

DATE OF MEETING FEBRUARY 3, 2025

AUTHORED BY DAMON JOHNSTON, MANAGER, RECREATION SERVICES

SUBJECT NANAIMO EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide Council with background for a letter of support from the City of Nanaimo, for the Nanaimo Equestrian Association's application for funding from the Horse Council BC. If successful the Nanaimo Equestrian Association will use these funds to upgrade facilities at Beban Park, to assist in hosting equestrian events for the 55+ BC Summer Games. |

Recommendation

That Council direct staff to provide a letter of support under the Mayor's signature on behalf of City Council to support Nanaimo Equestrian Association's grant application to the Horse Council of BC.

BACKGROUND

The Nanaimo Equestrian Association (NEA) has been operating as an organization for 42 years in the community. The NEA is a non-profit organization, run by volunteers who operate and maintain agricultural facilities including barns, paddocks, and an Agriplex at Beban Park under a lease agreement with the City of Nanaimo. The NEA is also responsible for the planning, implementation and delivery of equestrian related programming in the community.

In November of 2024 the NEA board of directors was approached by the organizing committee for the 55+ BC Summer Games (the "Games") with a request to host the equestrian events of the Games at Beban Park. City staff attended that meeting and learned that the current state of the barns on the grounds do not meet the required standards in order to host the equestrian events at the Games. As result of the meeting, NEA approached the Horse Council of BC inquiring about grant opportunities that may be available to help fund the work to improve the barns at Beban Park in order to meet the requirements to host the Games.

The scope of work in this project will include the following components:

- Removal of barn 2
- Repurpose the materials from barn 2 to upgrade the remaining barns
- Cleaning and painting barns 1, 3 and 4

DISCUSSION

Under the lease agreement NEA is solely responsible for the repair and maintenance of the buildings within the lease area. If NEA is successful in receiving this funding, the money will be

used to hire a contractor to provide labour and material for basic, temporary upgrades to three barns. These improvements will meet requirements to host the Games as well as support other ongoing events and programs hosted by NEA and other community organizations in these facilities such as: VIEX and Mid Island Velo Association Cycle Cross.

NEA is seeking a letter of support (Attachment A) from the City of Nanaimo to accompany their grant application, which is a requirement of the Horse Council BC grant application process. The amount of funding being requested by the NEA is \$27,000. This amount will cover the total cost of the scope of work outlined above.

While this project is small in scope it does align with City Plan policy C3.6.22 “Continue the phased implementation of the Beban Park Master Plan and the Beban Park Facility Plan, with updates based on engagement from the City Plan-Nanaimo Reimagined process”.

OPTIONS

1. That Council direct staff to provide a letter of support under the Mayor’s signature on behalf of City Council to support Nanaimo Equestrian Association’s grant application to the Horse Council of BC.
 - The advantages of this option: Beban Park Equestrian facility will receive upgrades if NEA successful in grant application.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None.
 - Financial Implications: None, NEA will be responsible for any cost overruns.

2. That Council direct staff to not provide a letter of support to the Nanaimo Equestrian Association and look for alternate options to complete upgrades.
 - The advantages of this option: None.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Loss of opportunity for grant funding to support facility upgrades.
 - Financial Implications: The NEA may approach the City with a grant request to complete the required work to enable the Games equestrian events to be hosted at Beban Park..]

SUMMARY POINTS

- Nanaimo Equestrian Association (NEA) has been operating in the Nanaimo Community for 42 years as a non-profit organization, run by volunteers who operate and maintain agricultural facilities including barns, paddocks, and an Agriplex at Beban Park under a lease agreement with the City of Nanaimo.
- The NEA board of directors was approached by the organizing committee for the 55+ BC Summer Games with a request to host the equestrian events of the Games at Beban Park in September, 2025.
- The NEA is requesting a letter of support from the City of Nanaimo to accompany their grant application to the Horse Council BC for \$27,000. The support letter is a requirement of the grant application process.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: REQUEST FOR SUPPORT APPLICATION FORM
ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR NANAIMO EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION GRANT APPLICATION

Submitted by:

Damon Johnston
Manager, Recreation Services

Concurrence by:

Darcie Osborne
Director, Parks, Recreation & Culture

Wendy Fulla
Director, Finance

Richard Harding
General Manager Community Services &
Deputy CAO

Laura Mercer
General Manager, Corporate Services and
Acting CAO