

Staff Report for Decision

DATE OF MEETING APRIL 16, 2025

AUTHORED BY DARCIE OSBORNE, DIRECTOR, PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE
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SUBJECT SPORT TOURISM GRANT FUNDING APPLICATION APPROVAL

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To seek Finance and Audit Committee approval to use funds from the Sport and Tourism Grant for sporting events that are impacted by the timeline of the Municipal & Regional District Tax (MRDT) fund transfer.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve granting the Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event at the Steve Smith Bike Park \$4,500 from the Sport Tournament Grant Fund.

BACKGROUND

The Freeride Mountain Bike (FMB) was founded in 2010 and is the world governing body of the sport of freeride mountain biking. It is registered as a not-for-profit organization in Germany. The purpose of the FMB is to promote free ride mountain biking sports, including the development, governance, and structure of free ride disciplines: dirt jump, park, slopestyle, and big mountain. The FMB World Tour is the official international circuit of both amateur and professional FMB competitions. Freeride athletes compete in sanctioned competitions around the world to earn points to qualify for the annual World Championship.

In 2023, the first FMB event was held in Nanaimo. In 2023 and 2024, the Vancouver Island Slopestyle events were supported through funding from the Nanaimo Hospitality Association (NHA) through the Municipal Regional District Tax (MRDT) Sport Tourism Grant stream. In both years the organization was granted \$4,500.

DISCUSSION

With the transition of the MRDT administration from the NHA to Tourism Nanaimo, there has been some impact to the timeline of the Sport Tourism Grant awards. This application timeline change has subsequently impacted this event as it will happen before the grants awards will be determined.

To help bridge the funding to the Vancouver Island Slopestyle event, Staff suggested that they apply under the Sport Tournament Grant stream (See ATTACHMENT "A") through the City of Nanaimo. This grant stream assists sports groups with cost of hosting tournaments.

The event currently does not fully meet the criteria for the Sport Tournament Grant as this will be the third year running and the Sport Tournament grant is designed to support first time start up events (See ATTACHMENT “B”).

The Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event will be hosted 2025-JUN-27 and 28 at Steve Smith Bike Park. The event will be a bronze level competition attracting both amateur and professional riders to compete in dirt jump, park and slopestyle. It is estimated that there will be 50 participants of all ages with 400 spectators in attendance. Participants and spectators coming from Vancouver Island, BC Mainland, other provinces and international locations.

The request to access the Sport Tournament Grant funding is a one-time request due to the transition of the grant administration and allocation.

The event supports sport tourism and the Nanaimo Sport Tourism Strategy. Funding this event through the Sport Tournament Grant will assist the event to continue for the third year in a row.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Sport Tournament Grant stream has an annual budget of \$20,000 and nothing has been spent to date in 2025. Funding this event will leave \$15,500 available for other sport tournament opportunities in 2025. |

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council approve granting the Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event at the Steve Smith Bike Park \$4,500 from the Sport Tournament Grant Fund.
 - The advantages of this option: The Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event will receive the equivalent funding they were expecting from MRDT thus enabling the event to occur.
 - The disadvantages of this option: The Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event does not fully meet the criteria of the Sport Tournament Grant.
 - Financial Implications: The Sport Tournament Grant will have \$15,500 in remaining budget for the year.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council deny granting the Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event at the Steve Smith Bike Park \$4,500 from the Sport Tournament Grant.
 - The advantages of this option: The Sport Tournament Grant will be available for other sport tournament opportunities in 2025.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Event organisers will need to find another funding source to cover event costs.
 - Financial Implications: None
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee provide alternate direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Vancouver Island Slopestyle 2025 event is seeking funding from Sport Tournament Grant as alternate to the MRDT Fund.
- The timeline for this event and MRDT funding does not align with transition from Nanaimo Hospitality Association to Tourism Nanaimo for administration and allocation of funds.
- Funds would be used to assist in costs to host the event for third year in a row.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Sport Tournament Grant Guidelines and Application
ATTACHMENT B: Sport Tournament Grant Criterial Checklist
ATTACHMENT C: Sport Tournament Grant Application Vancouver Island Slope Style

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