

DATE OF MEETING JUN 16, 2021

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PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

SUBJECT ROTARY BOWL OVAL RENEWAL PROJECT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To obtain Council approval to move the 2024 portion of the rubberized track surface replacement project at the Rotary Bowl to 2021 to ensure work is funded from the Community Works Reserve Fund.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve moving the Phase 2 rubberized track replacement project from 2024 to 2021 in the 2021-2025 Financial Plan funded from the Community Works Reserve Fund.

BACKGROUND

The Rotary Bowl was purchased by the City of Nanaimo from School District #68 (SD68) in 2017 as part of a package that also included the purchase of the Serauxmen Stadium and the jointly funded construction of the NDSS Community Field.

Rotary Bowl is an important recreational venue to Nanaimo and the general region in providing full Track and Field amenities. In addition to all it provides to residents in the region, it is also an economic driver to Nanaimo and infrastructure for sports tourism, including being instrumental for hosting large events, such as the BC Summer Games.

In 2019, a condition assessment was completed on the track and it showed considerable deterioration in areas of high intensity use. The deterioration is almost exclusively related to interplay delamination of the top wearing layer from the base layer. There is also a significant crack between the track surface and the exterior curb in area, which allows for water intrusion which could cause future product delamination. There were also areas showing damage from tree roots and these were subsequently repaired to avoid injury and further damage to the subsurface layers.

As this is a highly utilized facility, this project needs to be undertaken to enhance performance and will also allow increased capacity for users to host events at this facility.

The City has been in ongoing discussions with SD68 and the Nanaimo Track and Field Club (NTFC) as the primary users of the facility regarding the condition of the track and replacing the track surface. This project was also supported by Council to be put forward for the Community

Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program Grant in late 2020. Unfortunately, the grant application for \$1,000,000 was unsuccessful, but the two phases of the replacement project are in the approved 2021-2025 Financial Plan and fully funded.

The following Rotary Bowl improvement projects are currently included in the 2021-2025 Financial Plan:

Year	Description	Amount	Funding Source
2021	Sprint Track	\$228,175	Community Works Fund Operating Reserves Private Contributions
2024	400m Oval Track	\$988,250	Community Works Fund

DISCUSSION

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in there being no official track and field seasons in 2020 and 2021, this facility has seen increased casual use as it has allowed the community to stay active while maintaining social distance.

Staff have engaged the services of the same consultant to provide design and specification services for the upcoming 8-lane sprint track replacement in 2021 and for the other areas in 2024. This work is currently underway in preparation for a tender going to market.

The design discussions are happening in collaboration with community partners to ensure that the new surface meets all requirements of use for district meets, provincial competitions and national level events. The current conditions are subpar for competition level.

With the pandemic, there are no events or major SD68 use in 2021. Under normal circumstances, finding enough time to replace all of the rubberized surfacing as one project would prove to be challenging based on the window of use relative to required weather and track and field seasons. Doing both phases of the project in 2021 will ensure that there is not another significant season interruption of use in 2024, thus not affecting the use by NTFC, SD68, and the community as a whole. Both 2020 and 2021 seasons have been significantly impacted and or cancelled outright.

Council provided a letter of support when NTFC successfully bid for the 2020/21 BC Championships (subsequently moved to 2022/2023). At present, the NTFC has committed to hosting and is seeking to make bids to host the following competitions:

- Nanaimo Special Olympics, held annually at the Rotary Bowl
- 2022 Vancouver Island High School Track & Field Championships
- 2022 / 2023 BC Track & Field Jamboree (Provincial Club championships)
- Annual Elwood Wylie Memorial Track & Field Meet (qualifier for BC Summer Games)
- 2026 BC Summer Games (bid submitted by the City)
- Bid to host 2023 / 2024 BC High School Track & Field Championships
- Bid to host future Legion Youth Nationals
- Bid to host BC Masters Track & Field Championships

Each competition brings between 500 and 2,000 athletes and officials from across the province for three days (3 nights) of competition, with accompanying families and coaches.

This is the ideal time to fund the entire upgrade, minimizing downtime and maximizing efficiency. Upgrades must be done during the dry season, and will inevitably affect facility availability for several months. Two separate shutdowns (sprint straight track in 2021 and oval in 2024) doubles the impact and increases overall costs. With background work already complete and a tender nearly ready, the full upgrade could be done before the 2022 spring competition season commences in early April, allowing Nanaimo to take full advantage of the coming post-COVID boom and pre-scheduled events.

In the 2021 – 2025 Financial Plan, the 2024 Rotary Bowl Oval work is funded from the Community Works Reserve Fund. The 10-Year Gas Tax Fund is currently set to expire in March 2024. As part of this year's Federal Gas Tax reporting requirements, a number of questions were asked regarding unspent funds including asking the City to confirm that all unspent funds are targeted for a proposed project or identified for spending in an existing long-term capital plan by 2024-MAR-31. The reporting form also indicated that utilizing funds in a timely manner is critical for ensuring that the program is retained in its current form and level of funding.

Accelerating the Rotary Bowl Oval Renewal Project will help ensure that the project is completed before the end of the current Gas Tax Fund agreement in March of 2024 and support the need for the continuation of the funding program. |

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve moving the Phase 2 rubberized track replacement project from 2024 to 2021 in the approved 2021-2025 Financial Plan funded from the Community Works Reserve Fund.
 - The advantages of this option: The entire replacement project will be completed in one year rather than in two separate years. Current COVID restrictions make this a favourable time for replacement as there is no 2021 track and field season.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None.
 - Financial Implications: None as the project is already in the approved 2021-2025 Financial Plan.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternative direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Rotary Bowl was purchase by the City of Nanaimo in 2017 and is co-managed with the Nanaimo Track and Field Club.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted the Track and Field season for 2021 and no large track events will be held.
- Doing both phases of work in 2021 will ensure that there are no significant interruptions in two separate project years.
- Moving the project into 2021/22 will ensure the project is funded from the Community Works Reserve Fund
- The 10-Year Gas Tax Fund is currently set to expire in March 2024.

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