Active Alberta policy should lead to improved health and well-being for Albertans and their communities.

INTRODUCTION

Recreation, active living and sport are central to Alberta's culture:

From its earliest days, the people of what is now Alberta have engaged in recreation and sport as a central part of our culture. For example, the First Nations people had many traditional sports and games such as the bone game, the ring and pin game, and the rattler game. Today, these sports and games continue to play an important role in the cultural identity of the First Nations people of Alberta.

Furthermore, the traders and settlers who came to the province brought their own games and sports with them, and established recreational facilities and clubs. With the diversity of the population, a wide variety of sports became popular in Alberta: from polo, cricket and tennis to golf, hockey and football.



Often Alberta's heroes are drawn from the recreation and sport sector. While we cheer on the athletes of today, earlier Albertans celebrated the successes of competitors like Alex Decoteau, Canada's first Aboriginal police officer, who competed at the Stockholm Olympics in 1912, and the Edmonton Grads women's basketball team who won every game they played in four Olympic Games from 1924 to 1936.

Recreation, active living and sport are integral to the culture of Alberta. As *The Spirit of Alberta: Alberta's Cultural Policy* states, recreation and sport are included in our definition of Alberta's culture and: "...culture is the glue that connects us as individuals to our communities, fostering unity, civility and a sense of belonging, pride and caring for our fellow citizens."



“Being active isn’t just essential for a high quality of life, it is essential to life itself.”

ALBERTANS VALUE RECREATION, ACTIVE LIVING AND SPORT:

Albertans are passionate about their recreational and sport activities. They tell us they participate in recreation, active living and sport because of how it makes them feel, because of the energy they get from it, and because it is fun. Albertans say that being active improves their health and reduces stress. They tell us that recreation, active living and sport provide social and economic benefits to their communities and to the province. They say it also brings diverse cultural groups together, and provides a catalyst for pride in ourselves, in our communities, and in our environment. In fact, as the Chair of the Premier’s Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities told us, being active isn’t just essential for a high quality of life, it is essential to life itself.

Recreation, active living and sport are also key components of the wellness of Albertans, their families and communities. The Government of Alberta defines wellness as more than the absence of disease: it is the ability of people and communities to reach their best potential, in the broadest sense. The outcomes and strategies in this policy support a coordinated Government of Alberta approach to increase the wellness of Albertans.

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA COMMITMENT:

Given the importance of recreation, active living and sports to Albertans, the Government of Alberta has devoted considerable resources to this sector over many decades.

The province’s commitment has been demonstrated in a number of ways. Alberta was one of the first provinces in Canada to pass an act related to recreation when it passed the Recreation Development Act in 1980. The Government of Alberta was the first province to mandate the creation of evidence-based standards for exercise professionals and the training of qualified professionals to provide counseling to support recreation, active living and sport. As well, Alberta continues to support the 1987 National Recreation Statement which established a national framework for action and set out the responsibilities of different levels of government for recreation.

The Government of Alberta has also been a strong supporter of hosting major provincial, national and international sporting events. Albertans proudly showcased the province in 1978 when they welcomed athletes and visitors to the Commonwealth Games, and subsequently to other games including the 1983



Albertans are active because it is fun.

Universiade Games, 1988 Olympic Games, 2001 World Athletics Championship, 2005 World Masters Games, 1994 and 2004 Arctic Winter Games, numerous world cups and international single sport events.

Albertans continue to enjoy the benefits of hosting these events through the legacy of significant sporting venues such as the Canmore Nordic Centre, Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, and Commonwealth stadium in Edmonton.

The human legacy includes the development of large numbers of international and nationally qualified officials and volunteers. The expertise of this army of volunteers has enabled the staging of many other events and activities at a community, regional, national and international level.

While Tourism, Parks and Recreation has the lead responsibility for recreation, active living and sport, many other ministries throughout the Government of Alberta support the sector through programs, service delivery and funding. For example: Health and Wellness promotes healthy lifestyles, including physical activity, through its many programs and services; Education plays a key role in encouraging young Albertans to be active by mandating physical education for students in Kindergarten to Grade 10, and the requirement for 30 minutes of daily physical activity for all students in Grades 1–9. Physical education is optional for Grade 11 and 12. The policies of the ministries of Transportation, Infrastructure and Municipal Affairs influence the development of communities in ways that encourage active living. These are only a few examples of how the Government of Alberta is involved with the sector. There are many more.

OTHER PARTNERS ARE INVOLVED:

Indeed, the Government of Alberta is only one player in the system. Many other governments (federal, municipal, First Nations and Métis) deliver programs and services related to recreation, active living and sport. In addition, educational institutions, non-profit groups, community organizations and the private sector invest resources and provide opportunities for Albertans to be active and engage in activities they enjoy.

This policy acknowledges the important role that all these agencies, organizations and governments play and sets a strategic direction that will maximize the contribution and impact of them all.

support for recreation, active living and sport initiatives is effective through collaborations with stakeholders, other levels of government, not-for-profit organizations and the private sector.

1. PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVE ALBERTA POLICY

“Active Alberta” represents a call to action.



The intent of this new policy is to:

Acknowledge that recreation, active living and sport are essential to the health, well-being and social needs of all Albertans throughout their lives, whether they are toddlers or teenagers, parents or grandparents, full time workers or full time retirees. Regardless of their skills, interests and abilities, Albertans value recreational and sport activities and benefit from an active lifestyle.

Reaffirm the Government of Alberta’s commitment to the sector. The Government of Alberta is committed to continuing to support and promote recreation, active living and sport.

Replace the Active Living Strategy and, over the next ten years, coordinate other provincial policies and strategies that encourage healthy active lifestyle choices to improve Albertans’ quality of life, sense of security, and overall community health and well-being.

Describe the government’s priorities related to recreation, active living and sport.

Confirm the partnership the Government of Alberta enjoys with other governments, the non-profit sector, educational institutions and the private sector in delivering services and programs to Albertans, and clarify the role of all partners.

Establish common outcomes for the sector and invite partners to work with government, and with each other, to achieve those outcomes.

Guide Government of Alberta funding decisions and resource allocations related to recreation, active living and sport to help achieve the outcomes of this policy.

Support the Government of Alberta’s wellness initiatives.

2. WHY CALL IT ACTIVE ALBERTA?

Throughout the development of the policy there was debate over what to call it. Is it a recreation policy, or a recreation and sport policy, an active living policy, or all three?

Confusion arises because some people say that recreation is part of sport. Others say that sport is part of recreation. To others, active living encompasses recreation and sport. We chose Active Alberta because it speaks to the character and dynamic we need to create to be successful in improving individual and community health and well-being. We all benefit from being active – whether being physically active or active in the community.

We also chose this title because it signifies action. It indicates that the Government of Alberta is committed to moving on the issues identified in this policy. Furthermore, “Active Alberta” represents a call to action to other people and organizations that have an interest in these issues.

“We all benefit from being active - whether being physically active or active in the community.”

3. WHAT DOES “BEING ACTIVE” MEAN?

When the policy talks about encouraging activity, some may wonder what kinds of activities are meant. The activities that are important to Active Alberta will have some, or most of the following characteristics:

- inclusive of all Albertans, no matter their skill level, abilities, age, health, and interests;
- emphasize active living as an integrated part of Albertans’ lives – part of our culture;
- include a wide range of physical activity involving moderate to strenuous levels of exertion such as walking, biking, taking the stairs at work and gardening;
- include participation in activities ranging from unstructured play through to athletic excellence;
- can be achieved in any setting, at any time of day, whether at work, home, school, in the neighbourhood, or elsewhere; and/or
- contribute to a sense of pride and belonging in the community.



4. BENEFITS OF RECREATION, ACTIVE LIVING AND SPORT

Research demonstrates that recreation, active living and sport contribute to the physical and mental well-being of individuals, families and communities.

HEALTH:

Research shows that participation in recreation, active living and sport contribute not only to the physical health of individuals, but also to their mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual health.

Research shows that active living can help people live longer and enjoy a better quality of life (including more prolonged independent living, better vitality, cognitive and functional capacity) as they age.

The positive association between physical activity and chronic disease prevention may lead to a reduction in obesity and a decreased risk of chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes, heart disease, various types of cancer, osteoporosis and stroke.

Chronic diseases and injuries are leading causes of death, illness and disability in Alberta, and contribute to significant health care system costs.

The Active Alberta policy will contribute to improved health and well-being for all Albertans, so that they enjoy the benefits of being active.



Being active increases self-esteem, leadership skills and higher achievement.



Community design and transportation systems have a notable impact on how readily families can be active outdoors in natural environments.



EDUCATION:

Research shows that children who are more physically active, and demonstrate strong physical literacy, show greater perceptual skills and achieve higher grades in school. Other benefits of increasing physical activity during school hours include higher self-esteem, self-confidence, team and leadership skills, all of which help to develop resilience.

There is evidence that health and educational benefits can be achieved by school communities through proven approaches such as comprehensive school health, active transportation, daily physical activity and quality daily physical education. In health-promoting schools, a whole school approach is adopted where students, teachers, parents and community groups work together to create a healthy school environment.

Students who participate in sports at school are less likely to smoke or use illegal drugs, and are more likely to stay in school. They tend to have higher grades, higher educational aspirations and fewer discipline problems at school. Students who participate in extracurricular sports during high school are more likely to have a job at the age of 24.

Sports programs have also been seen to benefit youth at risk: by helping them to develop skills such as time management, the ability to accept criticism, and cooperation with others. Participation in recreation and sports has been shown to lead to improved behaviour and higher achievement at school, and improved self esteem.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITY:

Research suggests that being outdoors has a positive environmental influence on physical, mental and emotional health for people of all ages. Outdoor activity reduces the amount of sedentary time people spend indoors in front of screens, or riding in vehicles. Observational studies of children show a positive association between time outdoors, and physical activity. Community design and transportation planning influence the use of active transportation (e.g. walking and cycling) to get to school and work.

There is a growing body of research supporting the idea that access to nature is essential for the physical and emotional health of children and adults. Research suggests that living closer to natural environments encourages physical activity and strengthens community by connecting families and neighbours. Providing opportunities for people to be active in unstructured natural environments enhances their physical and emotional health.

Community design and transportation systems have a notable impact on how readily families can be active outdoors in natural environments.

4. BENEFITS OF RECREATION, ACTIVE LIVING AND SPORT

It is estimated that sport results in billions in tourism revenue across Canada annually.



ECONOMY:

Spectators and participants at sport and recreation events generate economic activity both locally and throughout the province. In 1997, a Government of Canada Study of Sport in Canada estimated that sport accounted for \$4 billion in tourism expenditures. In addition to these direct and indirect economic benefits, these events broadcast to the world that Alberta is a world-class tourism destination.

The combined budgets of national and provincial sport organization offices based in Alberta exceeds \$100 million annually, which generates economic benefits throughout the economy, and also brings extensive high quality sport development and sport-science expertise into the province.

In 2006, an Alberta Recreation and Parks Association study estimated the sport and recreation expenditures by households, governments and private industry to be approximately \$2.8 billion in 2001. The same study found that the sector supports an estimated employment impact of 34,000 full-time equivalent jobs in Alberta and generates more than \$1 billion in labour income.

CRIME PREVENTION & REDUCTION:

Research shows that increased access to community recreation, active living and sport opportunities contributes positively toward creating communities that are safer, more socially cohesive and engaged. For example, research suggests that participation in after-school programs by youth at risk can lead to reduced crime and violence. Increasing recreation, active living and sport choices for youth provides a constructive alternative for their spare time, and fosters improved self-esteem, leadership and team skills, and improved academic performance.

According to many criminology experts, the most effective approach to reducing youth crime is to steer young people away from negative social activities before they become involved in criminal activities.

recreation programs are an excellent way to bring diverse population groups together

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES:

Albertans live, work and learn in various types of communities: neighbourhood communities, workplace communities and school communities.

Adults spend the majority of their waking hours in workplaces. Workers have been shown to benefit from healthy workplace policies through fewer disability days, reduced accidents, and lower worker compensation costs.

Research shows that outdoor spaces and the opportunities for active living that they provide help to strengthen communities and neighbourhoods. Studies show that social interaction is more likely to take place in a green space such as a park rather than in a barren space.

A study of women suffering from social isolation has shown that involvement in recreation is an effective way of reducing that isolation. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that recreation programs are an excellent



way to bring diverse population groups together in a shared activity, thus increasing understanding and building bridges between different communities.

Research shows that school communities can contribute to health and well-being of students, teachers, parents, and to leadership development in the broader community through before and after-school programs.

Furthermore, community leaders are developed through recreation, active living, and sport. Community involvement in after-school recreation programs has been identified as a promising practice for stimulating youth engagement, team building and leadership development.



5. HOW WAS THE POLICY DEVELOPED?

Active Alberta was a collaborative effort of numerous government ministries, provincial associations and stakeholders.



Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation gathered information on promising practices from other jurisdictions and reviewed findings from previous consultations and research. It also reviewed other Government of Alberta policies and priorities to ensure that Active Alberta will be linked to the overall government direction. These policies are summarized under “Links to Government of Alberta Priorities.”

Other Government of Alberta ministries were consulted to determine their level of engagement in recreation, active living and sport, and to obtain their input:

- Aboriginal Relations
- Advanced Education and Technology
- Children and Youth Services
- Culture and Community Spirit
- Education
- Health and Wellness
- Justice and Attorney General
- Municipal Affairs
- Seniors and Community Supports
- Tourism, Parks and Recreation
- Transportation

Tourism, Parks and Recreation hosted a series of consultations and a discussion document containing preliminary concepts was shared with a wide variety of stakeholders in fall 2009. Stakeholders involved included 48 leaders from the sport, recreation and active living sector, and 180 presidents and staff from approximately 110 provincial sport, recreation and active living agencies across Alberta.

In June of 2010 the draft **Active Alberta** policy was released for public and stakeholder consultation: 435 on-line responses and 8 discussion papers were submitted by stakeholder groups.

The draft policy was updated to reflect the input received, and a further round of consultations was held with stakeholders in September 2010. This policy reflects the input received throughout the entire consultation process.

6. ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS



The Government of Alberta adopts an integrated approach to wellness, through collaboration among all ministries whose programs and services have an impact on wellness.

Implementing the policy and achieving the vision of Active Alberta will require focus, collaboration and commitment from the public sector, the not-for-profit sector and the private sector. Following is a description of the roles currently played by governments and partners. All partners will need to work together, and with Albertans, to explore what roles are appropriate, what should change, and what opportunities exist for innovative new roles.

INDIVIDUAL ALBERTANS

- Make choices about what recreation, active living and sport activities to pursue
- Take responsibility for own health and well-being
- Support healthy choices for their families
- Choose their level of engagement in community

The government of Alberta will provide leadership, set direction and build an integrated delivery system.

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

- Provide leadership by setting direction through policy development and establish priorities through legislation, regulation, standards, grant funding, and communicating with Albertans
- Provide programs and services that build an integrated delivery system
- Plan and support recreation research
- Encourage and support provincial recreation, sport and active living organizations
- Regional land use planning
- Enable and support recreational opportunities on public lands
- Manage provincial parks
- Build, operate and maintain facilities and infrastructure
- Encourage and facilitate intersectoral collaboration and community engagement.
- Recognize and celebrate community leaders and their accomplishments
- Work with the federal and municipal governments and other governments through intergovernmental cooperation

6. ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- Work with the Alberta Government through the Federal-Provincial/Territorial policy development mechanism to establish collaborative priorities, standards, grant funding and communication opportunities
- At the national level, encourage and facilitate intersectoral collaboration and community engagement with the recreation, active living and sport sectors, as well as in the health, education and infrastructure areas
- Set national physical activity guidelines
- Provide evidence-based national physical activity guidelines for Canadians of all ages



MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

- Ensure availability, affordability and accessibility of a broad range of recreation, active living and sport opportunities
- Undertake regular assessment to determine community needs or interests
- Facilitate local development through municipal policy, bylaws, as well as program design and delivery
- Provide incentives and services to programs
- Coordinate the best use of community resources
- Build, operate, and maintain infrastructure and facilities
- Make best efforts to the recreation needs of community
- Advise and consult with other levels of government regarding sector development initiatives
- Advocate on behalf of community-based recreation, active living and sport initiatives to other levels of government, and within other service sectors
- Support the volunteer and not-for-profit sector in the provision of recreation, active living and sport opportunities
- Optimize access and use of public recreation facilities



FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS SETTLEMENT GOVERNMENTS

- Facilitate affordable and accessible opportunities for recreation, active living and sport
- Plan, build and operate infrastructure to support recreation, active living, and sport
- Develop supportive policies and bylaws
- Develop and deliver programming
- Provide leadership and coordination to local community events

VOLUNTEER & NON-PROFIT SECTOR

- Design and deliver recreation, active living sport programs.
- Develop of community leadership capacity
- Provide leadership and coordination to local community events and festivals
- Operate recreational facilities
- Design and monitor industry standards

K – 12 EDUCATION

- Establish policies that support recreation, active living and sport
- Deliver Physical Education, Physical Activity and Wellness oriented curriculum
- Operate and maintain facilities
- Support delivery of extracurricular recreation, active living and sport opportunities (e.g. inter-school athletics)

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Research
- Develop policies that support recreation, active living and sport
- Program design and delivery
- Degree, Diploma and Certificate program delivery
- Teach and train future professionals
- Build, operate, and maintain infrastructure and facilities

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Sponsor sport and recreation events, programs and facilities
- Profit-based design and delivery of recreation, active living and sport programs
- Workplace activity and volunteer programs



Albertans enjoy a high quality of life, improved health and wellness, strong communities, economic benefits and personal fulfillment through recreation, active living and sport.

7. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA POLICY FRAMEWORK

This policy invites partners to work with the Government of Alberta to achieve specific outcomes.



A. VISION

Albertans enjoy a high quality of life, improved health and wellness, strong communities, economic benefits and personal fulfillment through recreation, active living and sport.

B. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A number of key principles inform this policy and guide the Government of Alberta in identifying outcomes and priority actions. They are:

Accessibility and inclusion: Recreation, active living and sport opportunities should respect and respond to the diverse needs and abilities of individuals, families, and communities

Citizenship: Leadership and engaged citizenship are greatly enhanced through participation in recreation, active living and sport opportunities

Holistic benefits: Recreation, active living and sport contribute to the physical, mental, social and spiritual health and well-being of Albertans, contribute to personal growth, self discovery and life long learning

Knowledge-based decision-making: Government of Alberta decisions will be informed by evidence, experience and the examination of promising practices

Partnership and collaboration: Recreation, active living and sport depend on solid partnerships and a sharing of responsibility among the Government of Alberta, the non-profit sector, the private sector, other governments and Albertans

Pursuit of excellence: Albertans have the opportunity to pursue athletic excellence

Quality of Life: Recreation, active living and sport are vital components of Albertans' quality of life

C. OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Alberta Government contributes to recreation, active living and sport directly, and through partnerships with the federal government, Alberta's municipalities, First Nation and Métis communities, post-secondary institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. This policy invites partners to work with the Government of Alberta to achieve the following six outcomes.

7. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA POLICY FRAMEWORK

Outcome One: Active Albertans More Albertans are more active, more often.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome One:

Working with partners, encourage and improve opportunities for children and families to engage in high quality, unstructured, and creative play.

Working with partners, increase levels of physical activity of Albertans of all ages and abilities across their lifespan and in diverse settings (e.g. homes, schools, workplaces) by sharing knowledge, supporting physical literacy and encouraging participation opportunities.

Through effective communication, including social marketing, increase awareness among all Albertans about how and where they can be active.

Support the integration of the Canadian Sport for Life model into the education, recreation, active living and sport development systems.

Work with partners to develop innovative, accessible after school programs that link community recreation programs and services to schools and community facilities.

Encourage school communities to adopt a comprehensive school health approach to promote healthy, active living.

What will success look like in ten years?

More Albertans are physically active in a wide variety of ways, and in many different settings.

More Albertans experience improved physical and mental health through integrating physical activity into their daily lives.

Affordable, accessible opportunities for physical activity are available to all Albertans.

Increased participation in recreation, active living and sport leads to social benefits, healthy weights and improved resiliency.



Outcome Two: Active Communities

Alberta communities are more active, creative, safe and inclusive.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome Two:

Encourage collaborative planning for facilities and services.

Work with partners to identify and share approaches in communities that capitalize on ethnic diversity, urban and rural distinctiveness, and mobilize industry to develop active communities.

Encourage local governments to create opportunities, and remove barriers to physical activity.

Work with partners to identify and implement best practices in land use and transportation planning to facilitate active transportation (walking, cycling).

Explore opportunities for tourism development around sport event hosting (e.g. games, tournaments)

What will success look like in ten years?

Communities are designed and developed to support recreation, active living and sport where people live, learn, work and play.

Communities benefit from the economic impacts of recreation, active living and sport, including job creation and visitor attraction.

More Albertans are using active transportation in their daily lives.

Albertans report that their communities are safe and inclusive.



7. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA POLICY FRAMEWORK

Outcome Three: Active Outdoors Albertans are connected to nature and able to explore the outdoors.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome Three:

Encourage partners to develop programs and services to connect adults and children with nature by providing opportunities for activities in a natural environment.

Encourage the development of education and stewardship programs that improve environmental and physical literacy, and that facilitate unstructured play in the outdoors.

Implement Alberta's Plan for Parks to guide long term planning and ensure our parks are protected yet accessible for Albertans' recreation, active living and sport activities.

Develop a provincial recreation trails strategy to accommodate diverse abilities, and link communities to the province's parks, outdoor spaces and recreation facilities through sustainable land and water based trails.

Encourage local governments to develop local parks and outdoor spaces that are connected to other parks, outdoor spaces and trails in the region.

Develop an online tool for Albertans and visitors to easily find and learn about recreation, active living and sport opportunities in Alberta's parks and outdoor spaces.

What will success look like in ten years?

More Albertans enjoy recreational opportunities outdoors.

Parks stewardship programs and services include integration of the principles of physical literacy and unstructured play.

The regional plans developed under the Land-use Framework identify strategies to ensure recreation, active living and sport needs are met in environmentally sustainable ways.



Outcome Four: Active Engagement

Albertans are engaged in activity and in their communities.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome Four:

Working with voluntary sector agencies, identify, recruit, nurture and recognize volunteers in the recreation, active living and sport sectors.

Support leadership training programs for community recreation, active living and sport leaders. Programs should be evidence-based, standardized, and designed to ensure leaders have the core competencies they need to deal with changing demands in recreation, active living and sport.

Work with partners to reduce barriers to participation for populations that are often less active, including families living in poverty, girls and women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, recent immigrants and older citizens.

Working with partners, explore the feasibility of establishing a Centre of Excellence for Recreation, Community and Quality of Life that will influence and provide benefits to community recreation.

What will success look like in ten years?

The recreation, active living and sport sector continues to have the highest rate of volunteerism.

Community leaders are developed through their participation in recreation, active living and sport.

The benefits of recreation, active living and sport are enjoyed by more Albertans, including those from previously less active populations.



7. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA POLICY FRAMEWORK

Outcome Five: Active Coordinated System

All partners involved in providing recreation, active living and sport opportunities to Albertans work together in a coordinated system.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome Five:

Government of Alberta funding and resource allocation related to recreation, active living and sport are guided by an assessment of how well the outcomes of this policy are being achieved.

Support and share current research on recreation, active living and sport, as well as best practices for program design and delivery.

Establish a mechanism to support interdepartmental and cross-sectoral network and consultations, and report on progress in achieving policy outcomes

Undertake a workforce strategy for the recreation, active living and sport sector to ensure an adequate supply of appropriately trained people.

In alignment with Land-use Framework Regional Plans, work with partners to identify and respond to regional recreation demands and trends, with consideration given to land use planning, design standards and its influence on active transportation.

Develop and promote tourism based recreation, active living and sport opportunities (e.g. ecotourism, adventure tourism).

What will success look like in ten years?

Governments and their partners in recreation, active living and sport work together towards shared outcomes, in a coordinated and sustainable system.

The Government of Alberta adopts an integrated approach to wellness, through collaboration among all ministries whose programs and services have an impact on wellness.

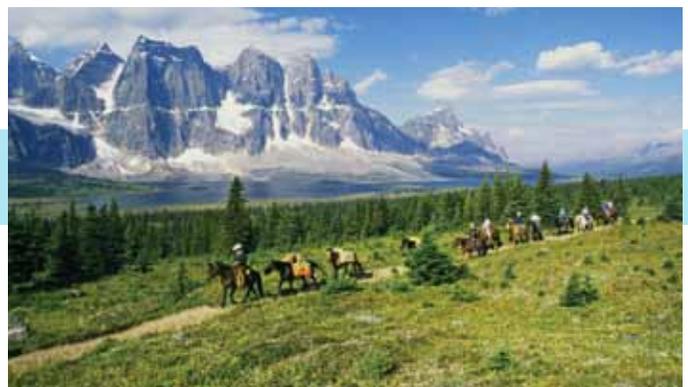
Research and best practices are shared among governments and their partners.

Measures to report progress are developed collaboratively.

The sector has an adequate supply of appropriately trained people.

Recreational demands are assessed on a regional basis within Land-use Framework Regional Plans, and regional approaches to meeting those demands are developed.

More tourists come to Alberta to enjoy recreation, active living and sport activities such as ecotourism or adventure tourism.



Outcome Six: Pursuit of Excellence

Albertans have opportunities to achieve athletic excellence.

Strategic Priorities for Outcome Six:

Update the Alberta Sport Plan using the Canadian Sport for Life model.

Support coaching, volunteer and sport science systems in alignment with the Canadian Sport for Life model.

Support a coordinated, collaborative, and accountable approach to hosting of sporting events in Alberta which will provide Alberta athletes and coaches with a home field advantage, and the opportunity for youth to be inspired by their heroes.

Consistent with the Olympic Legacy MOU signed between the Alberta Government and the British Columbia Government, continue to develop Olympic Legacy Utilization Strategies.



What will success look like in ten years?

Alberta is consistently ranked in the top 4 in Canada Games performance/medal points, and in the number of nationally carded athletes.

Alberta communities regularly host regional, national and international events in Canada.

Alberta's community-level facility designs are aligned with long term athlete development principles.

Organized sport works together to achieve shared outcomes, so that Albertans understand the value and benefits of sport.

Sport organizations at all levels collaborate to create athletic and volunteer opportunities. For example, the system encourages athletes and volunteers to transfer their skills across sports.

Community sport, school sport, and club sport systems collaboratively support athlete development opportunities for Alberta's youth.

Alberta's educational institutions and municipalities have integrated the principles of the Canadian Sport for Life model into their facility designs, programs, services, and educational standards.

7. GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA POLICY FRAMEWORK

Working with partners, encourage and improve opportunities for children and families to engage in high quality, unstructured and creative play.

D. ACCOUNTABILITY

The successful achievement of the policy outcomes is dependent on effective collaboration across government, as well as among Alberta's municipalities, Aboriginal communities, post-secondary institutions, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. The Alberta Government will work with its partners to develop measures so Albertans can track the progress of the Active Alberta Policy and its implementation.

E. IMPLEMENTATION

Active Alberta is a policy that will require a high degree of collaborative effort to achieve its Vision and Outcomes. The implementation approach for Active Alberta will begin with the establishment of mechanisms to support interdepartmental and cross-sectoral networks and consultations. These mechanisms will take the form of cross-ministry processes within the Alberta Government, as well as a cross-sectoral collaborative process that will represent the interests and roles of all partners involved in Active Alberta.

Being mindful of Active Alberta's Purpose, Guiding Principles, Vision and Outcomes, these mechanisms will be initially used to:

- Further refine the roles and shared responsibilities of all partners;
- Collectively develop, and establish evidence-based and practical outcome measures;
- Monitor progress towards outcomes; and
- Activate and align partner resources to implement the strategic priorities of Active Alberta.



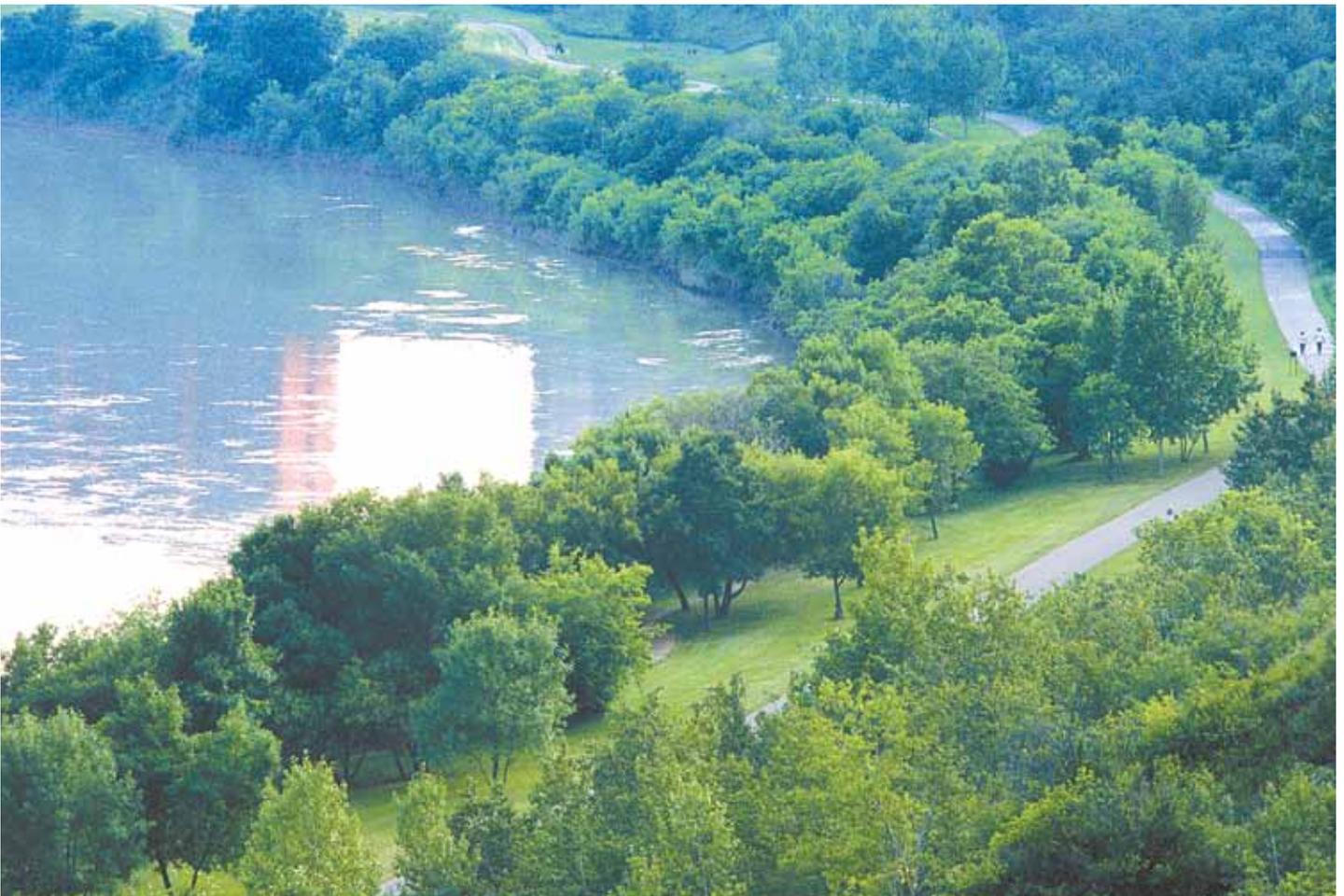
8. LINKS TO GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA PRIORITIES

LAND-USE FRAMEWORK

The Land-use Framework will guide the development of the province's private and public lands and natural resources to achieve Alberta's long term economic, social, and environmental goals. One of the outcomes of the Framework is "People-friendly communities with ample recreational and cultural opportunities". Active Alberta will identify Alberta's recreation priorities and inform the definition of "ample recreational opportunities". The regional plans being developed under the Land-use Framework will identify strategies to achieve the outcomes identified in Active Alberta.

PLAN FOR PARKS

Released in April 2009, Alberta's Plan for Parks sets out a ten year planning framework to guide decisions regarding management of Alberta's parks. It sets out a vision, outcomes, and action strategies to ensure that Alberta's provincial parks are properly managed to balance conservation and recreation goals. Given the importance of parks and natural areas to the health, well-being and recreational opportunities of Albertans, Active Alberta aligns closely with the Plan for Parks to ensure that shared objectives are met.



8. LINKS TO GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA PRIORITIES

Active Alberta will form the definition of “ample recreational opportunities.”

SAFE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Through a partnership of nine ministries of the Government of Alberta working with police, community groups, municipalities, businesses and social agencies, Alberta’s Safe Communities Initiative aims to find long term solutions to crime to improve the safety of Alberta communities. Since barriers to active living include a fear of crime and a concern about safety, the work of the Safe Communities Initiative will inform the strategies and actions of Active Alberta.

VISION 2020

One of the goals of Vision 2020, the strategy to set a new direction for Alberta’s health system is: “Building a strong foundation for public health.” The vision calls for “initiatives that support government and communities in encouraging healthy behaviours through the development of supportive and safe physical and social environments”. Active Alberta contains specific strategies and actions to help achieve this goal.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Government of Alberta is currently developing a Tourism Development Strategy that will establish priorities for development of the tourism sector in Alberta. It will identify ways in which the province can capitalize on its strengths to attract more people to visit the province. One



of the most important and appealing features of Alberta is its abundance of natural areas, and the opportunities they present for a wide range of recreational activities. Active Alberta notes the importance of recreation as an economic driver in the province. Encouraging recreational tourism is one way for Alberta to promote healthy living, and benefit from the economic opportunities it represents.

THE SPIRIT OF ALBERTA: ALBERTA’S CULTURAL POLICY

The Spirit of Alberta defines culture broadly, including the arts, heritage, sport and recreation, and the natural environment. It also notes the important role that culture plays in the health and wellness of Albertans. Active Alberta elaborates on the ways in which active living and participation in recreational activities give meaning to the lives of our citizens, strengthen social ties in our communities, and help to express Alberta’s unique culture.



Wellness Education nurtures the whole child, and enhances students' capacity for achieving their full potential – intellectually, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.

HEALTHY KIDS ALBERTA! STRATEGY

Healthy Kids Alberta! is a ten year (2007 -2017) government strategy involving 16 ministries identifying ways to work together to promote the wellness of all Alberta children and youth aged 0-18 years. Healthy Kids Alberta! focuses on the following four areas of wellness:

- Achieving healthy weights by encouraging healthy eating and promoting active living
- Supporting healthy birth outcomes
- Enhancing early childhood development; and
- Building resiliency (the ability to manage risks and respond positively to adversity)
- The strategies and actions in Active Alberta support all of these areas of focus.

HEALTHY ALBERTA SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

Healthy Alberta School Communities is a partnership strategy between Alberta Education and Alberta Health and Wellness. It is a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach that supports the development and implementation of health promotion strategies to enhance the wellness of school-aged children and youth. The priority areas of this strategy include physical activity, healthy eating, positive social environments and school connectedness.

FRAMEWORK FOR KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 12 WELLNESS EDUCATION

Wellness Education nurtures the whole child, and enhances students' capacity for achieving their full potential – intellectually, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally. Released in 2009, this new framework outlines the fundamental concepts and inherent values of wellness education, and provides guidance for the future development and implementation of K-12 wellness education programs to meet the needs of Alberta students living and learning in the 21st century.

AGING POPULATION POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Aging Population Policy Framework is designed to foster a coordinated and aligned approach across the Government of Alberta in developing policies, programs and services that meet the changing needs of an aging population, so that Albertans have the information and support they require to plan for their senior years. One of the policy directions is to facilitate community and individual efforts to engage in healthy living practices that will help to achieve healthy aging. The Active Alberta policy will provide leadership and support for improved health and personal fulfillment through Albertans' participation in recreation, active living and sport.

9. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility: Albertans, regardless of ability or income, have the opportunity to experience a wide range of recreation, active living and sport opportunities.

Active living: The integration into daily life of the physical activity needed to optimize health. (Tremblay, Shephard and Brawley, 2007)

Active transportation: Modes of travel that require physical activity, such as walking or cycling, in contrast to other modes that require little physical effort.

Canada Sport for Life Model: In 2005, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers agreed to proceed with the implementation of a new approach to sport and physical activity development which now falls under the label, “Canadian Sport for Life” (or CS4L). Through the development of physical literacy (see definition below), this model will help to encourage Canadians’ lifelong involvement and participation in physical activity and sport, as well as developing future athletes. (Adapted from Canadian Sport for Life website, and 2005 F-P/T Ministers Conference Notes)

Exercise: A form of leisure-time physical activity that is usually performed on a repeated basis over an extended period of time, with a specific objective such as improvement of fitness, physical performance or health. (Bouchard and Shepherd, 1994)

Health: Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. (WHO, in the Ottawa Charter for health Promotion, 1986)

Physical activity: Any body movement produced by the skeletal muscles that result in a substantial increase over resting energy expenditure. (Bouchard and Shephard, 1994)



“Wellness is more than the absence of disease; it is the ability of people and communities to reach their best potential in the broadest sense.”

Physical Fitness: A physiological state of well-being that enables the individual to meet the demands of daily living and/or provides the basis for sport performance.

Physical Literacy: A sound foundation of fundamental movement and sports skills. Physical literacy means developing proficiency in agility, balance, coordination



and speed; being able to move comfortably in different environments such as on the ground or in the water; and mastering specific skills such as throwing and catching a ball, riding a bike, or skating.



Quality of Life: Encompasses overall satisfaction with life and personal happiness including the facets of physiological, functional, emotional and spiritual well-being. (Tremblay, Shepherd and Brawley, Canadian Journal of Public Health, 2007)

Recreation: As agreed by Recreation Ministers in 1974, and affirmed in the National Recreation Statement (1987) and Canada's Sport Plan (2002), recreation is "all those things that a person or group chooses to do in order to make their leisure time more interesting, more enjoyable and more personally satisfying so as to enhance social functioning, assist in individual and community development, and improve quality of life."

Resiliency: The ability to bounce back from setbacks and cope with adversity. (Resiliency Canada, 2008)

Sedentary: Not participating in a regular exercise program or not meeting the minimal physical activity recommendations. (American College of Sports Medicine, 2006)

Sport: A regulated form of physical activity organized as a contest between two or more participants for the purpose of determining a winner by fair and ethical means. (Sport Canada)

System: The recreation, active living and sport system refers to the activities and initiatives of the governments and agencies involved in the sector, including federal, provincial, municipal, First Nations and Métis governments, as well as educational institutions, the non-profit sector and the private sector. All of these organizations have policies, programs and services that support the sector and the activities of each organization have an impact on the others.

Wellness: A measure of physical, mental and social health. It is the process of achieving optimum health and well-being through the active pursuit of good health and the removal of barriers, both personal and societal, to healthy living. Wellness is more than the absence of disease; it is the ability of people and communities to reach their best potential in the broadest sense. (Alberta Health and Wellness)



active
ALBERTA
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