

2015 Federal Election Sport Questionnaire Ottawa

Candidate: Paul Dewar, New Democratic Party of Canada

Riding: Ottawa Centre

Infrastructure and Facilities

Question 1: There is an estimated \$17 billion dollar deficit in sport and recreation facilities. Are you willing to support a dedicated infrastructure fund for sports and recreation facilities at the community level? If not, why not?

No.

Canada's municipal infrastructure deficit is a staggering \$172 billion and rising. Municipalities own 60% of our public infrastructure, yet collect only eight cents of every tax dollar. After years of downloading and neglect, too many municipalities are struggling. Past infrastructure plans have failed to get funding out the door – with complicated application processes and public-private partnership requirements that shut out smaller communities and add years of uncertainty and delays to important projects.

The NDP is committed to improving infrastructure in Canada. We will start by investing the equivalent of one additional cent of the existing gas tax. This will provide additional funding in the first year that will ramp up to an additional \$1.5 billion invested at the end of a first mandate. This NDP initiative will provide annual, stable, long-term investment for infrastructure projects. These additional funds will give municipalities increased capacity to repair and rehabilitate sport and recreation facilities or invest in new facilities.

As for the New Building Canada Fund, the NDP approach includes more flexibility that will allow municipalities to apply for projects related to cultural, sports and recreational facilities.

Question 2: There is also across the country a critical problem with lack of access to sport and recreation facilities for those with a disability. Are you willing to include support in the infrastructure fund for accessibility initiatives?

Yes. An NDP government will offer municipalities the flexibility they need when it comes to infrastructure funding. That's why we are significantly increasing transfers to municipalities through the existing Gas Tax Fund. An NDP government will expand eligibility under the New Building Canada Fund to cultural, sports and recreational facilities, including accessibility initiatives. We recognize that a lack of access to sport and recreational facilities for those with disability is an issue, and this is why the NDP will offer more flexibility.

Amateur/high performance sport

Question 3: High performance sport brings international attention to Canada and helps develop national identity and pride. Potential high performance athletes are identified and initially developed through a system of community sport organizations. As the progression to high performance athlete occurs, funding requirements increase. Federal government financial support has focused primarily on high-performance programs and not provided financial support at the community level. On a scale of 1-5, (where 5 is very important and 1 is not important at all?), how important do you believe it is to provide additional financial support for high performance development to community sporting organizations?

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: The NDP favours a balanced approach when it comes to sports investment. We will maintain current level of investment in high performance sports while reinvesting at the community level.

On September 2, Tom Mulcair announced the NDP commitment to invest an additional \$28 million over four years to help more young people participate in sports and to promote physical activity amongst our youth. The NDP will boost funding available for provinces and territories through the Sport Canada Bilateral Agreements. This funding will assist provincial and territorial governments in delivering projects such as community sport programs for young people. The NDP investment will also provide direct financial support through Sport Canada for organizations that run physical activity programs and that help families with expenses such as registration fees, equipment and transportation. This additional funding will help underrepresented groups participate in sports—like girls and young women, low-income, new Canadians, and Indigenous, disabled and LGBT youth.

Sport for Development

Question 4: Participation in sport can offer many benefits to communities. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is maximum benefit and 1 is minimum benefit, please indicate how you rate the benefits provided by sport in each of these areas:

(Respond "5" for all)

- Promoting health and fitness – 1 2 3 4 **5**
- Reducing youth crime – 1 2 3 4 **5**
- helping new Canadians feel part of the community – 1 2 3 4 **5**
- supporting the growth and development of First Nations communities through greater access to sport-based educational and social programs – 1 2 3 4 **5**
- Building character and relationships – 1 2 3 4 **5**
- Building community pride – 1 2 3 4 **5**

In which of the above area(s) would you request funding for your community? Why?

We believe that by increasing the funding to get youth, and especially disadvantaged youth, more active and engaged in organized sports, we contribute to achieving many of these social goals. This is why the NDP has committed to invest \$ 28 million over 4 years to make youth more physically active. Being enrolled in sport helps youth develop team spirit and lasting relationships, while also helping to reduce youth crime and build a sense of community.