

Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of June 24, 2021

То:	Committee of the Whole	Date:	June 14, 2021
From:	Thomas Soulliere – Director of Parks, Recreation and Facilities		
Subject:	North Park Neighbourhood Association Funding Request for Use of Royal Athletic Park		

RECOMMENDATION

That Council award a \$9,985.22 grant to the North Park Neighborhood Association to fund the cost of hosting programs and events at Royal Athletic Park in 2021.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the summer of 2020, the City transformed Royal Athletic Park (RAP) into a recreation hub, providing community recreation services while the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre was closed. For 2021, a summer program has been developed for RAP which builds on last year's successful use of the facility.

In addition to the services offered by the City, a request has been received from the North Park Neighbourhood Association (NPNA) to host community programs and events at the stadium. Where possible, staff have coordinated the NPNA bookings to align with City programming, resulting in the Association avoiding facility fees. However, some of the NPNA programs and events are proposed to occur outside of the facility's operating hours and would require additional staffing to safely operate and clean the facility.

The Association has requested that the City waive any fees associated with their proposed use of Royal Athletic Park. Fees for access to Royal Athletic Park are based on the local market for such facility use and the recovery of operating costs, as outlined in the *Recreation Fees Bylaw* No.06-056 (Attachment A). Should Council wish to approve the NPNA request, staff recommend the funding be provided as a one-time grant.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with the options and implications of a funding request from the North Park Neighbourhood Association for the use of the RAP facility.

BACKGROUND

The City operates Royal Athletic Park under a rental model, with fees for usage as outlined in Schedule C of the *Recreation Fee Bylaw* No.06-056.

Last year Royal Athletic Park served as the City's recreation hub, providing many of the programs and services typically offered at the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre and a variety of other programs in partnership with the North Park Neighbourhood Association.

In April 2021, the City received a formal request from NPNA to host 14 hours a week of Association programming at RAP. The proposal includes art events, picnics, sport sessions, seniors' classes delivered in partnership with community providers, as well as a monthly farmer's market.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

To facilitate the safe use of the facility and associated building systems, City staff are required to be on-site at RAP when open to the public. Where possible, staff have coordinated access with the NPNA to align with City programming to limit fees applicable for the stadium's use; however, there are timeslots that are outside of the operating hours for RAP which would result in fees for the Association. The fees for this additional site access are outlined in the table below.

Program type	Number of hours	Total fees
NPNA Summer Programs	65	\$5,952
Monthly Farmer's Markets	67	\$4,034
Total	122	\$9,986

The Association has requested that all facility rental fees be waived. However, the fees and charges for the facility are outlined in *Recreation Fee Bylaw* No.06-056 and without an amendment to the Bylaw.

The NPNA could host the proposed programming at Central Park through the City's Build Back Victoria Program. Neighbourhood and community associations are eligible to apply for the use of park space under this program at no cost. Staff suggested the lower cost Central Park option to the NPNA, however, this was declined.

Should Council wish to support the Association's request, staff recommend the funds be allocated in the form of a grant, rather than a change to the *Recreation Fees Bylaw*, which would require more time to process.

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Option 1: That Council award a grant of up to \$9,986 to the North Park Neighborhood Association to fund the cost of hosting Association programs at Royal Athletic Park in 2021. (Recommended)

A grant award would fund the entirety of NPNA's request for use of RAP, including monthly farmer's markets and community programming time, outside of the City's planned operations.

Option 2: That Council decline the request from NPNA.

Council may choose to decline the request. This would require the NPNA find alternative means of funding costs related to farmer's markets and programming at RAP or pursue the option of hosting programs at Central Park or another park (ie Franklin Green) at low or no cost.

Accessibility Impact Statement

The program and services planned by NPNA are intended to ensure access for all citizens.

2019 – 2022 Strategic Plan

This report relates to 2019-2022 Strategic Plan Objective 5 (*Health, Well-Being and a Welcoming City*), and Objective 8 (*Strong, Liveable Neighbourhoods*).

Impacts to Financial Plan

Should Council wish to support the funding request, staff recommend awarding a grant that is funded through an existing grant stream or through Corporate Contingency.

CONCLUSIONS

The Royal Athletic Park facility is a unique community amenity able to serve a wide range of programs and services. The recent expansion of City and community-led offerings will provide additional opportunities for citizens to utilize this historic stadium in creative ways.

Respectfully submitted,

Navdeep Sidhu Assistant Director Thomas Soulliere Director

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager.

List of Attachments

Attachment A - Recreation Fee Bylaw No. 06-056