

Mapping Provincial Sport Policy 1997-Present



Examining the data collected in order to establish the provincial-level policy context of sport participation.

The years are grouped into Provincial Government Administrations to gain an understanding of the governing political party priorities.

1997 or Before

Michael Harris-Conservative Majority

A total of 6 PDF documents have been collected. This part of the mapping project helped to contextualize what sport and recreation looked like before the 1998 - 2002 term. These documents range from sports strategies to outlining the landscape of community recreation at the time.



Key Points

- Mike Harris' party platform was the Common Sense Revolution which strongly influenced cutbacks to the public sector, in turn influencing how services from municipalities could be run
- While in the late '70s the federal government was heavily responsible for funding regional and provincial sports initiatives, the growth and development of the administration of sport at the regional or provincial levels were not well researched or understood
- For Provincial Sport Organizations (PSOs) to be eligible for funding, they had to meet the specific conditions and objectives set out in the Strategy for Amateur Sport, and these sports had to represent value to the taxpayer
- The impact of sport on the economy, specifically the tourism industry was outlined at this time
- Sport and recreation was now supported by the Ministry of Tourism
- The relationship between professional and amateur sport: the expectation of professional athletes to support the development of community/amateur sport

1998-2002

Michael Harris-Conservative Majority

A total of 3 documents have been collected that highlight the changes that took place in provincial-municipal relations in Ontario. These documents range from the Municipal Act to the funding that supports arts and culture, sports, and recreation.



Key Points

- 1996-1999; most comprehensive reform of municipal government since 1849
- 1998 Local Services Realignment: Some programs previously administered by the province have been fully transferred and are now being funded and administered exclusively at the local level
- No increased support from the provincial government for this increased responsibility
- Municipalities become more reliant on revenue from their sources such as property tax and user fees because provincial transfers decreased
- The new Municipal Act 2001 gave municipalities greater autonomy by providing them with a broader permissive policy framework to a greater sphere of jurisdictions including recreation, culture, parks, and heritage.

2002-2006

Dalton McGuinty-Liberal Majority

A total of 9 documents and 8 websites have been collected outlining the changes and transitions with McGuinty as premier in 2003. McGuinty government emphasized the link between sport and health as opposed to business and tourism. The documents collected range from the Ontario Sports Action Plan and the Active2010 strategy to funding breakdowns and McGuinty's strategies for physical activity promotion.



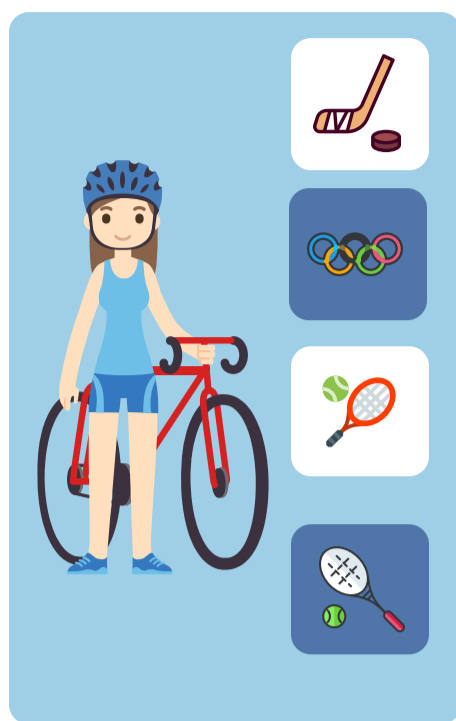
Key Points

- The direction of sport was transferred from the Ministry of Tourism to the newly created Ministry of Health Promotion
- More specific sports action plans are being introduced aiming to achieve: enhanced participation, excellence, capacity, and interaction
- Ontario Sports Action Plan and the Active2010 Strategy guided much of the decision making, sports strategies, and funding
- McGuinty government focused more on physical activity and strategies for more community sport and recreation
- Provincial and Federal Governments entered into a bilateral agreement to increase sports participation
- Boosted funding for high-performance athletes and coaches, as well as amateur sport
- More community support for understanding and expanding the sport and tourism sector
- Goals are set to influence a policy development framework in Ontario to increase access to recreation for low-income Ontarians.

2006-2010

Dalton McGuinty- Liberal Majority (In power from 2003-2013)

A total of 14 PDF documents were collected. These range from official provincial budgets, official provincial press releases, provincial funded reports, and policy frameworks.



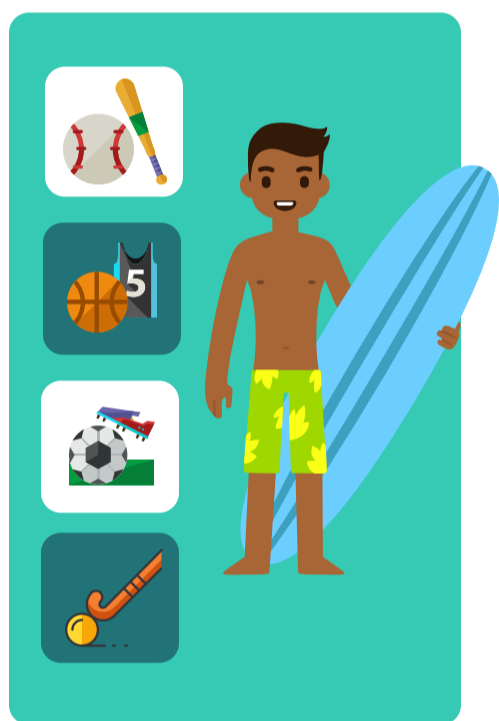
Key Points

- During McGuinty's time, he promised action (i.e., funding, strategies, policies) on **health care**, **education**, and the **environment** in Ontario
- Actions towards the health care sector resulted in the increased funding (i.e., Communities In Action Fund), strategies (i.e., ACTIVE2010), and policies (i.e., Access To Recreation for Ontarians Policy Framework) impacting non-profit organizations that would ultimately enhance opportunities for physical activity and community sport and recreation for Ontarians
- The Ministry of Health Promotion, the Liberal Party, and the Ministry of Tourism, Sport, and Culture were key actors in the attempt of promoting sports participation during this period (i.e., Pan American Games, Rogers Cup Tennis Tournament, Quest for gold Program)
- Towards the end of this timeline, the Federal Government became heavily involved with supporting/funding sport participation as noting the significant role sport plays in leading healthy and active lives
- Municipalities across Ontario experienced difficulties in regards to managing infrastructure replacement and renewal
- McGuinty kept to his promise of taking action on education in Ontario by supporting and funding the community use of schools program which was implicated in the municipal infrastructure difficulties

2010-2014

Kathleen Wynne- Liberal Majority (In power from 2013-2018)

A total of 16 PDF documents were collected. These range from official provincial mandate letters, provincial strategic plans, official provincial press releases, provincial policy statements, and official provincial reports.



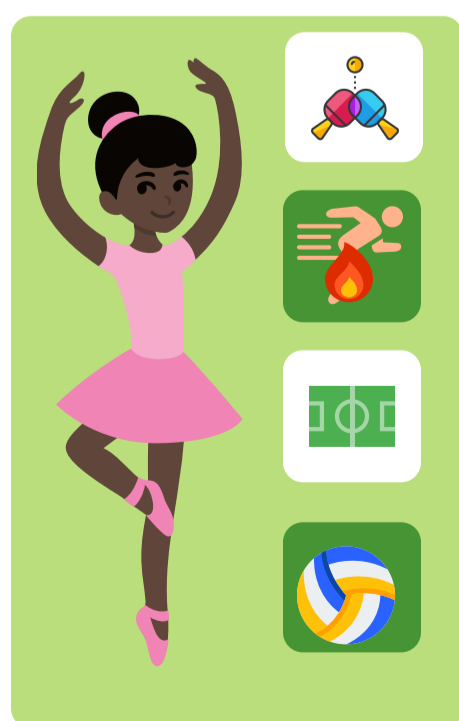
Key Points

- Kathleen Wynne became the province's first woman premier in 2013. Wynne's focus as premier was oriented around **health care systems**, **community wellness**, and **active/healthy lifestyles** for Ontarians
- In aligning with Kathleen Wynne's goals as premier, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport collaborated on many ideas and projects to promote active and healthy lifestyles in Ontario through sport, recreation, and physical activity
- During this time, the role of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport was recognized as important in strengthening and enhancing the economy for businesses across the province of Ontario
- Investing in amateur and youth sport participation became a large priority for the Ontario government and Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and sport (i.e., Healthy Kids Panel, Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, Jumpstart Foundation, The Healthy Kids Strategy)
- From 2010 to 2013, the Ontario Government focused on sports participation and recognition of First Nations communities and Aboriginal youth (i.e., PLAY Program, Jumpstart Foundation)
- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care became very involved with the Ontario Government and Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport in reducing childhood obesity rates through promoting active and healthy lifestyles in Ontario

2014-2018

Kathleen Wynne- Liberal Majority (In Power from 2013-2018)

A total of 17 documents ranging from official provincial policy to municipal strategies relating to sport and recreation, were produced by a range of stakeholders. Rhetoric or theory in many of these documents appears to be towards increasing sports participation which would, in turn, promote the health and well-being of citizens.



Key Points

- A shift of responsibilities for services between different levels of government adversely affected the fiscal sustainability of municipalities
- Balancing the provincial budget is viewed as a top priority
- The reduction in grants from the federal level influenced policy and the course of actions under the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism by placing more of a priority on non-related programs
- Game ON, The Ontario Government's Sport Plan Progress Report provides an update on actions identified in the plan
- The Healthy Kids Community Challenge (HKCC) Impact Evaluation provides insight and recommendations on improving PA outcomes
- Increasing sports participation identified as a goal for the OSCRF
- Only two-sport strategies were identified for municipalities; Ottawa and Toronto; suggesting that only large centers have the capacity to develop and implement
- The legislation created in other ministries has an impact on the delivery of recreation and sports programs

2018-2022

Doug Ford - Conservative Majority

13 documents were collected with the majority heavily discussing COVID-19 impacts and steps for recovery for businesses and organizations. These include documents such as sports action plans, non-partisan reports making recommendations to increase sports participation, program evaluations, and a scholarly article discussing the political priorities of the current government are also included.

Key Points

- High turnover for the Minister of Tourism, Sport and Culture between 2018-2019
- Budget prior to COVID put a person-first perspective on policies/programs/services, highlighting the economic opportunity
- Action Plan for COVID recovery and other programs discusses recovery funding and grant opportunities for the sector
- A literature review serves as a common evidence-based for collaborative policy and practical ideas for action aimed at increasing sports participation
- The Financial Information Return suggests that 98% of recreation services were paid for by municipal revenues
- Municipalities struggling with the impacts of COVID and service delivery
- HKCC Implementation Evaluation identifies factors contributing to successful implementation at the community level for a provincially led program

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- 78 documents total collected
- Policy related to sports participation in Ontario clearly articulated since 1996
- Sport has been politically associated with business, tourism, health promotion, education, and culture
- Ontario relied heavily on federal sports policy for guidance
- Local government and organizations are rarely consulted
- The roles & responsibilities of stakeholders are not clear
- In theory policy/funding aim to increase sport participation however, implementation processes are not clear
- Successful implementation is related to municipalities, schools, and local organizations
- Municipalities generally take a business approach to service delivery therefore may not be conducive to promoting sports participation specifically for diverse populations
- Very few sports policies at the local level

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