



2018 – 2021 Strategic Priorities





Message from the President and CEO

Athletics Ontario engaged its member clubs, athletes, coaches, technical officials, and other key stakeholders to create these strategic priorities in order to lead and guide the sport of athletics in Ontario. In developing these priorities, we have reviewed and discussed the feedback and input received, reaffirmed our direction as an organization and identified areas from the previous plan (2014 - 2018) that we needed to amend in order to make these priorities relevant for this four-year cycle.

The Association continues to evolve as we strengthen its leadership, financial position, services, programs and resources. We are confident in our abilities to tackle challenges as they arise and welcome new opportunities in 2018 - 2021.

The Board and management are mindful of its responsibilities at the provincial level, to lead the sport from grassroots to the elite levels and beyond. To do so, we have identified four (4) pillars that form the basis of these Priorities: (1) **PARTICIPATION**; (2) **SPORT DEVELOPMENT**; (3) **COMPETITION**; and (4) **INFRASTRUCTURE**.

Our **PARTICIPATION** pillar, which forms an integral part of our overall Strategic Priorities, focuses on five (5) areas:

- Grassroots
- Masters athletes (30+)
- Road, Trail & other new athletic events
- Non-competitive
- Underrepresented groups

Within the **SPORT DEVELOPMENT** pillar we will improve upon our Coaching Development Program and focus on expanding the reach of our Technical Officials Development Program.

In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport (MTCS), the Canadian Sport Institute of Ontario (CSIO) and Athletics Canada (AC), we have aligned closely to provide enhance financial support and services for our talented athletes. Ontario athlete performances on the national and international stage demonstrate the importance of our development programs. To ensure our athletes continue to develop and realize their goals, we will be enhancing our athlete development model and expanding it to encompass grassroots participants.

COMPETITION is an essential part of our sport from youth programs and school meets through to our Provincial Championships and local national and international events. We will continue to partner with or directly deliver enhanced competitions, which allow athletes at all levels to reach their full potential.

Under **INFRASTRUCTURE**, we are developing and embarking on a multiyear plan to address club capacity, athlete training and competition venues, and effective business practices for long-term sustainability of our sport in Ontario.

As a not-for-profit AO is very cognizant of the need to adopt best-practice processes, manage our sport as effectively as possible, and undertake revenue diversification initiatives in order to deliver a healthy and sustainable sport. Above all, we must have a willingness to work together to achieve these ends.

Our vision is to make athletics the sport of choice in the province of Ontario. We look forward to working with our membership, our key stakeholders, and partners, in meeting our challenges and realizing the utmost value with new opportunities in this new cycle.



Lisa Ferdinand
President & Chair



Paul Osland
Chief Executive Officer

Athletics Ontario

Athletics Ontario is the recognized sport governing body for athletics in Ontario. It is a not-for-profit organization that is athlete-centered, volunteer-based, club-structured and coach-driven. AO is a member of Athletics Canada and works in partnership with other provincial member associations across Canada.



Athletics Ontario provides competition structures and programs from grassroots to elite levels and beyond and operates under an affiliated member club system. Affiliate member clubs and several specialist groups and organizations; provide services to registered participants, including access to training venues, coaching, development opportunities and social activities.

In addition, AO provides developmental opportunities for athletes, coaches, and technical officials from beginners to high performance.

There is currently a membership base of:

- 4510 athletes in 126 clubs,
- 493 registered coaches,
- 78 associates,
- 174 technical officials, as well as
- hundreds of volunteers supporting our sport.

Additionally, we had approximately 175,000 participants in grassroots programming and 150,000 U14 participants in Ontario school competitions.

Introduction

In developing the 2018 - 2021 Priorities, Athletics Ontario is committed to providing leadership, as well as, working with its membership, key funding partners, and other stakeholders within and external to our sport.

As Athletics Ontario continues to move forward, we will need to:

- engage and service new members,
- develop and deliver new programming, and
- provide or make available necessary infrastructure to support our athletes, coaches and technical officials.

AO leadership will work with member clubs, the AO Officials Executive and other athletics organizations and groups to provide a strong provincial participation strategy. At the same time it is necessary to break down any barriers in communication and information delivery, and to address and embrace the values and principles of a united sport.

Our **SPORT DEVELOPMENT** pillar will focus on developing talent and skills in athletes and coaches for the 2021 Canada Summer Games, with long term planning for elevating them to the national carding system and international competition arena (i.e., Pan Am, Commonwealth Games, and Olympics Games and world Championships).

With strong Board leadership, following clear operating plans, streamlined delivery of development and competition models, and minimal duplication among the athletics community in Ontario, we are confident that we can produce an inclusive and integrated system for athletes, coaches, technical officials, volunteers and administrators.

Athletics Ontario's business model needs a structured revenue diversification plan and business development strategy, which reflects the true value of our assets, in order to provide tangible financial benefits and growth for the sport of athletics and the development of its members. These and other programs and initiatives undertaken by AO will be supported by an effective communications strategy and marketing plan.



Purpose, Mission, Vision, Values

“**Athletics**” is defined as “all athletics, including, but not restricted to, track and field, running, jumping, throwing, cross country, race walking, road running, ultra running and competitive athletics held under the auspices of Athletics Canada.”

PURPOSE

The objectives of Athletics Ontario are to:

- Promote physical, emotional and mental well-being;
- Promote athletics;
- Support and assist athletes in their development;
- Develop courses of instruction for/certification of coaches and officials; and
- Promote and ensure competent delivery of athlete-centre recreational and competitive athletics programs in Ontario through member clubs and athletics communities.

VALUES

Athletics Ontario values include:

- Health and fitness through sports and throughout life
- Commitment to excellence and the highest standards of performance by athletes at all age levels
- Integrity, loyalty, fair play, sportsmanship, honesty, commitment, dedication, patience, mutual respect and cooperation
- Inclusiveness, accessibility and affordability in participation
- Individual development and measurable achievement encouraged by administrators, coaches, officials and staff committed to AO values
- High ethical and moral standards and practices in athletics and the governance of athletics
- Prudent, transparent stewardship that demonstrates value for the investment of fiscal and human resources.



VISION

Athletics is the sport of choice in the province of Ontario.

MISSION

Promote the sport of Athletics in the province of Ontario and contribute to the health and wellness of all participants through long-term athlete-centered development.

Pillars & Foundation

Vision

*Athletics is **the** sport of choice in the Province of Ontario*

Mission

Promote the sport of **Athletics** in the Province of Ontario and Contribute to the **health and wellness of all participants** through **long-term athlete-centered development**.

Sport Development

- Athlete Development
- Coaching Education
- Officials Development

Participation

- Masters Athletes
- Road, Trail & Other new athletic events
- Non-Competitive
- Under-represented groups

Competitions

- Provincial Championships
- Elite Competitions
- Sanctioned Events

Infrastructure

- Organization Effectiveness
- Facilities
- Financial Stability

Leadership

- Governance
- Communication
- Culture

2018 – 2021 Strategic Priorities: Pillars

The four (4) Pillars of the 2018 - 2021 Strategic Priorities summarises our direction for the next four-years. Leadership and a strong foundation (through governance, communications and organizational capacity) will facilitate the implementation of these Priorities.

The pillars are defined as follows:

- **SPORT DEVELOPMENT** - stable and unified programs for athletes, coaches and technical officials that provide opportunities for growth, technical and professional development, including talent identification for athletes, support and resources leading to the national carding system and international success
- **PARTICIPATION** - Increase participation in athletics from grassroots, masters, road, trail & snowshoe groups as well as non-competitive and underrepresented groups through delivering of events and programs that support that encourage participation at every level across the sport
- **COMPETITION** - that enhance participation and performance opportunities for the development of athletes, coaches and technical officials at all levels of the sport
- **INFRASTRUCTURE** - a stable and viable organisation through effective business practices, adequate training and competition venues, and sound financial management to increase the value of the sport



Leadership: Foundation

Governance

- Provide sound governance and strong leadership in guiding the sport
- Ensure a focus on strategic planning and policy development, and ensure alignment of the plans and policies of Athletics Ontario and Member Associations
- Develop further the strategic relationships with other bodies and government agencies
- Provide advocacy to Government (Federal, Provincial, Local) in areas such as health, community services and education promoting the benefits of athletics and the need for engagement within their areas of influence
- Successful delivery of the goals and objectives of the strategic plan, and alignment of Athletics Ontario and Member Clubs plans and policies
- A provincial approach to strategic direction and policy development and implementation

Communication

- Foster a strong working relationship among the stakeholders that will ensure buy-in by all to a shared vision in which the best interests of the sport define the key criteria in decision making
- Enhance stakeholder relationships through effective communication and close engagement
- Ensure effective engagement and regular two-way communication between Athletics Ontario, Member Associations and key stakeholders

Culture

- Unified leadership at all levels fostering and encouraging participation and promoting excellence in performance
- Best practice management structures providing accountability and transparency
- The overall Athletics brand to be regarded as strong, vibrant and successful
- As stewards of the sport Athletics Ontario and Member Clubs are to display strong leadership
- To be inclusive of all stakeholders and respect the tradition and history of the sport



Strategic Initiatives & 2021 Outcomes

Strategic Focus	Actions	2021 Outcomes
Pillar #1 – Sport Development		
Athlete Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure communication with athletes is regular and transparent • Develop Ontario Provincial Team program and High Performance Plan • Provide opportunities for elementary and secondary school kids to participate in AO events • Establish an International high-performance competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased rate of transition to national carding programs • Growth within U14 and U17 age groups • Annual international High-performance event held in Ontario
Coaching Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support coaching development in alignment with valued LTAD Model • Offer a wide array of professional development opportunities in various delivery formats • Develop partnerships with educational institutions both locally, and regionally, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coordination and integration with NCCP Coaching and Mentorship program • Increased professional development opportunities • Establish educational reach throughout province
Officials Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Officials development within LTOD (Long Term Officials Development) principles • Provide strong mentorship program and professional development clinics for volunteers • Research and pilot new methods of instruction, evaluation and integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased support provided for pathway • Enhanced mentorship and development programs created • Implemented new methods for officials training

Pillar #2 – Participation		
Grassroots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish partnerships with Minor Track Association • Develop partnership with elementary schools • Increase quality of grassroots programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased quality of and numbers within grassroots programs including clubs & school competitions • Increased dual membership #'s and transfer rates • Integrated athletics coaching education for school teachers
Masters athletes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish formal partnership with Ontario Masters Athletics Association • Coordinate and deliver masters events • Enhance services offered to Masters group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of Master's membership • Successful delivery of Masters events and services
Road, Trail and Snowshoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance sanction process for Road & establish Trail and other recreational events • Partner with Snowshoe Canada for combined membership opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of membership within the Road & Trail categories • New Snowshoe memberships established
Non-competitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop insurance program for non-competitive recreational athletes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased recreational membership
Underrepresented Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for Inclusion in AO events or assistance with special events • Development of Girls-in-sport program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of underrepresented athletes and coaches participating in AO programs



Strategic Initiatives & 2021 Outcomes *(continued)*

Strategic Focus	Actions	2021 Outcomes
Pillar # 3 – Competition		
Provincial Championships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure competition programs support participation, growth and talent development for athletes, coaches and technical officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered Championship competition program to meet the needs of athletes, coaches and officials
Elite Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement International elite competition opportunities within the Province of Ontario 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented elite competition with AC & member support
Sanctioned events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanction a range of competitions across ON that allow athletes to participate at their desired level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided a competition structure to support athlete growth, talent ID and development

Pillar #4 – Infrastructure		
Organizational Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a quality management structure and support system for staff Ensure adequate technology and processes are available to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective and efficient staff with required skills in place Work structure identified and implemented
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a multiyear strategy for enhancing and upgrading existing ON athletic facilities Establish a working group to develop a plan for construction of new facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facility upgrade plan established and engagement begun New facility plan developed and presented to Board for next stage
Financial Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain sustainable budgets that support strategic & operational planning Implement a revenue diversity plan Establish a marketing & communication strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented sustainable year-over-year budgets Increased revenue diversification Increased sponsorship and partnership opportunities

Foundation - Leadership		
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong policies and process in place Effective board governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained focus on strategic priorities and policy development, and ensured alignment of supporting plans and policies Ensured successful delivery of the goals within the strategic priorities
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve 2-way communication between members, stakeholders and partners Ensure quality of social media is enhanced to improve our reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced stakeholder relationships through effective engagement and regular communication Quality social media program implemented
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture of collaboration, cooperation and high integrity in everything we do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unified cooperation and collaboration at all level

Monitoring and Support

The 2018 - 2021 Strategic Priorities will be:

- monitored regularly as part of the agenda at each Board meeting; and
- formally reviewed annually and adjusted, if required, in response to a changing sport environment or new opportunities

These Strategic Priorities are underpinned by detailed plans that will ensure accountability and a focus on successful outcomes. This includes an annual operational plan tied to our fiscal budget, an Ontario High Performance Plan, and Marketing and Communication Plans.

AO management and staff will develop the supporting operational plans outlining tasks and activities, timelines, key performance indicators and resources required.

Athletics Ontario will ensure its committees and working groups, operating structure and descriptions reflect the goals, priorities and success indicators of these Strategic Priorities.

In addition, Athletics Ontario will seek to develop partnerships with other athletics organizations and associations to better align AO's goals, roles and responsibilities, resources and identify indicators for delivering these goals in key areas of our Strategic Priorities.



Ontario Summer Games: London 2018





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