

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING 2023-JUL-19

AUTHORED BY DARCIE OSBORNE, DIRECTOR, RECREATION AND CULTURE

SUBJECT NANAIMO LEGION BID TO HOST 2026 AND 2027 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To request a financial commitment from Council regarding the proposal by the Nanaimo Legion 151 in their bid to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships for two years.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council commit up to \$100,000 in the 2024 - 2028 Financial Plan towards the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Canadian Track and Field Championships through the Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command together with Athletics Canada and funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund.

BACKGROUND

The Royal Canadian Legion has organized and coordinated the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships for 44 years in support of Canadian youth and communities. This national championship gives young Canadians 17 and under a chance to compete against the best, develop confidence, and better understand the diversity of other sports minded youth across Canada.

The event is being held in Calgary in 2025 and expects to see 800 athletes compete with support of 200 coaches, and over 1,000 family members and friends to cheer them on. Many of these athletes have gone on to compete at the international and Olympic levels.

The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command, together with Athletics Canada, is searching for a host city for the 2026 and 2027 Legion Youth National Track and Field Championships.

Nanaimo Legion Branch 10, along with Mid-Island Legion Branches and Provincial Command, supported by City of Nanaimo and Tourism Nanaimo will be submitting a bid package due 2023-JUL-21. Letters of support from Nanaimo Track and Field Club, and BC Athletics have been provided, as well as \$50,000 in funding from Nanaimo Hospitality Association.

DISCUSSION

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. Nanaimo will be hosting the BC High School Track and Field Championships in 2024 and have recently been awarded the BC 55+ games in 2025.

This 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. |

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The bid package requires that the Host Committee secure a minimum one time 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 Fund, to fund the bid for the 2026 and 2027 Championships. The HOC will work to obtain other financial support and those funds would offset the City's \$100,000 commitment. However, 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 to 2028 Financial Plan towards the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund.

- The advantages of this option: Economic benefit to the community through the promotion of sport tourism venue on a national level. It 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 public facilities will be limited during the event. Less funding will be available in the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund for other initiatives and projects.
- Financial Implications: The commitment will be included in the 2024 – 2028 Draft Financial Plan.

2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend to Council an alternative funding source of \$100,000 to support the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships

- 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 will not meet the bid package deadline of 2023-JUL-21.
- 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 Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2026 and 2027 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command, together with Athletics Canada, is searching for a host city for the 2026 and 2027 Legion Youth National Track and Field Championships for two years.
- The Nanaimo Legion Branch 10, City of Nanaimo and Tourism Nanaimo 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 M to the host community as Nanaimo will host for two years.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Letter of Support from Mayor and City Council for 2026 & 2027 Bid |

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