



THE CANADIAN SOCCER FEDERATION: A NEW WAY FORWARD

SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENT

Prepared by the Canadian Soccer Federation Steering Committee

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RANDOM QUOTES **REGARDING THE STATE OF THE GAME**

What is wrong with soccer in Canada?

Jason Devos – Former Canadian Men’s National team captain

- “It’s a shambles. Let’s make no bones about it; it’s a complete and utter shambles.”
- “We need to draw up a completely new model because the existing one certainly isn’t working.”

Dwayne DeRosario – Canadian Men’s National team member and three-time Canadian Player of the Year

- “Canada is still way behind. Our association, it’s sad to say, hasn’t gotten their act together.”

Dick Howard, Member of both the FIFA and CONCACAF Technical and Development Committees as well as Chairman of the Ontario Soccer Association (OSA) Technical Committee

- “I think the problem with soccer in Canada is the fact that at the present time the Canadian Soccer Association is not showing leadership.”

Bruce Twamley – Former Canadian National Player and Inductee to the Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame

- “Whatever success we have is despite the CSA.”
- “Things have been mismanaged for a long time.”
- “I would re-structure everything.”
- “The problem is the game is run by politicians, and as long as it’s run by politicians who make decisions, you have absolutely no chance.”
- “The sport relies on spin doctors whose role is to make the situation sound better than it is.”

Les Wilson – Former Canadian National Player and Inductee to the Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame

- “The leadership leaves a lot to be desired at all levels.”
- “I do not think the players are coming through and worse than that, the coaches are not coming through.”
- “There has to be an absolute complete overhaul of the associations and the programs.”

Iain Macintyre – Vancouver Sun

- “We’re soccer’s third world.”
- “You look at where Canadian soccer is going, look at the results --- the whole game needs an overhaul. Looking at what we are doing, it is hard to have any reason for optimism. No one should be sensitive about this criticism because it’s really the structure, not the individuals who are at fault.”

Dale Mitchell, Current Men’s National Team Head Coach and Member of Canadian Soccer Hall of Fame

- “What would it take to get the proper structure in place in Canada? It’s gonna take a lot of money, it’s gonna take full-time professional soccer, it’s gonna take what every other country has. We don’t have it. We have to be honest about that.”

Cathal Kelly – The Toronto Star

- “Rather than trying to plan the course for Canadian soccer, the CSA should be doing its best to get out of the planning business. An organization requires professionals to do that, rather than part-timers with divided loyalties and scanty expertise.”



What is wrong with soccer in Canada? (continued)

Ontario Soccer Association

- "The role of the provincial organization is changing as the system itself matures and it is critical that the Board of Directors understand the changes within the marketplace and prepare for the inevitable or deal with the consequences"

Ottawa Citizen

- "Canada is not a soccer nation"

What is wrong with youth soccer and youth sports in general, not just in Canada?

Sir Trevor Brooking – English FA

- "The crisis facing youth football in England is the emphasis on results above technical development, the win at all costs mentality."
- "While we have a national game strategy for grassroots, we do not have a whole game strategy and this will only work if we get everybody involved from top to bottom."
- "In the early years of a youngster's development there should be no positions. We have to find a way of replicating games, small numbers, no pressure, nobody ranting and raving."
- "If the grassroots are not generating the enthusiasts, the fans, the referees, the administrators and above all the players, then the top is going to suffer. And for me, it all begins in that crucial five to 11 age band."
- "The country's skills deficits are largely a function of how we coach small children."

Regan McMahon, author of "Revolution in the Bleachers"

- "Winning has superceded fun, learning and development as youth sports has been transformed into a star system modeled on professional sports, with all its greed and excesses and glorification of attitude and individualism."
- "Our society is stealing childhood from children and that certainly is a crime."
- "As youth sports have escalated in intensity, competitiveness, time commitment and parent involvement, certain risks are beginning to surface as well, from overuse injuries, stress and depression to inappropriate sideline behaviour and fractured family patterns."
- "Things have gotten out of whack and it's time to regain our balance. It's time for a revolution..."

The "French Way"

Gerard Houllier

- "A crisis forces people to work together more and better. It's an opportunity. Failure is part of success"

Question: Why has France produced so many top class young players?

- "Because we have a culture of development and training."
- "We coach coaches and we make a point of developing the best in the best conditions."
- "We have a long tradition in education and training the coaches; this stretches back 30 years and was set up in response to a series of poor results at senior level. We set training centers to improve the players aged between 13–19. Then we wanted to work better with players aged between 12 and 15 so we set up training pre-centres."
- "It's the academies all over the country that produce the players. Our idea at the FFF is not to replace the work done by the clubs, but to work alongside the clubs to supplement their work"



INTRODUCTION

The single greatest strength of Canadian soccer is the impressive and ever-growing number of registered players participating recreationally and competitively from coast to coast to coast. More Canadians are registered to play “The Beautiful Game” than any other organized sport, including hockey.

Canada’s community soccer clubs constitute the foundation upon which the strength of this grassroots participation is built and the backbone of any Canadian soccer club is its volunteers. Soccer is extremely fortunate to have tens of thousands of hard-working, capable and dedicated volunteer administrators at all levels of the game, working to make the game as enjoyable and accessible as possible.

However, all is not well in the Canadian soccer community. Despite the incredible growth of the game at the grassroots level over the past 20 years, Canadian soccer has stagnated. The Canadian Soccer League folded in 1992, no truly professional soccer league has emerged to replace the CSL and we have only three top level professional clubs in the entire country. Canada’s Men’s senior national team has not qualified for a World Cup since 1986 while our Women’s senior national team has failed to keep pace with their competition on the pitch in recent years and must rely on a wealthy benefactor to fund their program.

At the grassroots level, the volunteers, who are so critical to the success of any club, have continued to perform their duties but with little or no appreciation or support from Canada’s national and provincial governing bodies. Not surprisingly, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for clubs to identify and recruit these desperately needed volunteers. Furthermore, community clubs are faced with ever-increasing pressures, coping with the challenges created by the growth in registration numbers and the increasingly onerous regulatory demands imposed upon them, while their financial resources, in the majority of cases, are becoming proportionally smaller year after year.

Canadian soccer’s numerous governing bodies have become unresponsive to the needs of players, coaches and administrators. They have consistently failed to add sufficient value to their membership in order to justify the significant (and growing) registration “taxes” that they extract. They have not provided the leadership that is expected of them, nor have they made the commitment to transparency, accountability and strategic planning that the membership demands.

The time has come for a new National Governing Body for soccer in Canada, possessing a vision, a mission and a mandate to restructure the way the sport is governed and administered in order to meet the challenges of the 21st century and to move soccer forward with a greater sense of optimism and vibrancy.

The Canadian Soccer Federation (CSF) has been established by members of the Canadian soccer community who are deeply concerned by the current state of the game and who wish to present a vision for a better future. We are keenly aware of the significant structural problems plaguing Canadian soccer, a sport which we care deeply about. For that reason, we have come together over the past several months to assemble and ultimately present our best ideas, which we hope will assist in putting Canadian soccer on a better course. We are optimistic that a bright future is possible. Many of the main ingredients are in place. What is needed is a major reform of how soccer is governed and administered, based on best practices that have proven successful around the world which will then be adapted to the Canadian reality.

We urge the grassroots community to be an active participant in the process. The founding members of the CSF do not possess a monopoly on good ideas. Working together, Canadian soccer can look forward to a bright, prosperous future.



CANADIAN SOCCER FEDERATION

Mission Statement:

The Canadian Soccer Federation (CSF) will execute the role of National Governing Body with passion, integrity and professionalism.

We shall work tirelessly to unite our diverse membership by providing effective National Leadership while implementing a simplified, streamlined and unified governance structure. Our focus will be directed toward providing programs and services that reflect the needs of the entire membership.

The CSF will establish and nurture a culture of unparalleled transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, empowerment and respect, which will govern our relationship with the membership.

Objectives of the Canadian Soccer Federation:

- Develop and implement a new, simpler governance and operational structure for Canadian Soccer. All existing layers of governance will be evaluated and those deemed redundant and/or ineffective will risk being eliminated – **S**
 - The CSF model simplifies and streamlines the administrative process for the membership by requiring a direct relationship with only one governing body rather than the complex web of relationships with multiple governing bodies as currently exists.
 - The CSF recognizes how complicated and cumbersome it can be to operate and manage a community soccer club in Canada. Member clubs are currently serving too many “masters” (CSA, Provincial Associations, District Associations and Leagues) and having to provide resources to support the needlessly repetitive administrative processes required in order to remain in good standing with each. Because of the lack of standardization and integration across the existing levels of governance, club management and administrators are forced to spend the majority of their time on paperwork rather than focusing on what can be done to grow their club, to grow the sport in their community and to deliver the services desired by their own members (players, coaches, parents, volunteers).
 - At present, Canadian Soccer’s “Financial Pie” is being split into far too many different sections and there is a lack of value being delivered back to the membership because of this over-division of limited resources. The CSF model would consolidate the resources that exist, promote the identification of efficiencies and allow for the redirection of valuable financial and human resources back into the development and growth of the sport. This includes directing the requisite financial and human resources needed to support successful and flourishing national team programs for men and women that will be a source of pride for all Canadians.
 - The CSF model recognizes the importance of local access to the national governing body and proposes the establishment of Regional Soccer Centres (RSC) that will be operated by CSF technical staff and which will serve as a critical resource to local coaches and players. The RSC's will provide a strong “hands-on” connection to the national organization and the staff will work with the local membership to ensure that CSF technical objectives are being implemented and executed at the local level. More than one RSC may be established per province, depending on registration numbers and geographical factors.



- **Create a National Computerized Player Registry – S**
 - The value of a National Computerized Player Registry is incalculable. First and foremost, a properly executed national registration system will eliminate a significant amount of administrative overhead that currently exists. To do this, the new system will need to permit integration of existing club databases.
 - A single, comprehensive list of registrants would be a powerful marketing tool for the CSF in its efforts to seek out revenue streams that would ultimately lessen the need for registration fees as a main source of funding for the national body.
 - From a player scouting/identification perspective, a centralized player registry would allow the CSF to pursue the development of a central scouting system similar to what presently exists in minor and junior hockey in Canada. Through the use of technology, player performance feedback could be gathered and analyzed to allow CSF technical staff the ability to track the development of the “stars of tomorrow” and ensure that players are not left behind or ignored. Outstanding players in even the most remote locations would have a better likelihood of being evaluated by CSF technical staff to determine if the scouting reports are accurate. The data gathered by such a scouting system would be shared with CSF partners (i.e. MLS, USL, WPSL, NCAA, professional clubs in countries outside North America) to ensure that all players enjoy the potential benefits of regular, professional scouting.
- **Provide National Liability Insurance coverage that caters to the needs of the membership – S**
 - The CSF would work with insurance providers to develop a simple, easy to understand and comprehensive liability insurance program that delivers some degree of cost savings to the membership.
- **Establish national standards for Soccer Clubs, Coaches, Referees and Player Development – S**
 - The establishment of objective, measurable standards, based on international best practices, is critical if Canadian soccer is going to make the kind of positive progress that the soccer community desires.
 - The time has come for a more professional approach to the way community clubs are managed and operated. To achieve this objective, the CSF will establish clear national standards for Canadian Soccer Clubs and existing community soccer clubs will decide what type of club they will strive to be.
 - Without proper coaching, Canadian soccer players will never reach their full potential. As a result, CSF technical staff will develop a world class coaching education curriculum and apply this program nationally. The curriculum will be based upon globally recognized best practices. It is imperative that all Canadian coaches are receiving the highest possible quality of education and that Canadian coaching certifications become globally recognized. Furthermore, the CSF will encourage and facilitate the process for high level Canadian coaches to acquire valuable coaching experience outside Canada, preferably in a professional team environment. Canadian coaches must experience the way the game is played and coached outside of our country in order to share the knowledge and experience with younger/less experienced coaches and their players. Finally, the CSF will encourage the creation of a “Canadian Association of Soccer Coaches” (based loosely on the NSCAA model) and the CSF is committed to being a key founding sponsor of an annual conference for Canadian Soccer coaches.
 - High Quality referees are an integral part of the sport of soccer. The CSF will establish a Director of Officials, reporting to the Technical Director. Refereeing education programs will be enhanced, based on international best practices, and formal evaluation standards will be implemented. We must encourage referees at all levels to improve their skills because they are so important to the game.



- Encourage growth of the game of soccer by creating and implementing national development programs that are challenging and enjoyable and which cater to the abilities of all players and member clubs. – **S**
 - The CSF National Player Development Program will be developed by the CSF's Technical staff, in consultation with high level coaches and technical directors from the international community. We believe that the CSF development programs must be created by soccer professionals, as opposed to the current **"Wellness to World Cup"** document which is basically a generic athlete development model produced by Sport Canada and which has been modified for soccer.
 - A key objective of any national player development program is to align the various members at the grassroots levels with the new initiatives being implemented at the elite level. Canada needs a comprehensive, integrated long-term program to meet all players evolving needs and expectations.
 - Some of the major themes of the CSF player development program are as follows:
 - A player's soccer experience, especially at the youth level, must revolve around the concepts of Fun, Fitness and Fundamentals.
 - Players must be allowed the freedom to express themselves creatively on the field of play.
 - The way to measure the success of a player or a team (especially at the youth/amateur level) must not be in terms of wins and losses, but rather by how they have improved as a player (physically and mentally). The adults who mentor the youth players must nurture the player's desire to improve their skills and foster an eagerness to continue playing soccer.
 - Game to practice ratio should be geared to age and level of competition (more practice per week as the player advances up the ranks).
- Encourage all players, club executives, coaches, referees, parents and fans to work together in unity. – **S**
 - The CSF will encourage and empower the membership to be an active participant in creating a new direction for Canadian Soccer. Soccer will never reach its potential in this country until we replace pettiness and factionalism with unity, cohesiveness and a commitment to the greater good. We must all be pulling in the same direction to accomplish our collective goals.
- To ensure equal access to all services for the entire membership.
- Foster and cultivate a vibrant "Canadian Soccer Culture" (long term objective).



CSF Membership:

- Chartered Clubs -- **S**
 - The CSF believes that the time has come for the “professionalization” of the community soccer club. The Chartered Club concept reflects this belief.
 - The CSF will develop a comprehensive set of national standards to clearly define the qualifications that are necessary to be classified as a Charter Club. There will be some degree of flexibility built into the standard because it is not entirely reasonable to expect a Charter Club candidate in a remote/rural community to offer ALL of the same services as a club in a large metropolitan center but the standards cannot be too flexible.
 - A Charter Club must be a true “Full Service” club. They will deliver a full schedule of services to the membership, from youth recreational to a proper Senior Team program (be it professional, semi-professional, high level amateur, etc...). At present, very few Canadian soccer clubs can claim to be a “Full Service” club. It will take some period of time for clubs to work towards meeting the minimum standards for Charter Club designation. The CSF will create a “roadmap” and provide support for clubs that seek to achieve Charter Club status. However, the process cannot go on indefinitely. The CSF proposes a maximum 5 year transition period from applying for Chartered Club status to receiving full certification. The CSF will conduct regular audits to ensure ongoing compliance.
 - Clubs seeking Charter status will have to be prepared to make significant organizational and governance changes. The existing fraternal based structure at many Clubs needs to be addressed. There needs to be a new era of professional management with a longer term focus.
 - Clubs that seek Charter Status will have the option to choose whether they wish to operate as a private or public organization, for profit or not-for-profit. Clubs can choose how they wish to operate. However, clubs that choose to be “public”, not-for-profit organizations will be required to establish a governance structure that ensures that volunteer boards of directors must not maintain an active role in the day-to-day operations of the club. Professional staff must be put in place to run the operations of the clubs while the board exists to provide an oversight function as well as assisting the hired staff with strategic planning.
 - Chartered Clubs will receive financial rewards for their player development accomplishments. The CSF will actively assist clubs in collecting the development fees that they are entitled to (according to FIFA regulations).
 - We believe this new Club structure will provide players (and coaches) with greater opportunities and will provide an incentive for players to stay in the game longer.
 - The Canadian National team programs and Canada’s top professional teams will be the chief domestic beneficiaries of an enhanced Player Development system that evolves from the Charter Club model.



CSF Membership (continued):

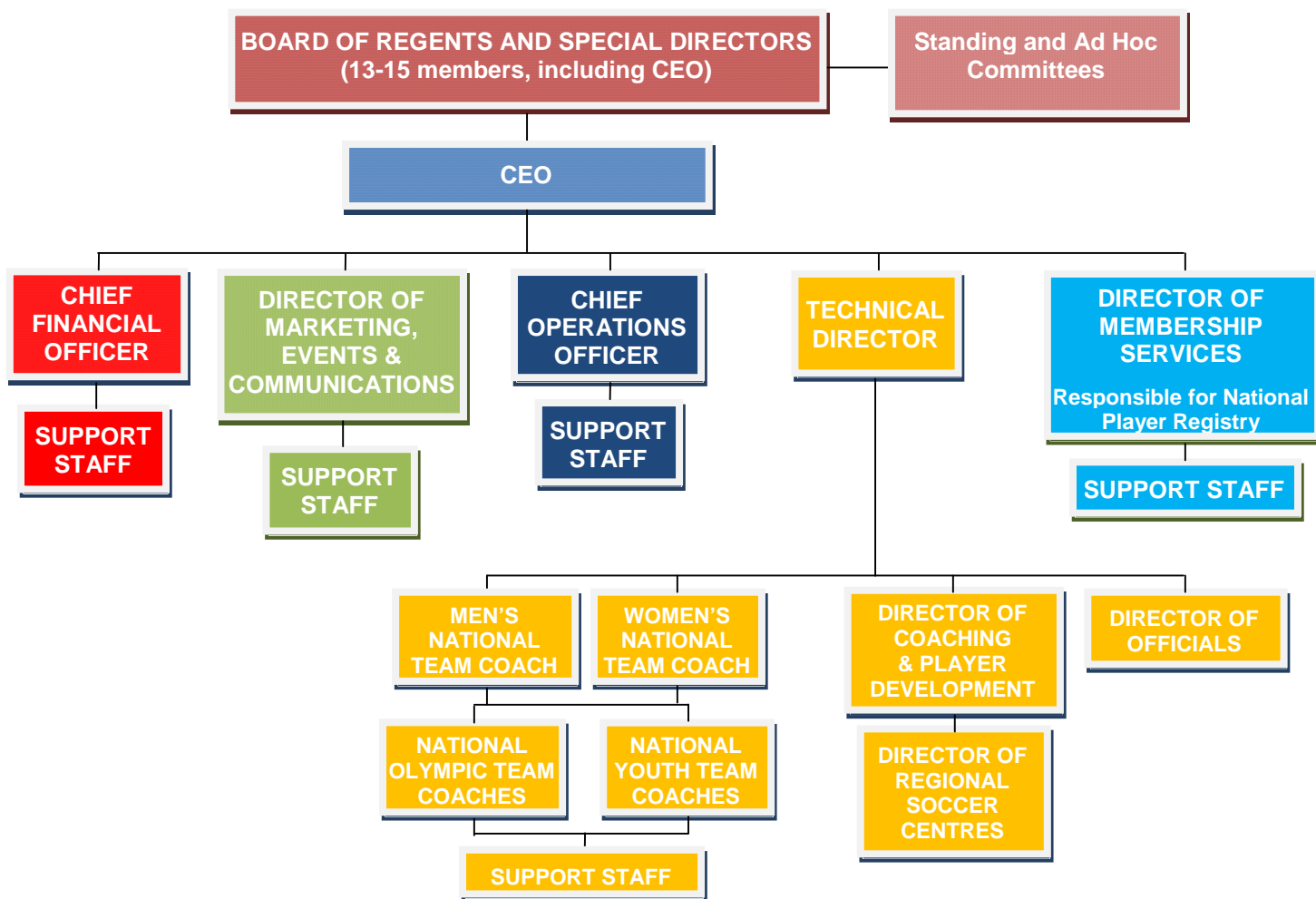
- Recreational Clubs -- **S**
 - It is highly unlikely that all existing community clubs will choose to seek Charter Club status. Those that do not want this status will be classified as Recreational (community) Clubs.
 - Recreational Clubs will be a critically important part of the soccer community. For most youth players, the community recreational club will provide their first soccer experiences. The recreational club will also provide many youth coaches and referees with their first experiences.
 - Recreational clubs will not be required to offer a full range of services. They will be free to choose how wide ranging of a program they wish to offer.
 - The Recreational soccer experience should be fun, simple and accessible to all.
 - Recreational clubs will be expected to apply the basic philosophies found in the National Player Development Program in their programs. To that end, entry level coaching education courses (the equivalent to the current “community coach-children” course) should be offered to all volunteer youth recreational coaches free of charge.
 - Recreational Clubs will have the option to apply for Chartered Club status if they choose to in the future but they will be required to meet all the same criteria as any other club seeking that status.
- Academies -- **S**
 - Existing Academies will be recognized as a CSF member offering specialized services and can continue as such or they will have the option to apply for Chartered Club status if they choose to but they will be required to meet all the same criteria as any other club seeking that status. They also have the option of merging with a community club to apply for Chartered Club status.
- Professional & semi-professional teams
- Coaches, referees, administrators, facility operators
- Senior and Youth Leagues (Recreational and Competitive)
- Associate Members (Colleges/Universities, High School Sports Associations, Soccer Camp operators)



Governance and Operational Structure:

- Board of Regents to be elected via direct vote by the membership. --S
 - Voting will be truly democratic. One member – One Vote.
- The Regents will invite a select number of Directors, recruited from outside the soccer community, to join the board. These Directors will bring a variety of experiences and skills to the Board.
- The Board will be exclusively focused on the strategic direction of the Canadian Soccer Federation.
- A Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will be hired by the Board. CEO will sit on the Board and has a vote.
- CEO will hire his/her executive team and the administrative staff and will be focused on the operations side of the organization. CEO will be accountable to the Board.

Preliminary Organizational Flow Chart:





Technical:

- CSF technical staff will draft a comprehensive National Player Development Plan specifically tailored to the needs of the membership. Input from the membership will be solicited.
 - CSF Technical Director will chair the committee to develop a National Player Development Program. The committee will consult with soccer professionals from within Canada and from the international soccer community. We must incorporate international best practices into our player development program in order to deliver the best training program possible. Once the program is approved, the CSF technical staff will be charged with implementing the program.
- A strong emphasis will be placed on coaching development at all levels, from recreational to elite. Existing programs will be reviewed and new alternatives will be considered with the goal being to improve the quality of soccer coaching education. -- **S**
 - CSF Technical Director and Director of Coaching / Player Development, in conjunction with the CSF staff coaches, will develop, implement and maintain a new, comprehensive national coaching education program.
 - Hand in hand with an improved coaching education program, new national standards for coaching qualifications (for every position from National Team coaching staffs to Charter Club coaches) will be developed and implemented.
- Reinforce the philosophy at the youth level of skills development over winning for the sake of winning. – **S**
 - Competition is an undeniably important element of player development. However, the overriding philosophy at too many current youth clubs is to encourage winning for the sake of winning. This philosophy is not beneficial to the development of young Canadian soccer players. In too many cases, players are being coached not to lose. All the good work that is done at practice teaching skills is often wasted when the time comes to play games. The purpose of playing games, especially at the youngest age groups, should be to demonstrate and reinforce skills learned in the training environment.

Existing Entities:

- A thorough review of all existing programs and organizations will be conducted. Any existing entity that does not add value to the membership may face elimination. New programs and initiatives will emerge that are goal oriented, in line with organizational objectives and reflective of the membership's wants and needs. – **S**
 - The highest profile existing entities that will be eliminated are the Provincial Soccer Associations and District Soccer Associations.
 - The CSF will deliver a better level of service to its members and do it with less overall administrative overhead, ultimately resulting in significant cost savings to the membership. The savings will be returned to the membership in many ways, such as the reduction of registration fees, enhanced player development and coaching education programs, investments in facilities, greater support for national team programs, etc...
 - The CSF National Player Registry will be a key program for the reduction of administrative costs that currently absorb a tremendous amount of financial resources.
 - The CSF will deliver its services to the membership through the Regional Soccer Centers. It is imperative that there be a local connection between the membership and the CSF. The CSF will not be a faceless, impersonal organization.



Grassroots:

- The membership will establish the framework by which soccer services will be delivered in their communities and by which their youth players will compete. That framework will be guided by the principles established in the CSF National Player Development plan and the fundamental belief that soccer must be enjoyable for all participants.
 - All soccer in Canada emanates from the grassroots. If soccer is not governed, administered, taught and played properly at the grassroots level, the results will be disastrous, as we are now witnessing.
 - A very important initiative that will have numerous benefits would be the elimination of the existing web of Youth competitive Leagues. The existing youth competitive leagues are essentially the embodiment of the flaws inherent in the existing player development system because, for all intents and purposes, they do not foster player development. They encourage winning for the sake of winning (promotion) and punish losing (relegation).
 - Furthermore, the expenses that come from participating in the existing youth competitive leagues will be drastically reduced (i.e. league fees, needless fines, reduced player registration fees, etc...). The money the clubs save can be reinvested within the club. Youth players / teams will still play competitive games but the competition will be organized between the clubs, and the purpose of playing games will be to further player development. The clubs will decide what kind of competition they want to participate in, governed by the principles established in the National Development Plan.
 - The level of competition that a player participates in should be driven by skill / ability rather than by chronological age restrictions.
 - Clubs need to focus on preparing players for a future beyond the developmental and academy programs (university/college or professional level).
 - Clubs should make it a priority to forge partnerships internationally to maximize the opportunities for players to further their soccer careers and to experience diverse soccer cultures.
 - The soccer community as a whole must invest significant resources (human and financial) to create a soccer environment whereby players at all levels will continue playing the sport for the love of the game. The only way to reverse the worrisome rates of attrition is to ensure that playing is fun.