

DATE: February 25, 2020

FILE: 1700-02/2020/600

TO: Chair and Directors
Committee of the Whole
Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Recreation Grant – Consideration of Memorial Pool Funding Request for Options Analysis

Purpose

To support a joint evaluation that includes options for the CVRD Comox Valley Sport Centre pool and City of Courtenay's Memorial Pool in hopes that solutions may yield a mutual benefit to the delivery of aquatic services in the Comox Valley.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT an options analysis be completed in 2021 considering the best delivery of aquatic services in the Comox Valley with a focus on the Comox Valley Sports Centre Pool and City of Courtenay's Memorial Outdoor Pool.

AND FURTHER THAT an allowance for professional fees of up to \$100,000 be included in the 2021-2025 financial plan, allocated equally between the Recreation Grant (600) service and the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes (645) service in 2021.

AND FINALLY THAT City of Courtenay and Comox Valley Regional District recreation staff oversee this process in partnership.

Executive Summary

At the committee of the whole meeting on February 11, 2020 a request for \$50,000 to fund an options analysis of the City of Courtenay's Memorial Outdoor Pool was presented by the City of Courtenay staff as part of the 2020 – 2024 financial plan presentation for the Recreation Grant service, function 600. Reviewing the full spectrum of aquatic services in the Comox Valley would be beneficial to ensure any future decisions were made while considering the existing infrastructure limitations. This report suggests an options analysis for both the City's Memorial Pool and CVRD's Sports Centre Pool be completed together.

The advantages of this approach include

- Ensure decisions are made for the full spectrum of aquatic services
- Address the potential life cycle turning point of the facilities with regards to financing and sustainable service delivery
- Support by the City of Courtenay staff for a collaborative approach and reconsideration of the original request.

Prepared by:

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Background/Current Situation

At the Committee of the Whole meeting on February 11, 2020, the City of Courtenay Director of Recreation and Cultural Services presented a request for \$50,000 to support an options analysis of the Courtenay and District Memorial Pool. The majority of the operations and capital expenditures for this pool have been funded by the CVRD's recreation grant service. Courtenay is the owner, operator and programmer for the memorial pool. In general, costs are impacted by increasing capital and maintenance costs due to the aging infrastructure as presented at the aforementioned meeting. The pool was built in 1947 as the first unnatural aquatic space used by the community.

The CVRD's Sports Centre pool was built in 1974 and the CVRD has recently received a Recreation Facility Condition Assessments and Life Cycle report. The highlights of the assessment were presented to the Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission December 10, 2019. In general terms the life expectancy of a pool can range from 30-60 years dependent on a number of options and the Sports Centre pool is now 46 years old. Staff are planning to complete a more thorough assessment of the pool tank and operating system during the shut-down this summer which will help inform the proposed options analysis report. It should be noted service delivery to the residents needs are believed to be limited by the design and available programming options of the 1974 pool.

Reviewing the full spectrum of aquatic services in the valley would be beneficial to ensure any future decisions were made while considering the existing infrastructure limitations. Along with new trends towards increased leisure pool space aquatic services also considers the following functions:

- Fitness swimming (programs)
- Skill development
- Recreation swimming
- Sports training/events
- Therapy/rehabilitation

Recently there has been community conversations about other covered area programmed space for various applications. The agri-plex, covered tennis courts and a covered turf field are three examples. It is possible the existing envelope of the Sports Centre pool may be able to accommodate some of the needs of these contemplated facilities if the sports centre pool is decommissioned in the future. However this study is focused on aquatic services and may only offer suggestions for alternative uses of the two sites.

Policy Analysis

At the Committee of the Whole on Tuesday February 11, 2020 the following motion was carried:

“THAT the City of Courtenay's request for \$50,000 in funding for an outdoor pool options analysis for completion in 2020 be referred to staff for a report on the implications of their request”

Options

Option 1

Complete an options analysis in 2021 considering the best delivery of aquatic services in the Comox Valley with a focus on the Sports Centre Pool and Memorial Outdoor Pool. The estimated cost of the study is between \$85,000 and \$100,000 and could be included in the Recreation Grant service (600) budget and the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes (645) service budget as part of the 2021-2025 financial planning process.

Option 2

Proceed with the recreation grant request for \$50,000 for the options analysis by the City of Courtenay for the Memorial Pool only in the 2020 – 2024 financial plan.

Options 3

Do not proceed with any further work at this time.

Staff are recommending option 1 at this time because it most closely aligns with long term board strategic drivers of fiscal management through an overall analysis of options and it may reveal support for potential partnerships for other recreation uses. Furthermore this is an opportunity to advance the sustainable service delivery objectives of asset management planning.

Financial Factors

The 2021 budget process will request \$50,000 from the Recreation Grant service and \$50,000 from the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes budget. Most of the revenues for operations and capital for the memorial pool have been traditionally provided through the recreation grant budget and similarly the Sports Centre is funded through the Comox Valley Recreation Complexes budget.

Both pools currently do not have any significant reserves for replacement. This report will help inform the community options within a realistic budget. There is a risk of future public service delivery expectations and alignment of actions as a result of community engagement from this process. The purpose of the options analysis is to address the potential life cycle turning point of:

- Rate of continued investment in the current infrastructure
- Reconstruct the existing locations
- Reconstruct elsewhere with higher collaborative cost efficiencies
- Displace uses and remove infrastructure.

Legal Factors

There are no foreseen legal factors as a result of a collaborative approach between the CVRD and City of Courtenay to undertake the options analysis.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

The aquatic services options analysis support the following RGS policies:

- Transportation: Develop accessible, efficient, affordable and connected multi-modal transportation network – the options analysis would consider the best location for citizens to utilize alternative transportation to access aquatic facilities.

- Infrastructure: Provide affordable, effective and efficient infrastructure that conserves land, water and energy resourced – currently swimming pools have very high energy consumptions and determining appropriate maintenance budgets in alignment with the potential lifespan of the facilities is critical.
- Public health and safety: Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being – aquatic services continue to play an important role in health and well-being for all ages.
- Climate change: Minimize regional greenhouse gas emissions and plan for adaptation- the memorial pool location may not be the best location with regards to planning for adaptation and the health of the rivers.

Intergovernmental Factors

The City's Memorial Pool is aging and the City of Courtenay's objective remains the options analysis as originally presented. However, after a meeting with the City's Director of Recreation and Cultural Service, the City is prepared to support a joint evaluation that includes options for the Sport Centre pool. City staff recognize the synergies and efficiencies of evaluating both assets in the hopes that solutions may yield mutual benefit. Specifically City staff request that the evaluation is managed cooperatively so that the unique needs of each asset are addressed through the process.

Interdepartmental Involvement

Recreation services will largely lead this process with support from procurement and finance.

Citizen/Public Relations

A fulsome community consultation plan would be part of the consultant's purview, supported by both CVRD and City of Courtenay staff, for the options analysis in 2021.