

DATE OF MEETING FEBRUARY 21, 2024
AUTHORED BY MICHAEL CHMIELEWSKI, SENIOR FINANCIAL ANALYST
SUBJECT ACTIVE COMMUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

To advise the Finance and Audit Committee that the City has submitted two grant applications to the Active Communities Grant Program.

BACKGROUND

The Active Communities Grant Program, administered by the BC Alliance for Healthy Living Society, provides resources to Indigenous and local governments to create or expand physical activity opportunities in their communities. Active Communities Grants are intended to build capacity, create or promote physical activity opportunities, support physical activity planning or infrastructure development, and increase physical activity participation with sustainable, community-level changes.

The Active Communities Grant Program offers funding up to \$50,000 to communities towards applications that meet the following key requirements:

- project activities must increase opportunities for physical activity, specifically through improving access, inclusion and healthy community planning and environments,
- applicants should demonstrate existing or planned collaboration with the regional health authority or other cross-sector community partners over the project timeline,
- all proposed activities should be completed and funding spent within 18 months of receiving funds.

The grant application deadline was 2024-FEB-05 and funding will be awarded and announced in April 2024.

DISCUSSION

Staff shortlisted two projects for submission to the Active Communities Grant Program based on suitability to program parameters and how readily projects could be implemented.

Westhaven Playground Redevelopment

The current playground at Westhaven Park was built in the 1990's and is scheduled to be replaced in 2024. The wooden structure is past its life expectancy and needs to be replaced and updated to provide an inclusive and accessible play space for all abilities. The project activities will consist of community engagement with the neighbourhood to finalize playground design, removal of the existing playground structure and pea gravel surfacing, and installation of the

new accessible playground and wood fibre surfacing that's mobility friendly. The project is scheduled for construction in September 2024 and expected to be complete October 2024.

Pleasant Valley Elementary School Bike Rack and Shelter

The City of Nanaimo will be partnering with School District 68 to supply and install new bike racks and an overhead shelter at Pleasant Valley Elementary School. The City has been in discussion with the School District and recently committed to providing bike racks/shelters for schools who work with the City on an Active School Travel Plan.

The project activities consist of pouring a new concrete pad for bike racks and shelters to be installed at the school. The new bike racks and shelter will encourage and increase the opportunity for students and staff to be physically active by commuting by bike to school if provided with a sufficient place to store and secure their bikes. A shelter will provide some weather protection and encourage riders to extend the season which they actively commute. The estimated construction date for the project is June 2024 and is expected to be complete by July 2024.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Westhaven Playground Redevelopment

The Westhaven Playground Redevelopment project is currently in the 2024-2028 Financial Plan with a budget of \$167,800 funded from the Parks DCC Reserve Fund, the General Asset Management Reserve Fund and general revenue. A successful grant application would provide up to \$50,000 of project costs which could reduce funding required from City sources which could then be reallocated to future projects.

Pleasant Valley Elementary School Bike Rack and Shelter

The Pleasant Valley Elementary School Bike Rack and Shelter project is currently not in the 2024-2028 Financial Plan. A successful grant application would provide up to \$31,500 for this project allowing the City to undertake an opportunity with the community that is not currently funded. The 2024 – 2028 Financial Plan will be amended to include this project if the grant application is successful.

CONCLUSION

The City is actively pursuing other revenues such as grants to help offset the costs of eligible projects currently in the Financial Plan as well as unfunded projects that benefit our community.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The City has submitted two grant applications to the Active Communities Grant Program which is offering communities up to \$50,000 in grant funding.
- The City has applied for \$50,000 for the Westhaven Playground Redevelopment Project and \$31,500 for the Pleasant Valley School Bike Rack and Shelter Project.
- Funding announcements are expected end of April 2024.

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