

August 7, 2007

Making Connections and Broadening Horizons The Contribution of Sport and Physical Activity to Canada – Next Steps

June 21st Senior Policy leaders Follow-up to Sport and Physical Activity Policy Interchange

Outcomes in Brief...

- Terrific energy, and high levels of support for moving the process forward.
- Sport and physical activity present a significant opportunity and platform at the community level, but we need to learn how to work better together.
- We want to *enable sport as a social institution*, but we want to *focus on the sport AND physical activity as an instrument to achieve other objectives*.
- Future objective should include: mapping out policy connections, developing a common agenda, and picking issues that will resonate.
- Determining the federal role is tough, so horizontal work needs to start across government and broaden to other stakeholders.

Working Together and Moving Forward...Next Steps

- *All participants enthusiastically committed to developing one or several pilot project(s).*
- Senior policy leaders want to reconvene in early September to move forward.

Background - On June 21st, the Public Policy Forum (PPF) hosted a lunch with a small group of senior policy leaders from across sport and physical activity sectors and government departments to follow-up on the May 23rd Sport and Physical Activity Policy Interchange. The purpose of the lunch was to have a relaxed, open discussion about ‘where to go from here’, ‘whether there is a willingness to work and learn together’, and ‘outcomes or processes moving forward’.

The session began with a briefing on the progress made during the May 23rd policy interchange...

- the exploration of policy and people in the sport and physical activity (s&pa) and the public policy worlds;
- the potential contribution of sport and physical activity to Canada;
- the linkages of sport and physical activity to broader policy issues and goals;
- and the strategic opportunity provided by the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver.

The major themes and key messages that came out of the day were also described. They were as follows:

1. “*Blazing the horizontal trail*” – processes and policies to drive horizontal policy;
2. “*Turning knowledge into action*” – research and ‘knowledge mobilization’;
3. “*Community development*” – the contribution s&pa can make to communities;
4. “*Infrastructure and s&pa*” – federal readiness, and involving other sectors;
5. “*Social cohesion and social integration*” – s&pa and vulnerable populations.

For a complete description, see the report on the PPF website at
<http://www.ppforum.ca/common/assets/publications/en/2007751012.pdf>

Outcomes of the June 21st lunch

A central element in the session was the extremely high level of energy, engagement and motivation coming from participants. There was a great deal of support for both the importance of the role sport and physical activity can play in Canada, and for keeping this process moving forward. The conclusions and next steps flowed from this energy.

The session produced broad agreement around a number of conclusions:

- Firstly, sport and physical activity present a significant opportunity and platform at the community level, whether as a link for new Canadians, a setting for skill development, or as a venue for the development of collective values. But we need to learn how to work better together to leverage this potential.
- Secondly, participants drew an important distinction.
 - They defined *Sport as a social institution in its own right*. With a large number of community organizations, and a small amount of government funding...it's a phenomenon that it's happening on it's own. Sport is self-sustaining, requiring only that it be enabled by ensuring the proper conditions are in place (infrastructure, volunteers, etc).
 - At the same time, there was also discussion of *the instrumentality of sport AND physical activity*. In this broader sense, sport and physical activity contributes to a broader policy goal, e.g. social inclusion, health, community development, etc.
 - *Participants agreed that we want to continue to support the former, our focus should be on the latter*. As such, how can sport and physical activity be used as an instrument to achieve other objectives?
- Thirdly, future objectives should include:
 - mapping out connections between s&pa and various policy domains,
 - developing a common agenda of 'increased participation in s&pa' to achieve or support various policy goals, and
 - identifying issues that will resonate.
- Lastly, determining the federal role in multi-jurisdictional policies that touch on sport and physical activity is a challenge, so federal organizations need to begin by building on mutual objectives and work collectively to shape a horizontal approach that includes other stakeholders.

Working together and moving forward – Developing a pilot project

All participants in attendance enthusiastically committed to the development of one or several pilot project(s).

It was agreed that pilot projects are a valuable way of 'learning by doing', the best way to test collaborative concepts in a variety of settings, and a valuable way to demonstrate the connections between sport and physical activity and an array of policy goals.

Next steps

To continue with the momentum and commitment to work together on this, senior policy leaders want to reconvene soon to move forward.

The PPF was asked to convene a subsequent senior policy leaders meeting during either the week of the 4th or the 10th of September to have a more comprehensive discussion about working together on the pilot project(s).

For discussion at the subsequent session:

- ⇒ With such an interest in working together and learning through collaboration, how will we frame the policy considerations (re: issues, audiences, places) and provide focus for the group?
- ⇒ How will we develop a new initiative(s) and/or connect to existing initiatives?
- ⇒ Does a mechanism need to be built or allowed to surface so that we can bring the various leaders and organizations together?

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*The Contribution of Sport and Physical Activity to Canada:
Exploring Common Interests and Making Connections*

Post Event Lunch

June 21, 2007

Ottawa

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