

DATE OF MEETING 2025-JUN-27

AUTHORED BY DARCIE OSBORNE, DIRECTOR, PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE

SUBJECT DISTRICT 68 SPORTS FIELD & RECREATION SERVICES AGREEMENT 2026 - 2045

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To renew the District 68 Sports Field & Recreation Services Agreement. |

Recommendation

That the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee recommend that the City of Nanaimo Council and the Regional District of Nanaimo Board authorize a renewal of the District 68 Sports Field & Recreation Services Agreement for a 20-year term from 2026-2045 commencing 2026-JAN-01.

BACKGROUND

Through the District 68 Sports Field & Recreation Services Agreement, The City of Nanaimo (the City) provides residents from the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Electoral Areas A, B and C and the District of Lantzville, with access to the City's five major recreation centres (ice arenas and pools) and twenty-three sports fields within the City of Nanaimo and two Electoral Area sports fields (Area B and Area C).

The Recreation Services Agreement was first reached between the RDN and the City in 2005 and has been renewed once since then in 2011. As the recreational facilities and sports fields are owned by the City and are not part of a regional function, only the cost of operation and maintenance are shared by the parties. The City retains the decision making authority on the operations of the fields and facilities and is responsible for funding capital investments. This agreement and current approach to funding these facilities achieves the goal of recognizing that not all residents from each jurisdiction utilize them the same way, particularly with respect to access.

The most recent agreement dated 2011-MAY-01 to 2025-DEC-31 is set to expire and in order to continue with the current cost sharing and governance arrangement, the service agreement requires renewal.

A joint staff committee from both organisations comprised of representation from senior staff, Parks, Recreation and Culture and Finance have been reviewing the previous agreement to update items no longer relevant and align with current practices.

The majority of the sections under the proposed agreement are consistent with the terms and conditions of the existing agreement. Cost sharing for the current agreement is based on usage of the facilities determined by a statistically valid survey that was to be done every five years. Due to the pandemic the survey scheduled for 2020 was postponed until 2023 leaving a significant gap. The firm RC Strategies was engaged to conduct the survey data collection required under this agreement as well as like agreements for Northern Regional District Areas. The survey data results and RC Strategies analyses of the survey data is attached as Attachment B.

In 2024, the total revenue that the City of Nanaimo received under this agreement was \$1,336,345.

DISCUSSION

Data Collection Methodology

While no data or survey system is 100% accurate, the methodology used for the survey and data collection provided similar results with a margin of error no greater than 2.5%, 19 times out of 20. This level of accuracy exceeds the industry standard of 5%, in 19 times out of 20 replications. Data was obtained by reviewing registration data, booking data and attending public drop in sessions at which address information was obtained from patrons exiting the facility.

Usage at the facilities (arenas, pools, sports fields) was weighted to provide as accurate a reflection of how the facilities are used as possible. The profile of usage at pools is typically 50% from drop in use, 40% from program registrations and 10% through rentals. By contrast arenas and sports fields are mostly rented by user groups (90% and 100% respectively).

Table 1 shows the trends in facility funding related to surveys conducted since 2010 and the percentage each contributing partners' population makes up of the entire RDN population based on the 2021 Census for comparative purposes. It is used to calculate the survey average % allocation in the table below.

Table 1 - RDN Contributing Partners Recreation Facilities and Sports Field Average Usage by Percentage*

Jurisdiction	Pools			Arenas			Sports Fields			Population
	2010	2015	2023	2010	2015	2023	2010	2015	2023	2021
Southern										
Nanaimo	88.8	91.2	91.7	84.1	86.8	86.0	85.3	89.4	89.3	83.9
Lantzville	4.7	3.9	2.5	5.0	4.1	5.4	7.1	4.3	4.7	3.2
EA A	3.7	1.9	2.6	5.8	5.8	4.5	3.4	2.5	2.9	6.3
EA B	1.1	1.0	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	3.8
EA C	1.7	1.9	2.5	4.9	2.3	3.7	3.6	3.3	2.8	2.8

* Only contributing jurisdictions

Proposed Changes To The Agreement

As noted earlier, the majority of the sections in the agreement are consistent with the terms and conditions of the existing agreement, however there are a few changes to note:

- The threshold for “non–shareable costs” for the development or upgrade of recreation facilities or sports fields increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The \$10,000 threshold included in the 2011 agreement is now outdated due to inflationary cost increases.
- Term of agreement from 15 years to 20 years, with surveys conducted every five years. Survey data would be averaged over the three most recent survey periods. This term allows three full cycles of surveys to be completed from start to finish.
- A comprehensive review of sports fields was completed which resulted in the addition of several City of Nanaimo sports fields and facilities including Merle Logan Artificial Turf Field, Second Artificial Turf Field (SATF), Harewood Artificial Turf Field East and Harewood Artificial Turf Field West, Departure Bay Fields, Deverill Field, Diver Lake Park Field, Groveland Fields, Harry Whipper Fields, Mansfield Field, Rotary Bowl, Sid Clark Gyro Fields and Q’unq’inuqwtuxw Stadium Artificial Turf Fields. Oliver Woods Community Centre was surveyed for inclusion, however did not meet the minimum threshold of 10% or more usage of the population from the RDN Areas attending public sessions and programs at the facility.

Sustainability / Citizen Implications

The availability of recreational facilities is of benefit to all residents in the region. The current approach to funding these facilities achieves the goal of recognizing that not all areas benefit in quite the same way, particularly with respect to access. The survey and data collection captures the ebb and flow of residents within the region ensuring that the cost of municipal facilities is reasonably shared by all who use them.

The amount of use corresponds to some degree with the proportion of population in each area of the Regional District.

OPTIONS

1. That the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee recommend that the City of Nanaimo Council and the Regional District of Nanaimo Board authorize a renewal of the District 68 Sports Field & Recreation Services Agreement for a 20-year term (Attachment A)
 - The advantages of this option: Facility operations and maintenance will continue with cost sharing based on usage from each RDN contributing area.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None
 - Financial Implications: No change to existing process.
2. That the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee not recommend that the City of Nanaimo Council and the Regional District of Nanaimo Board authorize a renewal of the District 68 Sports Field & Recreation Services Agreement for a 20-year term
 - The advantages of this option: None

- The disadvantages of this option: The City will fully fund the operating and maintenance of facilities without cost sharing based on usage from RDN contributing areas.
 - Financial Implications: The City would need to generate additional funding to fund the portion of costs which are no longer shared.
3. That the Special District 68 Sports Field and Recreation Committee provide alternate direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- In May 2011, the City and the RDN entered into a 15-year agreement to provide Electoral Areas A, B and C and the District of Lantzville with access to recreational facilities and sports fields within the City of Nanaimo. This agreement expires on 2025-DEC-31 and in order to continue with the current cost sharing and governance arrangement, the service agreement requires renewal.
- The Recreation Services Agreement reflects the agreement reached between the RDN and the City in 2005. This agreement and current approach to funding these facilities achieves the goal of recognizing that not all areas benefit in quite the same way, particularly with respect to access.
- The statistically valid data will be collected every five years of the agreement.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: District 68 Sports Field And Recreation Services Agreement 2026-2045
ATTACHMENT B: Survey Data and Analysis Report by RC Strategies |

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