

Stratford Sport Tourism - Public Survey

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

31 August 2022 - 04 October 2022

PROJECT NAME:

Stratford Sport Tourism Strategy

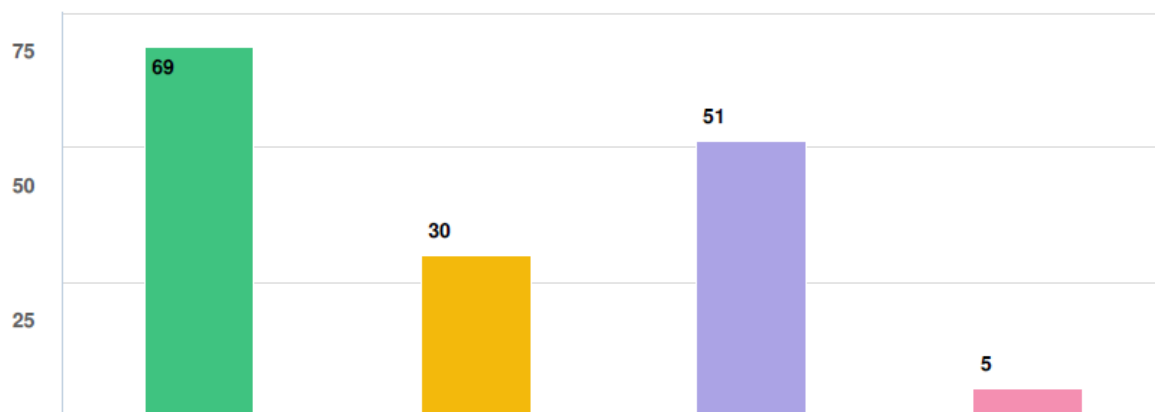
Q1 Does Stratford have a good track record in hosting sporting events?

Yes = 69 responses

No = 30 responses

Not sure = 51 responses

Q1 Does Stratford have a good track record in hosting sporting events?



Question options

Yes No Not sure Check to add additional comments:

Q2 Where do you rank the Sport Tourism opportunities for Stratford?

Very little opportunity = 14 responses

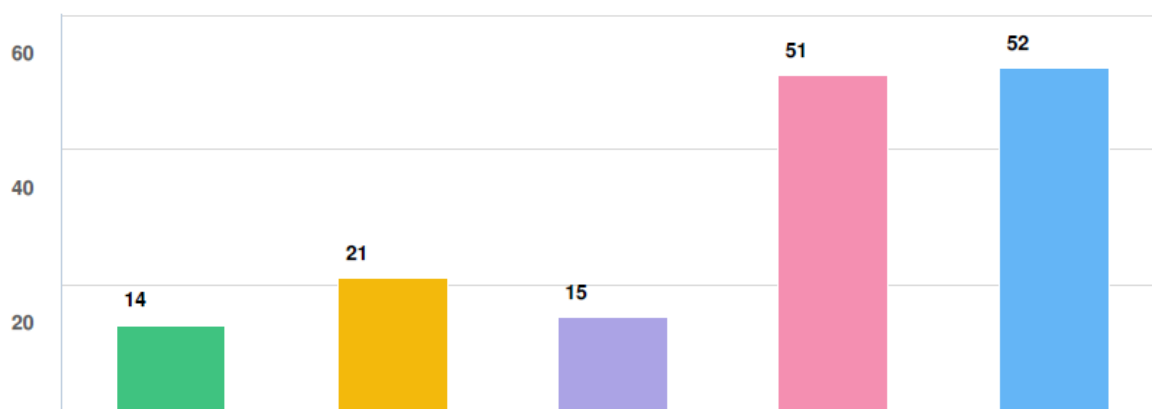
Little opportunity = 21 responses

Neutral = 15 responses;

Some opportunity = 51 responses

A great deal of opportunity = 52 responses

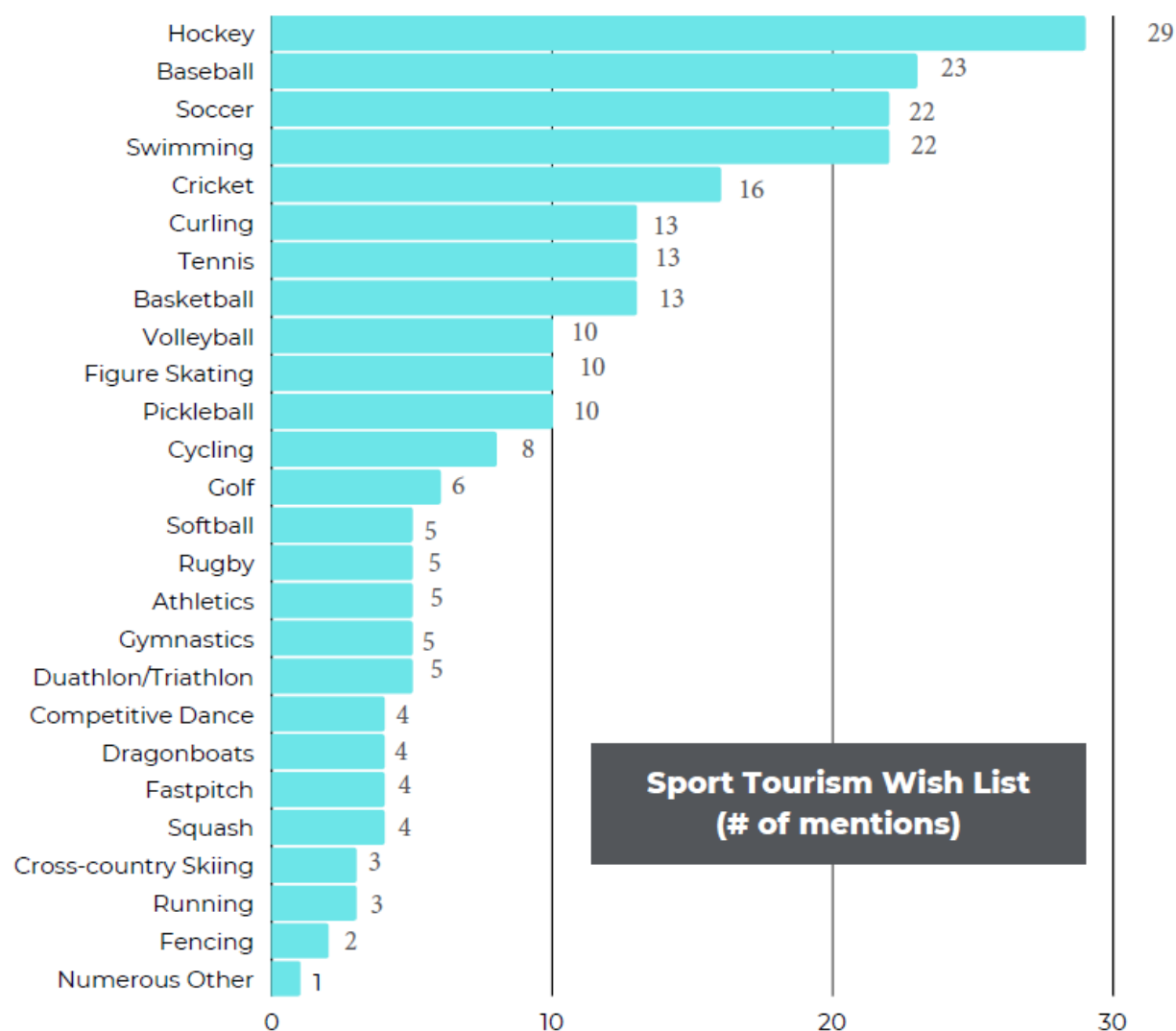
Q2 Where do you rank the Sport Tourism opportunities for Stratford?



Question options

Very little opportunity Little opportunity Neutral Some opportunity A great deal of opportunity

Q3 What sport events would you most like to see hosted in Stratford?



Hockey- 29 mentions
 Baseball = 23 mentions
 Soccer = 22 mentions
 Swimming = 22 mentions
 Cricket = 22 mentions
 Curling = 13 mentions
 Tennis = 13 mentions
 Basketball = 13 mentions
 Volleyball = 10 mentions
 Figure Skating = 10 mentions
 Pickleball = 10 mentions
 Cycling = 8 mentions
 Golf = 6 mentions

Softball = 5 mentions
 Rugby = 5 mentions
 Athletics = 5 mentions
 Gymnastics = 5 mentions
 Duathlon/Triathlon = 5 mentions
 Dance = 4 mentions
 Dragonboats = 4 mentions
 Fastpitch = 4 mentions
 Squash = 4 mentions
 Cross-country Skiing = 3 mentions
 Running = 3 mentions
 Fencing = 2 mentions
 Numerous Other = 1 mention each

Q4 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Stratford should pursue the Sport Tourism to disperse business throughout the year.

Strongly disagree = 8 responses

Somewhat disagree = 3 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 7 responses

Somewhat agree = 48 responses

Strongly agree = 89 response

Stratford has the venue and hospitality services to host Sport Tourism events.

Strongly disagree = 17 responses

Somewhat disagree = 39 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 10 responses

Somewhat agree = 50 responses

Strongly agree = 39 responses

Stratford should focus solely on cultural tourism activities and events.

Strongly disagree = 70 responses

Somewhat disagree = 39 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 18 responses

Somewhat agree = 17 responses

Strongly agree = 10 responses

Growth in Sport Tourism will bring additional revenues to the community.

Strongly disagree = 5 responses

Somewhat disagree = 3 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 9 responses

Somewhat agree = 35 responses

Strongly agree = 103 responses

Our community could use better training and education on how to benefit from Sport Tourism activities.

Strongly disagree = 7 responses

Somewhat disagree = 3 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 21 responses

Somewhat agree = 59 responses

Strongly agree = 65 responses

Stratford has a strong facility base to grow the Sport Tourism sector

Strongly disagree = 25 responses

Somewhat disagree = 27 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 17 responses

Somewhat agree = 55 responses

Strongly agree = 29 responses

Stratford has a strong volunteer base to expand Sport Tourism activities

Strongly disagree = 8 responses

Somewhat disagree = 12 responses

Neither agree nor disagree = 39 responses

Somewhat agree = 55 responses

Strongly agree = 41 responses

5 What gaps or weaknesses will Stratford have to address in developing sport tourism?

- Community Engagement and agreement. Financial support. Volunteer/workers to support growth.
 - Learning about and identifying sports that are forecasted to grow in popularity and revenue and learn how to accommodate said sports, e.g. Mountain biking, trail cycling
 - More indoor facilities for sports that don't require skates
 - Local sport tourism seems to be confined to Hockey, Baseball and Dragon Boat Race. The creation of sports facilities should not be pursued only for tourism. More important for a healthy local community are facilities firstly for the local youth and, general public which long-term will result in natural involvement and interest, resulting in more tourism. The development of the Cooper lot is a fantastic chance for a first class cultural and sport centre. It could offer indoor tennis courts, a swimming pool, running track, especially a challenging climbing wall which would draw from surrounding areas.
 - Not sure.
 - Accommodations, volunteers, indoor training facilities for the winter (school gyms do not cut it for indoor ball practice for our rep teams! We need to do better!!)
 - HOUSING! AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR RESIDENTS!
 - We need a larger facility with gymnasium space as well as public pool areas.
 - Grouchy old people which only make up about 25% of our population yet manage to impart their negativity on the other 75%.
 - National Stadium needs improvements, and also a parking lot. Dufferin Park & Arena need more parking. SERC baseball diamond needs parking off the street We also are missing the type of hotels that sports teams look for (need hotels with pools, breakfasts, child-friendly rooms), and then we need more buffet style restaurants.
 - Lack of facilities (no track, no swimming pool).
 - I assume you're mostly trying to encourage folks to come here off-season. We're not on the 401 so getting here from any major city is a challenge. Hwy 7/8 in the winter is really not great. There's no pool here. Medical services (walk in clinics/ doctors/emerg) can be an impossible challenge for anyone visiting. What would all the prospective sports tourists do when they're not playing or attending an event as off-season the town shuts down, will they all go to Walmart and Canadian Tire in the evenings to pass time?
 - Diversity or variety in events. We have solid hockey, baseball and soccer, but should try for other stuff too.
 - Maybe more winter events
 - We need an indoor soccer facility so the growing sport can go all year. This can also be used for baseball training
 - Utilizing old baseball fields would be great. I think we could go back to having this idea to find bigger like pro games
 - Engage clubs like Kiwanis and Rotary for providing volunteers and canteen / refreshments
 - Insufficient availability of Pickleball Courts for outdoor and indoor play
 - Q. What is the world's fastest growing sport and fastest growing sport for retired people with time and money? A. Pickleball. However, Stratford has poorer facilities and less accessibility to those facilities than neighbouring communities a fraction of our size. These communities draw players and tourist dollars from Stratford (Goderich, St. Marys etc).
 - A full ecosystem is missing. For example: sports facility that has Olympic swimming pool, run track, cycling track (indoor and outdoor). Hotels... this can be phased out
 - Proper ground for each sport, encourage people to take an interest in sports, ground maintenance etc
 - Funds to do it
 - More places for sports training
 - Aside from the baseball stadium, we don't have any facilities that I know of, that are suitable
-

for large events - we have arenas, but none with ice size + seating capabilities for large events, we have no useable pool for 5/6 of the year, and not a lot of spaces for anything else, either. Sport facilities of most kinds are notably lacking in this community.

- Not sure if this is related but would like to see a proper sized pool and aquatics center at some point to round out our sports opportunities. I think our hotels and accommodations may need to be considered especially when they overlap with theatre season.
- Develop a clear strategy & share it with the community, engage volunteers, promote; maybe host a community event to get in person feedback; you'd want the support of the community so businesses support, crowds come out to cheer the athletes on (very important), etc.
- Sports in Stratford is way too expensive. We don't have a lot of facilities unless it is hockey in the winter. We have ball and soccer facilities in the summer. That is basically it. We have to go to smaller centres around for most other sports.
- We need better facilities other than hockey arenas. The rotary complex could have been so much more than ice pads. You could have had swing pools, basketball courts, pickleball, volleyball, badminton it could have been like complexes in Milton and Toronto.
- No pool facilities
- A new modern swimming facility is a must. The only two options in the city are either seasonal or extremely old and outdated. Smaller populations within 1/2 an hour of us have wonderful options for their population base. Why is it an issue with Stratford being able to provide? Many travel out of town to compete for other towns teams. Imagine the win for the city if Stratford was able to host province wide swim meets.
- Facilities
- There is no cricket stadium in Stratford at all
- Missing venues for indoor sports
- Accommodations.
- If Stratford have Cricket ground, then it will host many Cricket tournament
- A central multi use facility that is open 365 to serve the public
- Accommodations during festival season seem to be challenging for visiting team centre's to book hotels etc
- Making the Agriplex a facility that can be used all year round. There are so many high-performance activities we are missing due to taking the floor out for 2 agricultural events a year. Seems like a big waste of opportunity.
- Stratford has a myopic attachment to hockey, at the expense of other sports and interests that are not only public safety issues (a proper community swimming complex), but also enjoyed throughout the life of our residents. I have zero belief that bringing additional groups of junior hockey players to town will benefit us in any way. Other sports, perhaps.
- Better venues with large spectator capacity
- Very busy in summer already, hotels and restaurants are booked.
- Lack of a community Center - Wilmont has a Center that draws a lot of events versus our rec complex that only houses to specific events.
- It's preposterous that a community this size doesn't have an adequate indoor pool.
- The City has adopted rules in the use of the Packham diamond facility that makes it virtually impossible to host large multi- day events. The booking policy is completely out of touch with the reality of competitive travel ball teams and tournament
- Training in every sector to be involved.
- Too much NIMBYism with the theatre crowd
- Depending on the sport, there may be lack of quality venues/facilities to host events, such as swimming, gymnastics, dance. One other item to consider is available, and willing, community partners. The Festival has a number of excellent spaces but they are generally out of reach for many organizations due to cost. Available and affordable accommodations, especially if the events

are concurrent with the Festival season, or concurrent with any other events. There is an opportunity to get involved with esports as it continues to be a rapidly growing industry. I'm not sure what would all be involved logistically, but likely worth an investigation. Stratford has a strong, but aging, volunteer base but with sport, I believe sport tourism can encourage youth and families to volunteer as they aren't the typical Stratford volunteer (Rotarians, other service groups, retirees).

- Need more hotels
 - New pool Increase seating capacity at Agriplex for volleyball/badminton spectators
 - Dufferin Arena now has no concession booth, and no beverage machines. Not very accommodating, especially for those coming from out of town.
 - Festival season accommodations and restaurant capacity. Alternative activities for children while in town.
 - Need to build an indoor aquatic facility. Public outdoor tennis courts need resurfacing and new nets (which are taken in during winter to preserve longevity).
 - City has only focused on hockey so other sport athletes have left our community. Build the facilities and host the tournaments to keep people here ex swimming and meets. Make sure you coordinate tournaments so that there is hotel and restaurant availability for sport tourists. The arts are dying and we need another revenue to keep our businesses going. This would also support all of the families in our community and use of facilities because right now we are NOT serving them well.
 - Like I said above, accommodations for teams. Nowhere for them to stay. Nothing giving them the opportunity to stay longer.
 - Bars/Restaurants could easily do specials like "bring your team and the coach eats free" or something like that. A team leaving tip would make up for much more than a coaches meal and that keeps them in town.
 - Sports tourism is a bit of a joke. Relies on too many volunteers while putting money in coffers of well off or sports organizations that are not for profit and are run by people who take advantage of them.
 - So much but probably getting the people of the town on your side. Maybe get a better indoor public pool? I'd start by providing facilities for the people who live here.
 - Coaching that isn't qualified
 - need a cricket ground
 - We applied for cricket stadium but not anything heard from Stratford councilors
 - Bicycle paths are a must! We also need a year-round public aquatic centre. Public tennis facilities would enhance as well.
 - Money, places to stay, money, tax payer's dollars should not be used
 - I think we need a cricket ground. So we can host cricket tournaments.
 - Put a rink in down at the river in the green space and you'll find people come from all over to roller skate
 - Parking Still prioritizing those that live here year-round and creating opportunities for us
 - Accommodations are expensive...very few package deals or inclusive offers
 - Lack of suitable accommodations, especially for multi-generational or families travelling together. Recent proposal to shutting down the air bnb component will further exacerbate this situation. Weather in the off season makes this proposal a non-runner. Investment is risky when connected to our local weather. Return On Investment, I'd like to see those numbers should this proposal be acted on.
 - No indoor playing facility for winters
 - Not a lot of large hotel options for sports teams, etc. No indoor pool. Restaurants are not within walking distance to Rotary arena.
 - Tourism requires service and retail staff who need housing under \$1,000 a month.
-

- Aside from the obvious need to upgrade our facilities, I feel a big challenge if we want to seriously be considered for sporting tourism would be improving Stratford's public transit to and from other major cities
 - Indoor facility complex. Such as soccer.
 - A great indoor pool. Many travel to St Mary's for Aquafit daily.
 - Places for the visitors to stay at reasonable prices
 - Communicating to local businesses in advance of upcoming events
 - Stratford City personnel and city council support required to be successful, and to facilitate businesses to quickly and easily build or modify their facilities to support year-round sport. Make Rotary Complex more accessible for younger demographics not just run programs for 55+. Enhanced road conditions and signage for active transportation such as cycling routes. More winter facilities such as indoor tennis, soccer etc.
 - Distance from major centres offer specific transportation for spectators to come
 - The survey questions above are impossible to answer. I do not have adequate information to answer. Communication with citizens in all areas need to be improved. Housing & accommodation shortages. Medical facilities (other than ER) to respond & care for participants ie. walk-in clinic. Consider that citizens would be interested in accessing facilities as well. A swimming pool. Our family traveled to West Perth (daily for 6 weeks this summer) for swimming lessons. It would be worth finding out the number of citizens that are travelling outside of Stratford for athletic facilities and why.
 - Racism!!! We are not a diverse community in term of culture and language, there is a lot of insidious racism in Stratford and Huron Perth.
 - Accommodations may be an issue. But off-season sport tourism would be ideal.
 - Insufficient space for all sports
 - Aquatics centre, improve arenas, indoor soccer
 - More facilities
 - You need an indoor pool. It is shameful that this city does not have one. You need proper bike trails that can be used as cross-country ski tracks in the winter. Trails that are not running along with traffic! You need proper squash courts. There are many players in this city and the squash tournaments bring in many opportunities year-round for visitors to the city. Sports are IMPORTANT! I see many unhealthy people in this city. Let's get them moving...
 - Post pandemic the issue is getting volunteers.
 - Expand sporting facilities as noted above by improving/creating an outdoor track. Ensure that there are sufficient accommodations in the area to host large events year-round and restaurants that are open on the weekends past 8 pm that accommodate larger groups.
 - Stratford is missing a decent sports complex to host these destination facilities. The rotary center is missing a pool and other facilities.
 - Facilities
 - Bringing teams when hotels aren't already full with cultural travelers - mid-week or between Nov and April.
 - Infrastructure gaps with track and field and basketball. Lack of org plan locally for cycling events
 - Facility sharing or lack of it. Proper training for management Overlap of sports with festival causes issues- not enough places to stay that are efficient
 - Facilities, traffic, safety measures
 - Bike lanes, bike routes. Aquatic centre
 - More/different indoor facilities. Water sports completely lacking! Basketball and volleyball facilities not sufficient.
 - No cricket ground
 - A bigger, more accessible pool would mean swim meets could take place here. A complex that houses other sports, not just hockey, would be great.
-

- Lack of public swimming pool and track and field venue.
 - More diverse facilities that go beyond baseball and football, indoor soccer facilities, cricket fields, facilities that can be used for national and provincial, so need to meet field and or pool specifications for instance.
 - Infrastructure, aging swim facilities, land use for future development, agency hotel alliances for the volume (stay and play)
 - The sports events are organized by the individual groups with little or no input from the city. The city should be more involved to share information and to make the events consistent and better organized.
 - A new pool.
 - Our neighbours (Region of Waterloo not only have the hospitality and venue infrastructure, they have a whole office dedicated to it. The only possible way to compete with that is on pricing- and if the goal is to increase revenue to existing businesses, that completely defeats the purpose.
 - Costs, population size
 - Not enough hotel/motel space
 - Accommodations are full and expensive in the summer months. Top notch facilities.
 - Volunteers are already dedicating hours of time
 - Timing and venues
 - Increasing hospitality for patrons from May to October
 - Better aquatic facility (YMCA pool is outdated & overcrowded, many locals travelling to St. Marys/Wilmot to use aquatic facility). While tourism is great, it's also important to support the locals which are living in the city and surrounding area.
 - Additional tourism brings more expenses as well traffic on roads, roads needing update etc. The revenues need to outweigh the costs.
 - Parking, accommodations for large groups, all weather facility options, keeping attendance financially possible for everyone!
 - Upgrading baseball diamonds and facilities to host tournaments, such as what Woodstock did in the past allowing them to host Nationals.
 - Sport Tourism is all about chain restaurant dining and cheap hotels. Let larger communities have it.
-