



BASKETBALL DEVELOPMENT PLAN





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Particular thanks to the members of the Basketball Reference Group, the PFR staff team, representatives from other City divisions, as well as those stakeholders who participated in consultations, and all those who responded to the online surveys.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Introduction

The Basketball Development Plan was undertaken by Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR), at the direction of City Council, to determine the best ways to support and build the capacity of Toronto's community-based basketball providers. The plan is informed by the principles of quality, capacity building, inclusion, equitable access and sustained engagement.

The involvement of community partners through the Basketball Reference Group (BRG) was central to the plan development. Members were selected based on their involvement in Toronto basketball. The group advised PFR in all phases of plan development including research and community engagement, analysis of findings, and the identification of thematic areas for focus.

The Basketball Development Plan engagement strategy included a resident survey with a focus on youth participation, a stakeholder survey sent to PFR basketball permit holders and cascaded through the BRG, and a series of stakeholder consultations held across the city.

Basketball in Toronto

Stakeholders strongly agreed that basketball had dramatically increased in popularity with residents over the past 20 years and that further increases are anticipated. While basketball is one of the most attractive team sports to Canadian children and youth, it is even more popular with female and newcomer residents in these age categories. These groups traditionally have much lower participation rates in sport, making basketball an important opportunity to increase female and newcomer participation in community sport. Similarly, participation rates in Parasport programs are significantly lower than those in able-bodied sports. Wheelchair basketball is the most popular team sport for people with disabilities in Ontario; providing appropriate opportunities to participate in wheelchair basketball is integral to increasing over all participation in Parasport programs.

Toronto's Community Basketball Network

Through the Community Recreation Branch of PFR, the City of Toronto provided almost 11,000 drop-in hours of indoor-court access and delivered 725 programs to over 12,000 registrants in 2015. Registrants in PFR basketball programs are predominantly children (6 to 12 years) or youth (13 to 24 years), and are mostly male (80%). Through the Welcome Policy and Community Centres Where Programs Are Free, 60% of these program registrations were subsidized or provided at no cost to residents. Additionally, PFR supports the community basketball programming delivered by other organizations through almost 7,000 hours of basketball permits in 2015.

The BRG, based on the results of the consultation process, found that the increasing popularity of basketball is reflected by an increasing number of community based program providers. Due to its rapid expansion, this network of organizations is informally structured and lacking clear leadership. The resulting disconnection limits the capacity to collectively address issues such as program standards and best practices.

The Toronto community-based basketball network is made up of many organizations that deliver programs and/or operate facilities that allow for recreational play throughout the city. The most common programs survey respondents participated in were delivered by PFR, schools and Ontario Basketball Association (OBA) affiliated clubs. Other program providers referenced include multi-service providers (i.e. YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs) as well as cultural and faith-based organizations.

Future Opportunities for the Toronto Community Basketball Network

Two recent events are expected to directly impact the future landscape of community-based basketball in Toronto. The OBA recently completed the first year of programming for the Ontario Basketball League. The majority of participants were from Toronto and 36% of players were female. Canada Basketball has developed a club excellence framework that recommends organizational and program standards for basketball providers. It is scheduled to launch to community sports organizations in fall 2016.

Basketball Development Plan Recommendations

Through an analysis of the plan research and engagement findings, the BRG identified three thematic areas of focus for the plan recommendations.

Program Quality:

- Increase the number of qualified community basketball coaches in Toronto by continuing to deliver the Let's Get Coaching! program
- Establish quality standards for introductory basketball programs through a standardized Learn-to-Play curriculum
- Support community basketball organizations' capacity to provide quality programs by sharing this curriculum

Build Capacity:

- Increase the connectivity of Toronto's community basketball network by creating networking as well as information and resource sharing opportunities

Gaps in Service:

- Create an entry point into community basketball for youth with minimal or no experience in the sport by establishing an introductory basketball program for youth
- Increase participation in wheelchair basketball by partnering with the Ontario Wheelchair Sports Association (OWSA) to establish a new drop in program
- Apply the expertise and research findings of the Toronto Sports Council (TSC) to identify strategies that advance female participation in sport through community basketball
- Align the findings of the Basketball Development Plan with the other divisional plans currently in progress (i.e. Facilities Master Plan, City of Toronto Sport Plan)



Realizing Success

The implementation of the Basketball Development Plan over the next five years will promote the availability of quality and accessible opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities. This will be achieved by introducing an opportunity for new youth players, increasing participation by underrepresented groups such as female players, creating a standardized 'Learn-to-Play' curriculum for all PFR introductory programs (including sharing it with other program providers), and strengthening the community basketball network through facilitating integration and communication.

2. INTRODUCTION



Community sport helps build strong and healthy communities by creating opportunities for integration and inclusion, as well as by providing residents with opportunities to benefit from physical activity and sport participation. The current and growing popularity of basketball in Toronto, in combination with the relatively low costs associated with player equipment, makes it an effective means to increase participation in and engage residents through community sport.

2.1 Basketball Development Plan Purpose

The Basketball Development Plan was undertaken to determine the best ways to support and build the capacity of Toronto's network of community-based basketball providers. These organizations share, not just enthusiasm for and dedication to the sport, but a common vision of accessible and appropriate opportunities for all interested residents to participate. This plan establishes strategies for Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PFR) and its community partners to improve the quality and increase the capacity of the community basketball network that serves the recreational needs of Toronto residents.

2.2 Origins of the Basketball Development Plan

At its meeting on August 25, 2014, through item EX44.3, City Council directed the General Manager of PFR to work with community stakeholders to create a basketball development program.

This directive reflects the perceptions of community basketball stakeholders that there is an increased interest in basketball by Toronto residents and a corresponding increased need for quality, accessible community basketball programming. This was confirmed through consultations in which 66% of respondents to the resident survey did not think there were enough community basketball programs and opportunities to meet their needs.

2.3 Alignment with other PFR Priorities

Advancing the interests of the community basketball network and its participants through the Basketball Development Plan aligns with several other PFR plans and strategies:

- The Recreation Service Plan 2013-2017 provides guidelines for the delivery of recreation program and services, including basketball programs. It outlines the role that the City plays in meeting the recreation needs of Torontonians.
- The Youth Recreation Engagement Strategy is an appendix to the Recreation Service Plan and confirms youth as a priority area of service. The strategy is founded on the understanding that engaging more youth in recreation is an essential step in the development of healthy communities. Lack of the required skills or knowledge specifically is specifically identified as a barrier to youth participation in recreational sport, especially newcomer youth.
- The Facilities Master Plan, currently in development, will establish principles to guide investments in parks and recreation facilities over the next 20 years. This includes the construction, maintenance, and standards of basketball courts in community centres and parks.
- The City of Toronto Sport Plan, also currently in development, will guide the planning and delivery of City recreational sport programs and services over the next five years. The vision of the plan is to improve access, for all Torontonians, to quality sport programs and opportunities in their communities.

Together, the Basketball Development Plan and the above strategies further PFR's contributions to the City of Toronto's strategic goals to 'Strengthen Neighbourhoods,' 'Enhance the City's Quality of Life' and 'Advance Toronto's Motto 'Diversity our Strength.'

2.4 Basketball Development Plan Methodology

PFR service planning is informed through public engagement and stakeholder consultation as well as research and development. These processes ensure that appropriate priorities, or thematic areas, guide programming decisions to meet the current and future needs of residents.

Guiding Principles

The following principles, approved by City Council in the context of the Recreation Service Plan, direct the Basketball Development Plan:

- Quality — Providing high quality programming to enhance the health, quality of life and wellbeing of residents.

- Equitable access — Providing equitable access on a geographic and demographic basis for all residents of Toronto.

- Sustained engagement — Ensuring sustained, meaningful engagement in all aspects of service planning and delivery.

- Capacity building — Providing programming that is of social, economic and physical benefit to all participants and that creates a sense of community, belonging and vitality.

- Inclusion — Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to access and participate in programs and services that are planned, delivered and managed in a way that recognizes diversity and encourages participation of marginalized and racialized people and groups.

Basketball Reference Group

City Council's directive to create a Basketball Development Plan specified that PFR work with community partners to develop basketball in Toronto. PFR established a Basketball Reference Group (BRG) to provide advice to the Director of Community Recreation and Branch staff. Members brought a diverse range of perspectives, knowledge and expertise to the plan. Group members included:

- Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Toronto
- Canada Basketball
- MLSE Foundation
- Ontario Basketball Association (OBA)
- Ontario Wheelchair Sports Association (OWSA)
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
- Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto
- The 519 Community Centre
- Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB)
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC)
- Toronto District School Board (TDSB)

The BRG guided the plan development process towards shared objectives. Their contributions included:

- Advising PFR on the project's comprehensive and consensus-driven consultation with stakeholders by identifying relevant stakeholders, recommending the best methods for engagement and serving as a connection to them
- Contributing to the review and analysis of project findings to identify thematic areas of focus for improvement, including identifying gaps in service, barriers to participation, and partnership opportunities
- Providing recommendations on the role of PFR in addressing these issues and supporting the Toronto community-based basketball network

Community Engagement

To ensure that the Basketball Development Plan accurately reflects the needs of Toronto's community basketball network and program participants, recommendations were informed by extensive community engagement that included consultation with Toronto residents and other community basketball stakeholders.

Community Basketball Stakeholders

In 2015 PFR conducted a Community Basketball Stakeholder Survey. It was accessible on the City website from November 16, 2015 to April 30, 2017. Questions were designed to gather information from the diverse organizations that deliver community basketball programs to Toronto residents including the scope and needs of their operations. In tandem with this survey, PFR conducted a series of stakeholder consultations across the city. At the request of stakeholders, two additional consultations were held, one to review plan thematic areas and another to review framed recommendations. Almost 100 representatives of community basketball organizations were consulted throughout the plan development process.

What we heard from Community Basketball Stakeholders

Stakeholder survey consultation comments focused on the needs of community basketball organizations in terms of supporting program delivery and sustainability; 25% of comments concerned the supports that organizations were looking for (i.e. facilitating communications, organizational intelligence and accessible coach training), while 30% of comments addressed the facility needs of program providers (i.e. access, permit processes, costs and facility quality).

Community Basketball Resident Survey

A Community Basketball Resident Survey was accessible on the City website from November 16, 2016 to January 30, 2017. The survey link was cascaded through community basketball stakeholders to their members, promoted through PFR social media channels, and emailed directly to PFR program participants. Additionally, hard copies of the survey were distributed and collected at various youth events. We received almost 400 resident survey responses: 86% of respondents participated in community basketball, 55% of respondents were under 19 years of age, and 67% identified as male.

The top three barriers to participation in community basketball identified by respondents were inconvenient scheduling, program costs, and locating information about opportunities. When choosing a community basketball program, respondents indicated that a safe environment, convenient scheduling and facility quality were the most important considerations.

Refer to Appendix 1 for further details on the stakeholder and resident engagement strategies and findings.



Have your say about basketball programs in Toronto

The City is designing a community-based Basketball Development Plan and wants to hear from you.

3. BASKETBALL IN TORONTO



3.1 The Growth of Basketball in Toronto

This year marks the 125th anniversary of the creation of basketball by Canadian Dr. James Naismith. The profile of the sport in Toronto was galvanized with the establishment of the Raptor NBA-franchise in 1995. The first NBA All-Star Game to be hosted outside the U.S. took place in Toronto earlier this year and the Raptors achieved their first 50-win season, proceeding to the Eastern Conference Finals. Additionally, the Canadian Women's team won back-to-back gold medals in 2015, first in Toronto at the Pan Am Games and followed by the FIBA Americas Women's Championship in Edmonton, qualifying for the 2016 Rio Olympic Games.

According to Statistics Canada's Kids' Sports Report, basketball is the third most popular team sport with Canadians age 3 to 17, following soccer and hockey. No specific numbers are available for recreational basketball participation through all program providers in Toronto. However, the BRG and the stakeholders who were consulted in the plan development process, strongly agreed with the perception that basketball has increased in popularity as a recreational sport in Toronto over the past decade. Further, it is anticipated that continued Toronto and Canada basketball successes will inspire even greater interest in the sport at the recreational level.



3.2 Participation in Community Basketball

Benefits of Participation

Participating in basketball provides residents the opportunity to gain the acknowledged benefits of recreation, physical activity and team sport, including but not limited to:

- Enhanced physical and mental health through physical activity
- Personal development through increased confidence as well as the acquisition of leadership and team-building skills
- Social inclusion and community building through reduced isolation and opportunity to develop social networks

While all residents can benefit from participation in community sport, there are specific groups with lower than average rates of participation.

Game ON, the Ontario Government Sport Plan (2016), focuses on the following under-represented groups in sport: women and girls, children in low-income families, people with disabilities, an aging population, aboriginal people, LGBTQ Ontarians, and newcomers to Canada. Research as well as stakeholder and resident consultations, undertaken for the Basketball Development Plan, suggest that basketball was an important means of increasing rates of participation in several of these groups.

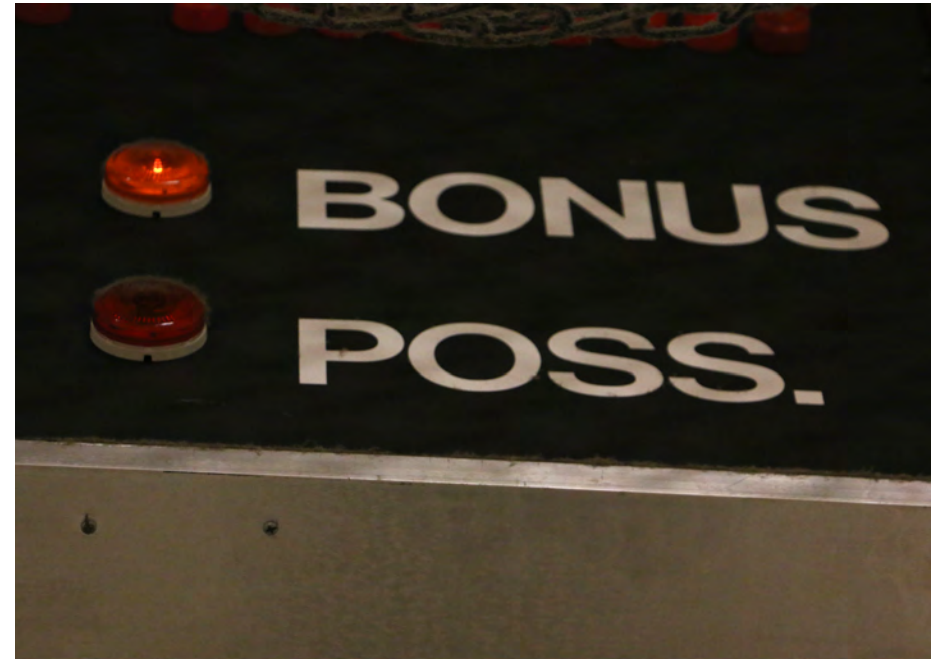
Female and Newcomer Participation

While the relatively low costs for player equipment make community basketball a popular and accessible opportunity to participate in recreational sport, it is an especially important vehicle for female and newcomer participation. According to Stats Canada Kids' Sport Report, rates of participation are lower by a statistically significant amount in these two socio-demographic groups. While 52% of boys 5 to 10 years old and 62% of boys 11 to 14 years regularly participate in sports, rates of participation by girls are 45% and 48% respectively. The rate of participation by Canadian-born children is 55%, while only 32% of children whose parents immigrated after 1995 regularly participate in sport.

However, while basketball is the third most popular team sport with Canadians age 3 to 17, following soccer and hockey, it is even more popular with newcomer and girl participants, ranking second with both these groups.

Wheelchair Basketball Participation

The Canadian Paralympic Committee emphasizes that while the benefits of physical activity are universal for all children, they are even more so for those with disabilities. The participation of children with disabilities in sports and recreational activities promotes inclusion, minimizes deconditioning, optimizes physical functioning, and enhances overall well-being. However, participation rates in Parasport programs are significantly lower than those in able-bodied sports. According to Statistics Canada, approximately 8.5% of Canadians have a physical disability, yet only 3% of Canadians with disabilities participate in regular, organized physical activity. It is estimated that there are 70,000 children with physical disabilities living in Canada (statistics specific to Toronto are currently unavailable). Wheelchair basketball is the most popular team sport for people with disabilities in Ontario; providing appropriate opportunities to participate in wheelchair basketball is integral to increasing over all participation in



Canada's dispersed geography and small population have made it difficult to establish wheelchair basketball teams. As a result, the game has evolved to adopt a policy of reverse-integration, encouraging able-bodied athletes to participate alongside those with physical disabilities. Today, it is one of the most inclusive and diversely integrated sports in Canada. Anybody can participate regardless of ability, age, or gender. Club teams are often comprised of male and female athletes with and without disabilities from a wide range of ages.

3.3 Toronto's Community Basketball Network

Basketball Programs Delivered by PFR

PFR contributes to Toronto's quality of life by promoting and enhancing the social and physical development of children and youth and by leading the way to lifelong active living for residents of Toronto through a wide variety of leisure and recreational opportunities that welcome everyone. Basketball programs are an important part of the sport programming PFR provides Toronto residents. Basketball programming decisions are determined at the local level by front-line staff in order to respond to community needs.

Through the Community Recreation Branch of PFR, the City of Toronto provided almost 11,000 drop-in hours of indoor-court access and delivered 725 programs to over 12,000 registrants (almost 9,000 unique individuals) at 105 locations in 2015. Registrants in PFR basketball programs are predominantly children (6 to 12 years) or youth (13 to 24 years), and are mostly male (80%). Refer to Figure 1 for a full breakdown of unique registrants by age and gender. The utilization rate for registered programs was high with 90% of offerings achieving over 90% capacity. Figure 2 illustrates the wide

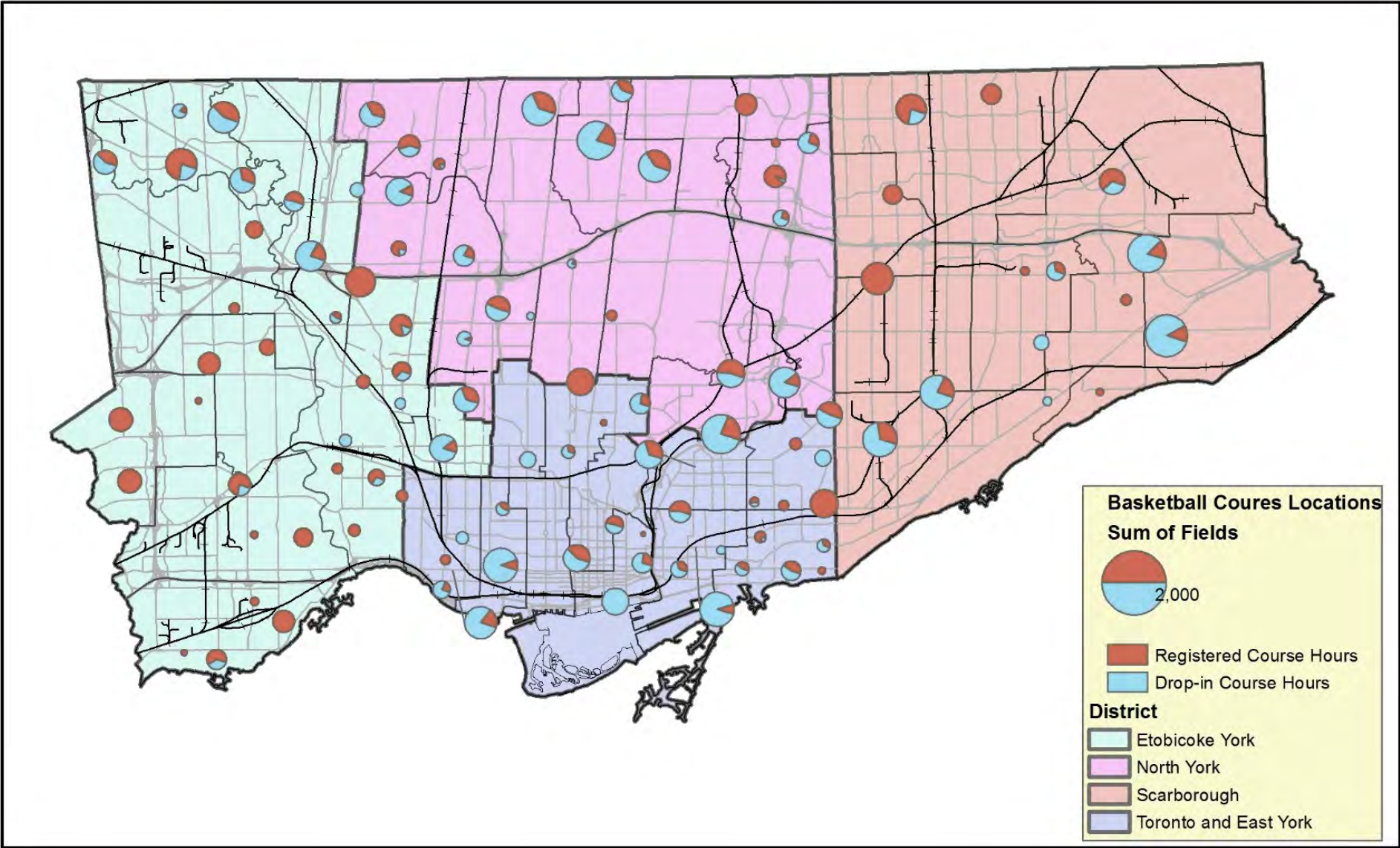
geographic distribution of PFR registered and drop-in programs across the city.

Through the Welcome Policy and Community Centres Where Programs Are Free, 60% of basketball registrations were subsidized or accessed at no cost to residents. This suggests that PFR is providing opportunities to participate in appropriate areas of need. An analysis by postal code identifies over half of registrants as coming from neighbourhoods with a high cultural-diversity index and where there is a high concentration of families. Further, almost a third of registrations come from neighbourhoods designated as low-income.

Figure 1. Unique Registrants in PFR Basketball Programs for 2015

Age Group		Female	Male	Total
Early Child	> 6	213	742	955
Child	6-12	1,275	4,708	5,983
Youth	13-24	224	1,294	1,518
Adult	25-59	67	361	428
Older Adult	60+	1	5	6
Total		1,780	7,110	8,890

Figure 2: PFR Drop-In and Registered Basketball Program Hours by Location



Each year, PFR supports the community basketball programming delivered by other organizations through almost 7,000 hours of basketball permits. 52% of these permit hours were issued to not-for-profit organizations serving Toronto children and youth, and 44% to not-for-profit organizations providing programs to adults and older adults.

Other Community Basketball Program Providers

In the Community Basketball Resident Survey, many respondents indicated that they participated in basketball programs through multiple organizations. The most common organizations cited were PFR (26%), schools (25%), and OBA-affiliated clubs (12%). Other program providers referenced include multi-service providers (i.e. YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs) as well as cultural and faith-based organizations.

The Toronto community-based basketball network is made up of many organizations that deliver programs and/or operate facilities that allow for recreational play throughout the city. A number of these organizations are not-for-profit and serve Toronto's youth population by delivering programs at little or no cost to participants. They create numerous sport-for-development opportunities that

use basketball as a vehicle to engage at-risk youth in crime prevention, academic success and job readiness initiatives.

The BRG observed that the rise of basketball in popularity over recent years resulted in a rapid increase in the number of community-based program providers. Because of the unstructured nature of this growth, the community basketball network is less integrated than other, longer-established sports in Toronto. The resulting disconnection has significant impacts. Stakeholders commented on the inconsistency between programs. The lack of a defined leadership structure limits the capacity to develop a coordinated approach to community basketball in Toronto. Unlike many other sports, basketball lacks a consistently adopted pathway for player development with clearly identifiable, progressive opportunities for players of specific ages and skill levels.

Most program providers indicated that they have little or no contact with other organizations, including the City. However, they expressed a strong interest in collaborative initiatives, particularly in regards to education on business intelligence and the facilitation of communications between organizations.

3.4 Future Opportunities for the Toronto Community Basketball Network

Recent developments and program innovations by basketball governing bodies are expected to positively impact the quality and consistency of community-based programs in Toronto.

The OBA recently completed the first year of programming for the Ontario Basketball League. They describe the purpose of this league as "to promote safe and stage-appropriate athlete development according to Long Term-Athlete Development (LTAD) principles at all levels of play." LTAD is the sport development model advocated by Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L). It is designed to maximize an individual's potential and lifelong involvement in sport. It recommends appropriate activities and the appropriate time at which they should be undertaken, laying out specific activities for ages and stages of athlete development.

The growth of the program could result in the establishment of a Toronto division. Program highlights include:

- Almost 80% of the 484 teams participating were Toronto-based

- 36% of participating teams were for girls
- 1,000 coaches and 5,000 athletes participated in 3000 games

Canada Basketball has developed a club excellence framework that will launch to community sport organizations (CSOs) in fall 2016.

This framework includes guidelines addressing:

- Implementation of the LTAD model
- Coach education, including on-going development opportunities
- Practices and procedures related to program safety
- Organizational governance and administration

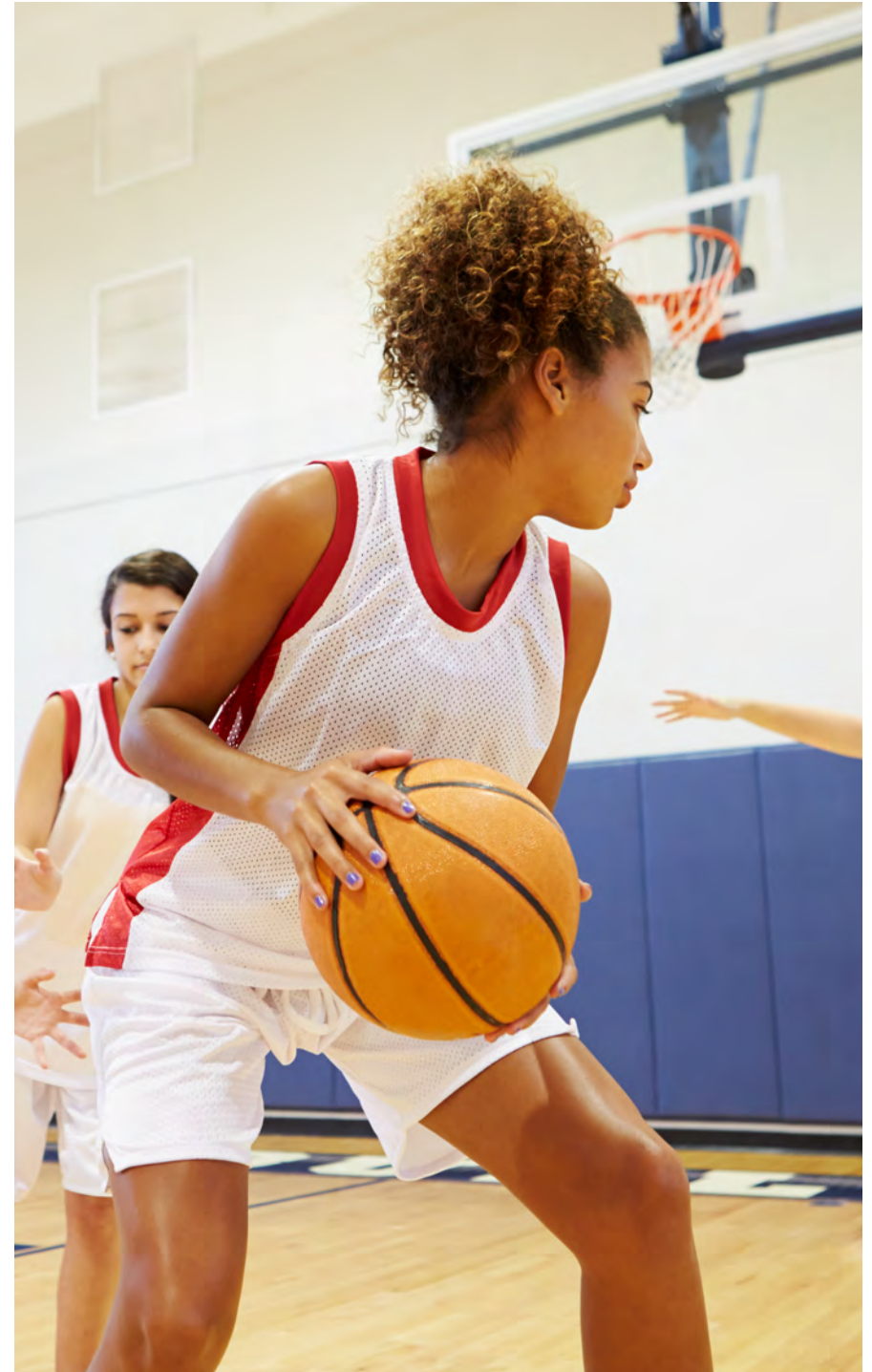
4. RECOMMENDATIONS



Through the analysis of the project research and consultation findings, the BRG identified three thematic areas to focus the plan recommendations. These themes were validated by stakeholders at a follow-up consultation on March 7, 2016. They are:

- Program Quality
- Gaps in Service
- Capacity Building

The Basketball Development Plan recommendations have been framed to advance these thematic areas through program innovations, capacity building initiatives or further research and development strategies.



4.1 Program Quality

In the resident survey, respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the community basketball programs delivered by the network of organizations operating across Toronto. 58% of respondents did not agree with the statement: "I am satisfied with the quality of programs and opportunities."

Recommendation 1: That PFR increase the number of qualified community basketball coaches in Toronto through the continued delivery of the Let's Get Coaching! program.

Stakeholders felt that certified coaches would improve the consistency and quality of programs. By providing access to National Coach Certification Program (NCCP) training, PFR can support the quality of basketball programs across the city. More than 50% of stakeholders indicated that they do not require instructors to have specific coaching qualifications. In stakeholder consultations, many organizations cited the cost of coach training as a barrier to staff and volunteers acquiring certification. In the stakeholder survey, providing access to training was ranked as one of the top three ways their programs could be best supported.

NCCP training also addresses the priorities of residents in terms of features they indicated as important when choosing a basketball program. In the resident survey, respondents indicated their primary consideration was safety and one of the top-two additional features captured in open-ended comments was fair play. NCCP training modules specifically address both of these considerations, providing coaches with the knowledge and skills they need to ensure programs consistently incorporate the principles of fair play and are delivered in a safe environment.

Over the last two years, PFR has delivered the Let's Get Coaching! program in collaboration with the Coaches Association of Ontario and MLSE Foundation. To date, over 100 residents have been provided no-cost NCCP training in Basketball FUNDamentals. Other trainings offered that are relevant to community basketball coaches include: Fundamental Movement Skills and Wheelchair

Basketball, as well as Competition Introduction modules (Making Ethical Decisions, Planning a Practice, Nutrition, Design a Sport Program, Basic Mental Skills, Teaching and Learning). PFR should continue program delivery to increase the number of trained coaches in Toronto and conduct a program evaluation to assess impact.



Recommendation 2: That PFR establish quality standards for introductory basketball programs through the implementation of a standardized Learn-to-Play curriculum.

Almost seven thousand children participate in PFR introductory basketball programs each year. The implementation of a standardized Learn-to-Play curriculum is an important element of ensuring a consistent, quality experience regardless of program location. The BRG advocated alignment of participant development with the CS4L LTAD model. This model was created by experts on child and youth sport development. It has been adopted as a program standard by numerous sport organizations at the local, provincial and national level, including Canada Basketball and the OBA.

The new PFR curriculum aligns with the early stages of the LTAD model, incorporating the principles of physical literacy, providing participants with the opportunity to master the fundamental movement skills that enable children to read their environment, make appropriate decisions, and move confidently with control in a wide range of physical activities. While this program will include the development of proficiencies that are transferable

across all sports and provide a foundation for lifelong physical activity, it will also specifically address basketball-related skills such as shooting, dribbling, and passing. Program resources will include stage-appropriate games and drills to support instructors planning programs that develop participants' skills. The curriculum pilot will include an introductory wheelchair basketball program that addresses the specifics of wheelchair basketball and ensures that participants' introduction to the sport is a positive experience.

Recommendation 2: That PFR support community basketball organization's capacity to provide quality programs.

Releasing the PFR Learn-to-Play basketball curriculum to CSOs is an opportunity to support their delivery of quality programs through the sharing of best practices. The implementation of the curriculum in these organizations can be further supported through basketball-focused offerings of the Let's Get Coaching! program. These innovations will provide a baseline standard from which to grow consistent quality in community basketball programs, regardless of the delivering organization.

4.1 Gaps in Service

PFR is committed to providing residents with opportunities to participate that are welcoming, inclusive and appropriate to their needs. Community basketball is an opportunity to increase sport participation in three groups with a traditionally low rate of activity in sport: female players, newcomers and persons with a disability.

Recommendation 2: That PFR support community basketball organization's capacity to provide quality programs.

The Recreation Service Plan confirms youth as a priority area of service for PFR, recognizing that engaging more youth is an integral step in the development of healthy communities. Recreation programs provide youth with opportunities to develop skills and talents, build social connections within their neighbourhood, and build future leaders. In pursuit of this priority, the PFR Youth Engagement Strategy identified a lack of knowledge or skill in sports as a barrier to attracting new youth. Introductory sport programs were identified as an area of interest and viewed as especially important for newcomer youth who may not have previous exposure to certain sports. The strategy specifically cites the need for introductory basketball programs that advance skill development. The Institute for

Canadian Citizenship (ICC) confirms this as an issue, identifying newcomers' lack of required skills as a significant barrier to participation in sport; a quarter of those surveyed by ICC indicated that this was an important obstacle for them.

PFR basketball programs shift with participant age from child-instructional (ages 6 to 12) to youth drop-in programs (ages 13 to 24). From 2012 to 2014, 12% of PFR children's basketball program hours were drop-in compared to 71% of youth basketball program hours. For those youth who are less-skilled (i.e. players who do not have opportunities to participate in school or competitive programs) and who rely solely on drop-in programs to play basketball, there is minimal opportunity for skill development. This programming gap both limits player development, increasing the risk of drop-off from participation in the sport, and provides no entry point for those who have not previously participated in the sport.

PFR should establish a sustainable skill-development program with a basketball-league component for youth. PFR should work with community partners (including TCHC, TDSB, TCDSB, and the Toronto Newcomer Office) to identify potential program participants. The proposed program is a learn-to-play opportunity for youth in which they will be introduced to the basics of basketball, while gaining confidence and competency in fundamental sport skills. Participants will challenge their new skills in a competitive environment through intramural play. This opportunity will create the bridge necessary for participants to access a range of programs offered by CSOs and provide the necessary foundation to remain active in sport for life.



Recommendation 5: That PFR, in collaboration with the OWSA, increase participation in wheelchair basketball by partnering to provide a program to residents.



Participation rates in Parasport programs are significantly lower than those in able-bodied sports. According to Statistics Canada, approximately 8.5% of Canadians have a physical disability, yet only 3% of Canadians with disabilities participate in regular, organized physical activity.

Wheelchair basketball programming is limited by the availability of facilities that meet the following requirements: accessible facility entry, washrooms and gym, proximity to accessible public transportation and available storage for sport wheelchairs. There are currently only two programs delivering community-level wheelchair basketball in Toronto: Variety Village Rolling Rebels in Scarborough and the Toronto Tornados out of Parkway Forest Community Centre in North York.

OWSA believes that wheelchair basketball is an opportunity to address the stigma that surrounds disability; they are committed to promoting wheelchair basketball as a 'sport for all' rather than a sport for only those with physical disabilities. OWSA will collaborate with the City of Toronto to create a drop-in basketball program and will provide sport wheelchairs for use during the program start-up phase.

Recommendation 6: That PFR align the findings of the Basketball Development Plan with the other divisional plans currently in progress.

Through resident and stakeholder engagement, several issues arose that are best addressed by other areas of work currently being carried out by PFR.

In consultations, stakeholders remarked on the condition of outdoor basketball courts, including the prompt replacement of net and backboards, as well as the condition of court surfaces. These findings will be directed to the Facilities Master Plan and an

opportunity will be created for community basketball stakeholders to consult with the project team.

Survey responses indicated that residents learned about opportunities to participate in community basketball primarily through school and friends (as opposed to City communication channels traditionally used by the City, i.e. the FUNguide or 311). Respondents identified "I can't find information about opportunities" as the third most common barrier to participation, and 47% did not agree with the statement "I can find the information I need." Determining best practices to inform and engage residents about community sport opportunities should be incorporated into the project objectives of the Sport Plan.



Recommendation 7: That the Toronto Sports Council (TSC) share their expertise and research findings with PFR to identify strategies that will increase participation by under-represented groups including a focus on female participation.

The importance of female participation in sport and the recurring gap between male and female participation has recently been emphasized at both the provincial and national level. Female participation is a prominent area of focus in 'Game ON,' the Province's recently released sport plan and is further addressed in 'Women in Sport' by the Canadian Centre for the Advancement of Women and Sport.

As the second most popular organized team sport for girls in Canada, basketball is an important means for encouraging female participation in sport.

Registrations show that participation in PFR basketball programs is predominantly male and that rates of female participation decrease with age. In 2015, 22% of early child (under 6 years) and child (6 to 12 years) unique basketball registrants were female, while only 15% of youth (13 to 24 years) registrants were female (see Figure 1, Section 3.3). Resident survey results confirm the perception that community basketball participants were predominantly male; only 24% of respondents, indicating that they are players, identified as female.

TSC is a contributing member of the Province's panel on female participation in sport and is ideally positioned to assist in the development of strategies to increase female participation. The TSC has agreed to share their findings and support PFR in researching effective means to increase female participation in community basketball, including the establishment of recommended practices for encouraging participation.

4.3 Capacity Building

Recommendation 8: That PFR, the OBA, and community partners collaborate to increase the connectivity of Toronto's community basketball network by creating networking as well as information and resource sharing opportunities.

Not-for-profit basketball organizations are vital contributors to Toronto's community basketball network. These CSOs create diverse and local opportunities for residents to participate in the sport. In both survey responses and consultation comments, stakeholders identified three key areas in which they required support:

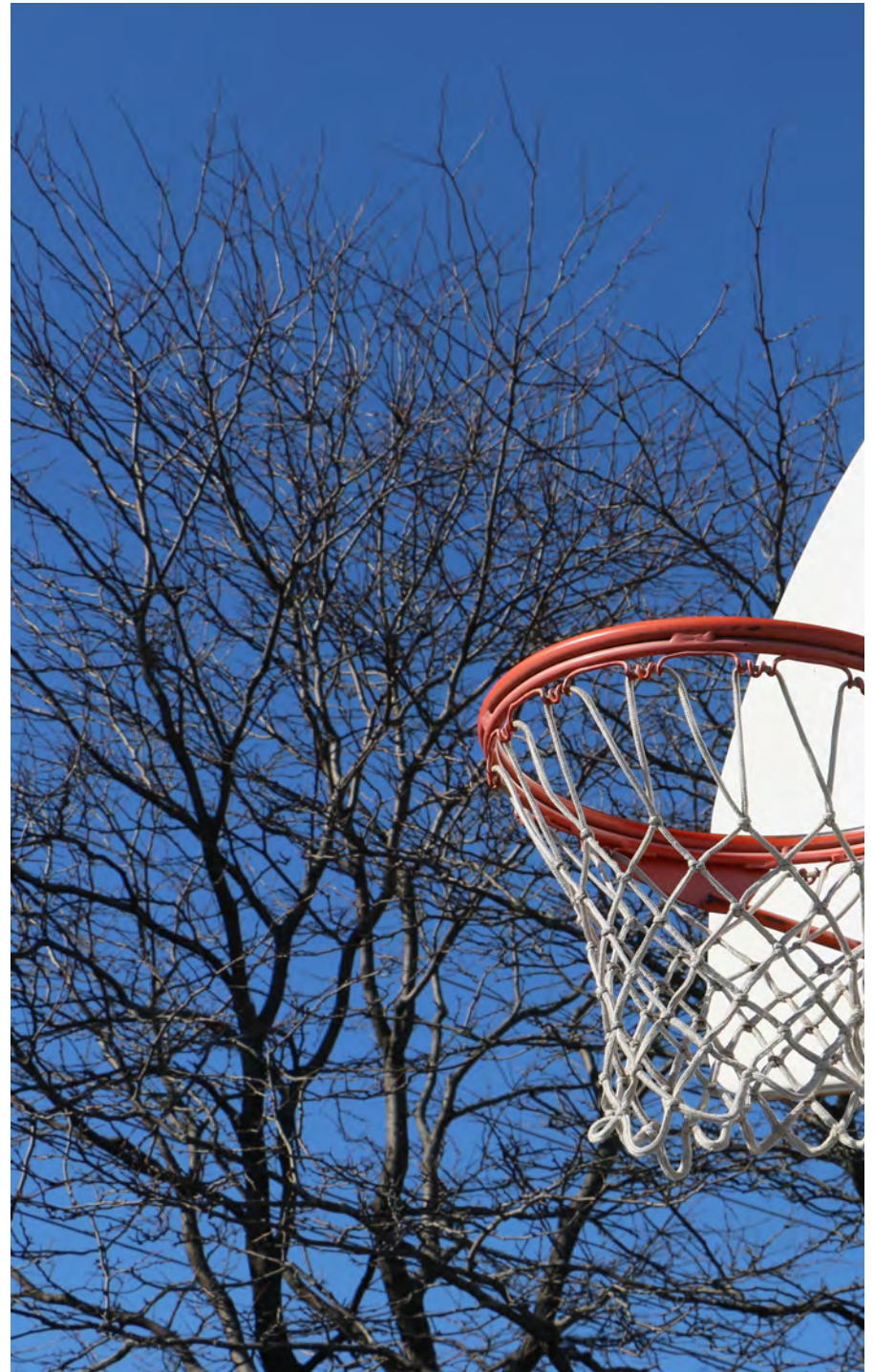
- Communication facilitation
- Organizational intelligence
- Accessing facilities

In regards to communication facilitation, priorities raised in consultation included opportunities for CSOs to communicate with each other, opening up the possibility of sharing resources and coordinating

program delivery, and the City notifying them of events and opportunities for their programs. CSOs, particularly those that were newly established, were looking to share organizational intelligence, including knowledge pertaining to funding opportunities, grant writing and governance. In the stakeholder survey, CSOs specified "creating stronger community connections" (26%) and "building partnerships" (22%) as two of the top three opportunities for increasing capacity and growing their organizations (see Appendix 1).

Almost all stakeholders acknowledged that facilities were a significant constraint impacting program delivery: 55% of consultation comments focused on access to facilities and 53% survey respondents indicated that accessing facilities were one their biggest challenges (see Appendix 1). While cost was an issue for many, the main concerns were related to permitting processes and access. Many stakeholders found the various processes confusing and frequently time-consuming as they are required to navigate three systems: PFR, TDSB and TCDSB. There were numerous requests for education around permitting policies. It is believed that many of the challenges surrounding accessing facilities would be alleviated through demystifying these processes.

An annual networking and intelligence-sharing event for organizations that deliver community basketball programs would have value. Further, opportunities should be explored to leverage existing digital and online information platforms to cross promote programs, assets and information. Stakeholders expressed the view that increasing connections and developing partnerships would increase the capacity of the Toronto basketball network.



5. REALIZING SUCCESS



PFR recognizes the importance of recreational basketball as an opportunity for residents of all ages and abilities to participate in and benefit from community sport. The implementation of the Basketball Development Plan over the next five years will promote the availability of quality and accessible opportunities that meet resident interests and needs. This will be achieved by:

- Creating a strong and sustainable community basketball league for youth who are new to the sport, increasing participation by youth who might otherwise not have an opportunity to gain the foundation required to remain active
- Increasing participation by creating accessible opportunities, including the development of effective recruitment and retention strategies that will encourage female participation and creating a wheelchair basketball program
- Establishing a 'Learn-to-Play' basketball curriculum that maximizes player development and supports the quality of PFR programs (and sharing it with other program providers)
- Providing no-cost National Coach Certification Program training to increase the number of basketball coaches that support the quality of programs across the city and across program providers
- Strengthening Toronto's network of community basketball providers by facilitating communication and integration, creating opportunities for members to support one another through collaboration and coordination to grow program capacity

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