

DATE OF MEETING NOVEMBER 13, 2024

AUTHORED BY MIKE BRYSON, MANAGER, RECREATION FACILITIES & CUSTODIAL SERVICES

SUBJECT LOCAL COMMUNITY ACCESSIBILITY GRANT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To seek direction from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) on a grant application for the Local Community Accessibility Grant (the Grant) funded by the Province of British Columbia, offered by The Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC BC).

Recommendation

That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI):

- support an application for the Local Community Accessibility Grant in the amount of \$24,052 to purchase and install seven (7) assistive hearing devices for the wickets at the front counters at all five (5) recreation centres; Beban Pool, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Oliver Woods Community Centre and Bowen Complex; and,
- recommend that Council provide a letter in support of the City's application to SPARC BC.

BACKGROUND

The Grant is a program offered by SPARC BC that is funded by the Province of BC. This grant provides up to \$25,000 in one-time funding for eligible BC municipalities and regional districts to support the implementation of projects or priorities identified in their Accessibility Plan, in partnership with their Accessibility Committee. The program is designed to support persons with disabilities by funding the removal of barriers identified by local government Accessibility Committees, feedback mechanisms, or Accessibility Plans.

DISCUSSION

The funding stream for Local Government led projects is designed to provide support for local governments who have a clear project in mind that they would like to implement. Under this grant are projects and initiatives designed to identify barriers and improve the overall level of accessibility and inclusion related to: The Built Environment, Education and Awareness, Policy and Programs, Modelling Inclusive Practices, Communication and Engagement, or The Use of Technology.

The Use of Technology category is explained in the program overview as: This could include exploring ways to support more active participation and engagement of persons with disabilities in all aspects of community life (economic, social, cultural and recreational) through the use of

assistive devices and technology. As such, the assistive hearing devices project would align perfectly with this criteria.

Earlier in 2024 there was a pilot project for assistive hearing devices at one wicket at the front counter of two recreation centres; Bowen Complex and Nanaimo Aquatic Centre. Adding seven more would result in every wicket at every recreation centre having the assistive hearing devices available.]

OPTIONS

1. That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI):
 - support an application for the Local Community Accessibility Grant in the amount of \$24,052 to purchase and install seven (7) assistive hearing devices for the wickets at the front counters at all five (5) recreation centres; Beban Pool, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Oliver Woods Community Centre and Bowen Complex; and,
 - recommend that Council provide a letter in support of the City's application to SPARC BC.
 - The advantages of this option: Adding assistive hearing devices in the various facilities will create consistency in service to our patrons with hearing impairment.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None
 - Financial Implications: None, as this funding is from a grant
2. That the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) not support an application for the Local Community Accessibility Grant in the amount of \$24,052 to purchase and install seven (7) assistive hearing devices for the wickets at the front counters at all five (5) recreation centres; Beban Pool, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Oliver Woods Community Centre and Bowen Complex; and that Council not provide a letter in support of the City's application to SPARC BC.
 - The advantages of this option: None
 - The disadvantages of this option: There is no funding allocated in the budget for assisted hearing devices to be installed in five (5) recreation centres: Beban Pool, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Oliver Woods Community Centre and Bowen Complex. Assistive hearing devices would not be installed in the various facilities to create consistency in service to our patrons with hearing impairment.
 - Financial Implications: Alternative funding sources would be required.
3. That the ACAI provide alternate direction.]

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Local Community Accessibility Grant (the Grant), funded by the Province of British Columbia, provides an opportunity to apply for a one-time \$25,000 grant for implementation of projects or priorities identified in their Accessibility Plan in partnership with their Accessibility Committee.
- A pilot project earlier in 2024 had assistive hearing devices installed at Bowen Complex and Nanaimo Aquatic Centre front desks.

- The Grant would provide funding for assistive hearing devices at all five (5) City of Nanaimo recreation facilities.

Submitted by:

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