

DATE OF MEETING JANUARY 19, 2022

AUTHORED BY ART GROOT, DIRECTOR, FACILITY AND PARKS OPERATIONS

SUBJECT NANAIMO TRACK AND FIELD CLUB – BID TO HOST 2024 TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS - OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC TRIALS

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To request a financial commitment from Council regarding the proposal by the Nanaimo Track And Field Club to Athletics Canada in their bid to host the 2024 Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council commit up to \$100,000 in 2024-2028 Financial Plan towards the Nanaimo Track and Field Club's bid to host the 2024 Canadian Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve.

BACKGROUND

The Rotary Bowl, home to the Nanaimo Track and Field Club (NTFC), is an important recreational venue to Nanaimo and the surrounding 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.

The COVID-19 Pandemic resulted in the cancellation of track and field seasons in 2020 and 2021, including School District use, but athletes continued to train at the site and the facility has seen a significant increase in casual use, allowing the community to stay active while maintaining social distance.

The straightaway was due for surface replacement in 2021 and the oval was scheduled for 2024. Under normal circumstances, finding enough time to replace the rubberized track surfacing as one project would have proven logistically challenging based on the window of use relative to required weather and timing of athletic seasons. The cancellation of the season in 2021 due to the pandemic allowed for the acceleration of the project.

At the Finance and Audit Committee meeting held 2021-JUN-16, a motion was passed approving the expedition of the track surfacing as such:

“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.”

The motion was approved by Council through consent at the Regular Council Meeting held 2021-JUN-21.

Both phases of the track resurfacing project were completed in 2021 allowing the NTFC to plan for hosting future high level events.

Athletics Canada is searching for a host city for the 2024 Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials. The Championships include U20, Open, and Para Athletics competition.

The NTFC felt it was timely for the Club to submit a bid package for this event. Mayor and Council provided a Letter of Support in time for the 2021-SEP-30 deadline (Attachment A). |

DISCUSSION

|The NTFC is currently working on the bid package that is due on 2022-MAR-31 and will provide a presentation to Council regarding the proposed bid. Nanaimo has a proven history of successfully hosting large sporting events, including the BC Summer Games and many other high level national and international competitions.

The 2024 Track and Field event has the potential to attract visitors from across Canada and there will be significant benefit from tourism and additional accommodation requirements booked separately by spectators and others attending the events.

Edmonton, Alberta was the host city for the 2016 Canadian Junior / Senior Track and Field Championships and selection trials for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, which included over 2,000 participants (athletes, coaches, officials, and other team personnel) from across the country. The total economic activity generated by the 2016 event was estimated at \$21 million dollars in the Province of Alberta and \$15 million in the host city of Edmonton.

Athletics Canada will provide a Hosting Grant in the amount of \$25,000 to the HOC (Host Organizing Committee) for the administration and operations of the competition.

A financial commitment from the hosting committee is required to complete the bid package. |

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

|The bid package requires that the HOC secure a minimum financial commitment of up to \$100,000 from corporate, municipal, provincial, tourism or accommodation incentives, prior to bid package submission. Staff recommend a commitment of \$100,000 utilizing the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve, to fund the bid for the 2024 Championships. The HOC will work to obtain other financial support and those funds would offset the City's \$100,000 commitment but for bid deadline purposes, the commitment is required for the bid package. |

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council commit \$100,000 in 2024-2028 Financial Plan towards the Nanaimo Track and Field Club's bid to host the 2024 Canadian Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve.
 - The advantages of this option: Economic benefit to the community through the promotion of sport tourism venue on a national level. Provides a platform to prepare for higher levels of competition through the promotion of athletic excellence.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Commitment of staff time to the Host Organizing Committee. Access to a public facility will be limited during the event.
 - Financial Implications: A \$100,000 commitment from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve will affect funds availability for other initiatives and projects.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend to Council an alternative funding source of \$100,000 to support the Nanaimo Track and Field Club's bid for the 2024 Canadian Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials.
 - The advantages of this option: Continues to support the bid package and the potential economic driver for the community.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Making any changes may not meet the bid package deadline of 2022-MAR-31.
 - Financial Implications: Will leave funds available in the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve for alternative projects and initiatives.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council do not approve the \$100,000 commitment towards the Nanaimo Track and Field Club's bid to host the 2024 Canadian Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Athletics Canada is looking for a host city for the 2024 Canadian Track and Field Championships / Olympic and Paralympic Trials.
- The Rotary Bowl oval and straightaway rubberized surfacing was renewed in 2021 allowing for the hosting of high level events.
- The Nanaimo Track and Field Club are preparing a bid package to host the event and require a funding commitment of \$100,000 from the City of Nanaimo.
- Hosting the event could have substantial economic benefit, up to an estimated \$15 million to the host community.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Letter of Support from Mayor and Council for 2024 Trial Bid
ATTACHMENT B: PowerPoint Presentation by the Nanaimo Track and Field Club |

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