

Active Alberta

A Recreation, Active Living and Sport Policy

Draft: May 2010

Government
of Alberta ■

Alberta ■
Freedom To Create. Spirit To Achieve.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recreation, active living and sport are vitally important to Albertans. What 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 physical activity to the health and wellbeing of Albertans and their communities. The Government of Alberta recognizes this research and intends to use this evidence to refresh and renew its policy related to recreation, active living and sport. The following pages outline a policy to refocus government initiatives, challenge partners, and encourage Albertans over the next ten years 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, strong communities and personal fulfillment through recreation, active living and sport.

It also identifies the following **OUTCOMES** that will guide the Government of Alberta and its partners as they design programs and deliver services and make investments related to recreation, active living, and sport:

1. Albertans are healthier through recreation, active living and sport.
2. Alberta communities are more active, creative, sustainable, safe and inclusive.
3. Albertans have opportunities to enjoy their natural heritage.
4. Albertans access recreation, active living and sport opportunities through a coordinated and sustainable system.

The policy outlines key strategies and short, medium and long term priority actions to achieve these outcomes, and it sets out an accountability framework.

Implementation of this strategy will require coordination and collaboration among all government ministries involved in the sector, and with partners such as 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 important, successful implementation of this policy should lead to improved health for Albertans and their communities.

1. INTRODUCTION

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 play an important role in keeping alive 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.

Given the importance of recreation, active living and sports to Albertans, the Government of Alberta has devoted considerable resources to it over many decades. The province's commitment to the sector has been demonstrated through legislation (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) and through funding. For example, in 2008-09, the ministry of Tourism, Parks and Recreation provided \$48.2 million 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 the 1983 Universiade Games, 1988 Olympic Games, 2001 World Athletics Championship, 2005 World Masters Games, 1994 and 2004 Arctic Winter Games and 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 the 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 play a key role in supporting the sector through programs, service delivery, and funding. By mandating daily physical education in schools, for example, Education plays a key role in encouraging young Albertans to be active. The policies of Transportation and Infrastructure and Municipal Affairs influence whether our communities are developed in ways that encourage active living. Health and Wellness promotes healthy lifestyles, including physical activity, through its many programs and services. These are only a few examples of how the Government of Alberta is involved with the sector. There are many more.

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.

2. WHY DO WE NEED A NEW RECREATION, ACTIVE LIVING AND SPORT POLICY?

Despite the importance of recreation, active living, and sport to our culture, and even with initiatives that have been pursued under existing policies such as the Active Living Strategy, research shows that sedentary lifestyles are on the rise in the province. The resulting levels of obesity and other preventable chronic diseases throughout our population are accelerating. These important public health issues and our limited success in increasing physical activity levels show us that a fresh approach and a broader policy is needed.

The intent of this new policy is to:

- **Acknowledge** that recreation, active living and sport are important to Albertans of all ages. Albertans need to be active throughout their lives, whether they are toddlers or teenagers, parents or grandparents, full time workers or full time retirees. No matter their skills, interests, and abilities, Albertans value recreational activities and benefit from an active lifestyle.
- **Reaffirm** the Government of Alberta's commitment to recreation, active living and sport.
- **Replace the Active Living Strategy and, over the next ten years, coordinate other provincial policies and strategies to encourage healthier lifestyle choices and to improve Albertans' quality of life, sense of security, and community 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 it clarifies 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. Accordingly, this policy will guide the Government of Alberta and its partners in making their decisions about investments in the sector.

3. 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. Each of these individual factors combined create a higher quality of life for Albertans.

A. Health:

Active living and healthy eating are part of a balanced lifestyle and can contribute to individual, family and community well-being. The positive association between physical activity and chronic disease prevention is evident and may lead to a reduction of 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 are responsible for a large cost burden of disease experienced by Albertans.

There are numerous interrelated factors that enhance the health and wellbeing of the overall population. These factors help to determine health and include social, cultural and economic factors (employment, income, housing, transportation, environment, education, etc.). These determinants need to be addressed to help individuals and populations to be as healthy as possible.

Countries with higher rates of active transport (walking, bicycling, or public transit) and participation in recreation and sport often present lower obesity rates. Canada ranks third highest for obesity and third lowest in walking, bicycling or public transit use; and sport participation among Canadian teenagers aged 15 – 18 declined from 77% to 59% between 1992 and 2005. The Active Alberta policy will help to provide improvements in these areas so all Albertans can enjoy the related benefits.

B. 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.

C. Natural Spaces:

Research suggests that as children today spend more time indoors in front of screens and less time in contact with nature, childhood obesity, attention deficit disorders and depression increase. 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 also suggests that living closer to natural environments encourages physical activity and strengthens community by connecting families and neighbours. Providing opportunities for children to play in unstructured natural environments encourages them to be more physically active.

The significance for public policy is that community design and transportation systems have a notable impact on how readily families can access natural spaces.

D. *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 payroll of National Sport Organization head offices based in Alberta exceeds \$75 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 2001, an Alberta-based study estimated the sport and recreation expenditures by households, governments, and private industry to be approximately \$2.4 billion annually. Other research indicates that sport and recreation spending over the last 20 years increased at a rate exceeding economic growth.

E. *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.

Increasing physical activity 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.

F. *Healthy Communities:*

Communities are dependent on accessible open spaces, facilities and services as well as an engaged and capable volunteer sector.

Community involvement in after-school recreation, active living and sport programs has been identified as a promising practice for increasing physical activity levels as well as for stimulating youth engagement and leadership development.

Recreation, active living, and sport programs provide excellent opportunities for participants to learn leadership and team-building skills and contribute to building strong communities throughout Alberta.

Strong communities are critical to the mastery of skills and athlete development, from entry level to international excellence.

4. WHAT IS RECREATION, ACTIVE LIVING AND SPORT?

While significant academic work has been done on coming up with common definitions for these terms, there is still debate about their meaning. For the purposes of this policy, we use the following definitions:

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

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)

Recreation: For the past thirty-six years, recreation has been broadly defined in Canada to include physical, artistic, creative, cultural, social, and intellectual pursuits. In 1974 Recreation Ministers agreed that 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”.

In this document, the Government of Alberta’s approach emphasizes the physical component of recreation. Other Government of Alberta policies such as *The Spirit of Alberta: Alberta’s Cultural Policy* support other aspects of recreation.

The importance of physical activity in this policy stems from the clear link that research has established between physical inactivity and rising rates of obesity and other health problems such as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, various types of cancer, osteoporosis, and depression. A priority of the Government of Alberta is to promote more physical activity among Albertans in order to improve health outcomes in the population. Accordingly, when the Government of Alberta refers to “recreation” in this policy, its focus is on physical activity.

This policy is intended to encourage more Albertans to incorporate recreation, active living and sport into their lives. What kind of activities do we mean? In this document, the activity we want to encourage has the following characteristics:

- It is inclusive of all Albertans, no matter their skill level, abilities, age, health, and interests.
- It emphasizes active living as an integrated part of Albertans’ lives – part of our culture.
- It includes a wide range of activities involving moderate to strenuous levels of exertion, such as walking, biking, taking the stairs at work and gardening.
- It includes participation in sport as well as unstructured play.
- It can take place in any setting, at any time of day, whether at work, home, school, in the neighbourhood or elsewhere.

5. HOW WAS THE POLICY DEVELOPED?

Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation gathered information on promising practices from other jurisdictions and reviewed findings from previous consultations and research. It then embarked on a series of consultations.

It met with other ministries of the Government of Alberta to obtain their input and determine their level of engagement in recreation, active living and sport. Ministries consulted include:

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

A discussion document containing preliminary concepts was shared with a wide variety of stakeholders. They included 48 leaders from the sport, recreation, and active living sector, 180 Presidents and staff from approximately 110 provincial sport, recreation and active living agencies across Alberta, and members of the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association, including representatives from municipal recreation departments, Active Living agencies, community recreation practitioners, and academics.

6. ROLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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.

A number of roles are shared and delivery occurs through partnerships. The following outlines the core roles and contributions of these various sectors to recreation, active living and sport in Alberta:

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

- Provide leadership by setting direction through policy development and establishing priorities through legislation, regulation, standards, grant funding, and communicating to Albertans
- Encourage and facilitate intersectoral collaboration and community engagement.
- Recognize and celebrate community leaders and their accomplishments

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
- Develop and circulate nationally, promotional and resource materials which will encourage individuals to participate in recreation, active living and sport activities

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS

- Ensure availability of a broad range of recreation, active living and sport opportunities
- Facilitate local development through municipal policy, bylaws, as well as program design and delivery
- Provide incentives and services to these programs
- Coordinate and develop the best use of community resources
- Build, operate, and maintain infrastructure/facilities

FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS SETTLEMENT GOVERNMENTS

- Facilitate affordable and accessible opportunities for recreation, active living and sport
- Plan, build, and operate infrastructure that 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

- Delivery of recreation, sport, and physical activity programs
- Development of community leadership capacity
- Provide leadership and coordination to local community events and festivals

EDUCATION

- Establishing policies that support recreation, active living and sport
- Deliver Physical Education, Physical Activity and Wellness oriented curriculum
- Operate and maintain facilities

POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

- Research
- Development of policies that support recreation, active living and sport
- Program design and delivery
- Teach and train future professionals
- Build, operate, and maintain infrastructure/facilities

PRIVATE SECTOR

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

7. ACTIVE ALBERTA POLICY

A. Vision

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

B. Outcomes

The Alberta Government contributes to recreation, active living and sport directly, and through partnerships with the federal government, Alberta's municipalities, Aboriginal 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 outcomes:

1. Albertans are healthier through recreation, active living and sport.

We will know this outcome has been achieved, if in ten years . . .

- More Albertans experience improved physical and mental health through integrating physical activity into their daily lives.
- Levels of obesity, overweight and sedentary lifestyles are reduced.
- 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.

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

We will know this outcome has been achieved, if in ten years . . .

- Communities are designed and developed to support recreation, active living and sport where people live, learn, work and play.
- High levels of volunteerism are supported within communities through the recreation, active living and sport sector.
- Community leaders are developed through participation in recreation, active living and sport.
- Communities benefit from the economic impacts of recreation, active living and sport, including job creation and visitor attraction

3. Albertans have opportunities to enjoy their natural heritage.

We will know this outcome has been achieved, if in ten years . . .

- Alberta's parks and recreation areas are protected yet accessible so that all Albertans, and future generations, will be able to benefit from them.
- 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.

4. Albertans access recreation, active living and sport opportunities through a coordinated and sustainable system.

We will know this outcome has been achieved, if in ten years . . .

- The provincial recreation, active living and sport sector collaborates in a strategic and integrated partnership with government, stakeholders and communities to achieve shared outcomes.
- The Government of Alberta adopts an integrated approach to wellness through collaboration among all ministries whose mandates have an impact on wellness.

C. Strategies and Priority Actions

Each of these strategies is related to at least one of the outcomes and some of them support several outcomes.

STRATEGY 1: ACTIVE ALBERTANS

Priority Actions	2010-12 Short-term	2013-15 Medium-term	2016-20 Long-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the development of programs that facilitate participation in physical activity in less active populations. 	☑	☑	☑
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to develop innovative, accessible after school programs that link community recreation programs and services to schools. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh Alberta's Sport Plan to incorporate new research and current best practices. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with partners, encourage and improve opportunities for children to engage in high quality, free, and creative play. 		☑	☑
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with partners, increase levels of physical activity across the lifespan by sharing knowledge, supporting skill development and encouraging participation opportunities. 	☑	☑	☑
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through effective communication, including social marketing, increase awareness among all Albertans about how and where to be physically active. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage school communities to adopt a comprehensive school health approach to promote healthy, active living. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the integration of the Canadian Sport for Life model into the education, recreation, active living, and sport development systems. 	☑	☑	

STRATEGY 2: ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Priority Actions	2010-12 Short-term	2013-15 Medium-term	2016-20 Long-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for tourism development based on sport event hosting (e.g. games, tournaments). 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to support increased recreation, active living and sport in the school, worksite and seniors housing settings. 		☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with voluntary sector agencies, identify, recruit, nurture and recognize volunteers in the recreation, active living and sport sector. 		☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support leadership training programs for community recreation, active living and sport leaders. Programs should be designed to ensure leaders have the core competencies they need to deal with changing demands in recreation. 		☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a long term plan to upgrade and develop accessible recreation and parks infrastructure. 		☑	☑
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to identify, share and implement best practices in land use and transportation planning that facilitate active transportation (walking, cycling). 			☑

STRATEGY 3: ACTIVE OUTDOORS

Priority Actions	2010-12 Short-term	2013-15 Medium-term	2016-20 Long-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage partners to develop programs and services to connect children with nature by providing opportunities for children to play and learn in a natural environment. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the development of education and stewardship programs to improve environmental literacy. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Plan for Parks to guide long term planning and ensure our parks are protected yet accessible for participation in recreation, active living and sport activities. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a provincial recreation trails strategy. 		☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 open spaces. 		☑	

STRATEGY 4: AN ACTIVE SYSTEM

Priority Actions	2010-12 Short-term	2013-15 Medium-term	2016-20 Long-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of Alberta funding will be guided by an assessment of how well the outcomes of this policy are being achieved. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research on the benefits of recreation, active living and sport will be supported and shared to inform program design and delivery. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a mechanism to administer progress toward policy outcomes and identify and communicate the roles and responsibilities for all partners. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In alignment with Land-use Framework Regional Plans, work with partners to identify regional recreation demands and trends. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve coordination and alignment of government programs and services related to increasing recreation, active living and sport. 	☑		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote tourism based recreation, active living and sport opportunities (e.g. ecotourism, adventure tourism). 	☑	☑	☑
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best practices for program design and delivery are identified and shared with partners. 	☑	☑	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create regional recreation/tourism inventories which identify valuable landscape features for recreation opportunities that will inform strategic planning. 		☑	☑

D. Accountability

The Alberta Government will develop measures so Albertans can track the progress of the Active Alberta and its implementation. The successful achievement of the policy outcomes is dependent on effective collaboration across government as well as among and between Alberta's municipalities, Aboriginal communities, post-secondary institutions, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. As we collectively pursue these outcomes, the following are examples of some of the measures that may be used:

OUTCOMES	EXAMPLES OF MEASURES THAT MAY BE USED
1 Albertans are healthier through recreation, active living and sport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of adults and children who participate in recreation, active living and sport • Percentage of adults and children who are overweight or obese • Increased participation in recreation, active living and sport by Albertans in target groups (e.g. Aboriginal people, women, recent immigrants, older adults, persons with disabilities) • Increase in quality daily physical activity in schools • Increased number of innovative, accessible after school programs
2 Alberta communities are active, creative, sustainable, safe and inclusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices in land use and transportation planning related to active transportation are identified and shared • Increased physical activity at targeted locations such as worksites, schools, and seniors housing • Percentage of leaders in the recreation, active living and sport sector that are recruited and supported • Percentage of volunteers in the recreation, active living and sport sector that are recruited and supported
3 Albertans have opportunities to enjoy their natural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional plans identify strategies to ensure recreational needs are met in environmentally sustainable ways • A provincial trails strategy is developed • Programs are developed to connect children with nature • Plan for Parks is implemented
4 Albertans access physical activity opportunities through a coordinated and sustainable system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Alberta funding for the recreation, active living and sport sector is guided by how well the outcomes of this policy are being achieved • Regional recreation/tourism inventories are created which identify valuable landscape features and inform strategic planning • An inventory of Government of Alberta funding for wellness is created and shared • Alberta's Sport Plan is updated

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 2008, the Plan for Parks sets out a ten year planning framework to describe how decisions will be made regarding Alberta's parks. It sets out a vision, outcomes, and action strategies that will be pursued over the next ten years to ensure Alberta's parks are properly managed. Because of 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.

Safe Communities Initiative

The Initiative is a partnership of nine ministries of the Government of Alberta working with police, community groups, municipalities, businesses, and social agencies. Its aim is to find long term solutions to crime and improve the safety of Alberta communities. Since one of the barriers to active living is 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, which is a 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 the development of the tourism sector in Alberta. It identifies 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 the province 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 as well as benefiting 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.

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, multifaceted 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.

Aging Population Framework

The Aging Population Framework will identify the Government of Alberta's role in meeting the needs of Alberta's 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.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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 wheeling and 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 below for definition), this model will help to develop a lifelong involvement of Canadians in physical activity and sport participation 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 that produced by the skeletal muscles that results in a substantial increase over resting energy expenditure (Bouchard and Shephard, 1994).

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, and 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, 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”.

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 many 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)