



## **The results are in and the message is clear—amateur sport makes a substantial impact on Calgary’s economy.**

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A recent report on *The Economic Significance of Amateur Sport In the City of Calgary in 2002* states: “Calgary’s gross municipal sport product in 2002 totaled \$728.9 million. The portion of Calgary’s gross domestic product that resulted from these initial expenditures amounted to \$477.8 million.”

“The results are huge!” says Daryl Leinweber, Chair of the Calgary Sport Council. “Calgary is a young, vibrant city and this report refers to how activity, and being active, can generate an incredible economic impact.”

“The report gives credence to the considerable contribution amateur sport has on Calgary’s economy,” says Dale Henwood, President of the Canadian Sport Centre Calgary and Chair of Sport Alberta. “If you look at the findings from an economic standpoint, the results are very significant. The sport community has said this for years, now when we advocate for sport we have real, defensible evidence to back up our claim and justify investment.”

The study, presented to the City of Calgary Civic Sport Policy Steering Committee by Caminata Consulting, found:

- The amateur sport sector accounted for \$309.9 million in labor income in Calgary in 2002, which translates into approximately 11,537 jobs.
- The overall taxation revenue in Calgary resulting from amateur sport-related spending in Calgary totaled \$189.2 million. This includes \$123.0 million in federal taxation revenues, \$47.5 million in provincial taxes and \$18.7 million in municipal tax.
- Based on the economic impact statement, amateur sport in Calgary contributed 1.2% to the city’s gross domestic product and 1.8% to employment in 2002.
- A selected sample of 59 Calgary sport groups and event organizers reported that 728,322 sport tourist visitor nights resulted from their hosting events in 2002. These visitors spent an estimated \$47.6 million in the Calgary economy. Since there are approximately 250 amateur sport groups in the city, this figure represents only a portion of the total sport tourism in Calgary in 2002.

Another significant finding is the value of volunteer contribution. The study estimated \$73.7 million in volunteer contributions in 2002. However, Henwood says quantifying volunteer contribution is difficult: “Volunteers are the backbone of the sport community—you can’t put a dollar figure on what they do. The sport sector has the largest volunteer sector in Canada, bigger than recreation, arts or churches.”

The study explains that it did not take into account the wide range of social benefits of amateur sport: “These benefits include enhanced health and reduced health care costs; improved sense of well-being

among participants, reduced incidence of crime and other social problems; increased local and national pride felt by a community in which a successful athlete or team resides; and community legacy benefits from hosting major events.”

“The report offers a better appreciation of the value and benefits in economic terms and this is important for some people,” says Henwood. “For the sport community, the bottom line is not our top priority. It doesn't quantify health, happiness, and how you feel about yourself, your city and your country. These issues are critical, but they are not as easy to quantify.”

“The uniqueness of Calgary is the magnitude of Olympic athletes here and how that impacts amateur sport in terms of role models,” says Leinweber. “We have more carded athletes in Calgary than any one city in the world. Amateur sport has a huge legacy here because kids grow up to see it—that's where the true value of sport is in Calgary.”

The report clearly shows Calgary's amateur sport industry is an economic driver, both in terms of economic output and employment effects. And this is a positive step for the future of amateur sport in Calgary.

“From a strictly economic perspective, the report shows that minimum investment in sport has unbelievable returns back to the economy,” says Henwood. “This is an acceptable and well-respected economic model. Now we can convince people—decision makers in government, the corporate sector and citizens—that investment in sport brings a multiple-fold return.”

“The millions generated by amateur sport in Calgary clearly indicate a profound impact. A lot of our amateur sport success is a legacy of the Winter Olympics—COP and the Olympic Oval are two examples—imagine what we could do if we invested in summer sport.

“Now we have the numbers to back what we've always believed. Our next step is to create a Civic Sport Policy that will address the economic benefits of amateur sport.”

*\*The results of this study were presented in the year 2005. However, the year 2002 was selected for analysis as given the variety of sources that were used in compiling the initial amateur sport-related expenditures, this is the most recent year for which complete data were available.*

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