

DATE OF MEETING NOVEMBER 19, 2025

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SUBJECT NANAIMO LEGION BID TO HOST 2028 AND 2029 LEGION NATIONAL YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To request a financial commitment from Council regarding the proposal by the Nanaimo Legion Branch 10 in their bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council commit up to \$100,000 in the 2026 - 2030 Financial Plan towards the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Canadian Track and Field Championships through the Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command together with Athletics Canada and funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund.

BACKGROUND

The Royal Canadian Legion has organized and coordinated the Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships for 46 years in support of Canadian youth and communities. This national championship gives young Canadians 17 and under a chance to compete against the best, develop confidence, and better understand the diversity of other sports minded youth across Canada.

The event is being held in Regina in 2026 and 2027 and expects to see more than 1000 athletes compete with support of 200 coaches, and over 1,000 family members and friends to cheer them on. Many of these athletes have gone on to compete at the international and Olympic levels.

The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command, together with Athletics Canada, is searching for a host city for the 2028 and 2029 Legion Youth National Track and Field Championships.

Nanaimo Legion Branch 10, along with Mid-Island Legion Branches and Provincial Command, supported by City of Nanaimo and Tourism Nanaimo will be submitting a bid package due 2025-NOV-30. Endorsements have been provided from the Nanaimo Track and Field Club, BC Athletics, and the Vancouver Island Athletic Association as well as \$50,000 per year from Tourism Nanaimo.

DISCUSSION

Nanaimo has a proven history of successfully hosting large sporting events, including the BC Summer Games and many other high level national and international competitions. Nanaimo

recently hosted the BC High School Track and Field Championships in 2024, the BC Athletics Provincial Track & Field Jamboree in 2023 and 2024, and the 55+ BC Games in 2025.

This event has the potential to attract visitors from across Canada and there will be significant benefit from tourism and additional accommodation requirements booked separately by spectators and others attending the events.

In 2023 a request for financial support to bid on the 2026 & 2027 Legion National Youth Canadian Track and Field Championships was approved by Council, however the bid was not successful. Feedback on the bid has been provided and Nanaimo has been encouraged to bid again for the event in 2028 & 2029.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The bid package requires that the Host Organizing Committee (HOC) secure a minimum one-time financial commitment of up to \$100,000 from corporate, municipal, provincial, tourism or accommodation incentives, prior to bid package submission. Staff recommend a commitment of \$100,000 utilizing the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund, to fund the bid for the 2028 and 2029 Championships. The HOC will work to obtain other financial support, and those funds would offset the City's \$100,000 commitment. However, for bid deadline purposes, the commitment is required for the bid package.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council commit \$100,000 in the 2026 to 2030 Financial Plan towards the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships funded from the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund, and that Council include a Letter of Support from the Mayor to accompany the bid.
 - The advantages of this option: Economic benefit to the community through the promotion of sport tourism venue on a national level. It provides a platform to prepare for higher levels of competition through the promotion of athletic excellence.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Commitment of staff time to the Host Organizing Committee. Access to public facilities will be limited during the event. Less funding will be available in the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve Fund for other initiatives and projects.
 - Financial Implications: The 2026 – 2030 Draft Financial Plan currently includes \$100,000 that was committed by Council for the 2026 and 2027 bid package, these funds will be redirected to the new 2028 and 2029 bid package. The 2026 – 2030 Financial Plan will be updated for the provisional budget to reflect this change.

2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend to Council an alternative funding source of \$100,000 to support the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships
 - The advantages of this option: Continues to support the bid package and the potential economic driver for the community.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Making any changes will not meet the bid package deadline of 2025-NOV-30.

- Financial Implications: Will leave funds available in the Strategic Infrastructure Reserve for alternative projects and initiatives.
3. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council do not approve the \$100,000 commitment towards the Legion Branch 10 bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track and Field Championships.

SUMMARY POINTS

- The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command, together with Athletics Canada, is searching for a host city for the 2028 and 2029 Legion Youth National Track and Field Championships for two years.
- The Nanaimo Legion Branch 10, City of Nanaimo and Tourism Nanaimo are preparing a bid package to host the event and require a funding commitment of \$100,000 from the City of Nanaimo.
- Hosting the event could have substantial economic benefit, up to an estimated \$15 M to the host community as Nanaimo will host for two years.

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