



THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

MEMORANDUM

TO: Patti Bridal, Chief Administrative Officer **FILE:** 7700-16
PC: Jason Blood, Director, Recreation Services **DATE:** November 17, 2023
FROM: Leah Walker, Manager, Customer Service - Recreation
SUBJECT: CITY OF VERNON PARKS AND GREATER VERNON RECREATION FEES ASSESSMENT UPDATE

Following the 2018 Recreation Master Plan recommendation, a study of the policy for setting Parks and Recreation User Fees and Charges was completed by a third-party consulting group, Innovate Planning & Co.

This memorandum will serve as an update on the progress of the implementation of the City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment.

Council, at their Regular meeting held on September 11, 2023 passed the following resolution:

"THAT Council receive and endorse the 'City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment' as attached to the report dated August 4, 2023 titled 'City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Fees Assessment - Implementation Plan' respectfully submitted by the Manager, Customer Service - Recreation and the Manager, Parks and Public Spaces, Maintenance;

AND FURTHER, that Council direct Administration to implement the recommendations as contained within the 'City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Assessment' report;

AND FURTHER, that Council direct Administration to report back with periodic updates on the implementation of 'City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment' report.

The implementation of the City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment is underway and in accordance with the Implementation Timeline in Attachment 1.

The 5% increase of user fees, amalgamating child and youth rates, and removal of programs from the Recreation and Parks Services Fees and Charges bylaw was adopted by Council at their regular meeting of October 23, 2023, and will come into effect January 1, 2024.

The establishment of annual users' meeting, hiring of an event coordinator, and establishment of a Discretionary Grant Process are in progress by staff.

The next major milestone in this process is capturing data and determining cost recovery goals and subsidy rates for 2025 and onwards, and establishing a two-year cycle for the Recreation and Parks Services Fees and Charges bylaw. This will involve confirming accurate cost scenarios with another full year of user data and granular costing post COVID. As indicated by the Consultants, this is an in-depth process with quite a bit of data to capture and review. Recreation Services is looking to continue to work with Innovate Planning & Co to work on these next steps and have recommendations to Council ready for the Spring of 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive the memorandum titled "City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment Update" dated November 17, 2023 and respectfully submitted by the Manager, Customer Service – Recreation;

AND FURTHER, that Council direct staff to work with Innovate Planning and Co at a cost of \$40,000 to capture data, determine cost recovery and subsidy rates, and establish a two-year cycle for the Recreation and Parks Services Fees and Charges bylaw;

AND FURTHER, that Council authorize the funds to come from the Prior Year Unexpended Uncommitted Balance.

Respectfully Submitted:

Leah Walker



Attachment 1 – City of Vernon Parks and Greater Vernon Recreation Fees Assessment recommendations and Implementation Timeline

Approved for the Agenda by the CAO



Recommendation Summary		Priority
Administration		
1.	Hold Recreation and Park Fee increases at CPI for 2024. Recommend a 5% increase for 2024 effective January 1, 2024	High
2.	Model fee subsidy levels beginning in 2025 based on the price formula	High
3.	Establish cost recovery goals and subsidy rates beginning in 2025.	High
4.	Establish a 2-year cycle for the Fees & Charges Bylaw.	High
5.	Establish a discretionary Grant Process to assist groups in hosting major community events.	High
6.	Schedule an Event Coordinator and/or Parks Caretaker so that they are on duty when major tournaments and events are taking place.	High
7.	Remove recreation programs from the Bylaw effective January 1 st , 2024.	Medium
8.	Consider allocating a portion of the Municipal Regional District Tax Program (MRDT) funds collected from hotel room rentals in Vernon to be used to enhance and maintain City facilities and amenities used for sport hosting tournaments and events.	Medium
9.	Review recreation programs for premium and low-cost options.	Medium

Admissions		
7.	To confirm costing scenarios more accurately, another year of user data and granular costing is required to better understand user patterns and amenity and service costs following COVID.	High
8.	Amalgamate child and youth rates to be the same price for January 1 st , 2024.	High
9.	Review the Accessible Access Pass Program, and survey other local municipalities.	Medium
10.	Review low and no-cost options for core recreation activities such as swimming and skating.	Medium
Sport Field & Diamonds		
11.	To confirm costing scenarios more accurately, another year of user data and granular costing is required to better understand user patterns and amenity and service costs following COVID.	High
12.	Develop an a la carte menu for additional service fees (e.g., field lining, additional mowing).	High

13.	Establish annual users' meetings to discuss fees, tournament dates, maintenance priorities, etc.	High
14.	Consider establishing a Renewal and Replacement Fund for field repair and replacement projects	
15.	Consider charging higher fees for most expensive fields to maintain, and less for least expensive to maintain. Most municipalities have 3 field fee categories.	Medium
16.	Review service levels and staffing requirements, especially for tournaments.	Medium
17.	Establish a Field Allocation Policy. Use the Ice Allocation Policy as a template.	Medium
Rentals		
18.	To confirm costing scenarios more accurately, another year of user data and granular costing is required to better understand user patterns and amenity and service costs following COVID.	High
19.	Develop an a la carte menu for additional service fees (e.g., chairs, technology, set up and take down).	High
20.	Establish annual users' meetings with ice and dry floor arena users.	High
21.	Vernon charges different rates for minor and youth groups for gym and room rentals. Recommend charging one rate for all children's group gym and room rentals for ages 18 years and under.	High
22.	Adult ice rental rates are below market values for prime and non-prime time. Recommend aligning rates to cost with a phased in approach.	Medium
23.	Consider charging a picnic shelter rental fee for Kin Beach. Even a nominal fee prevents a group from booking the facility, and then not using it as well as supporting additional maintenance costs.	Medium
24.	Talk to field user groups about what additional field maintenance and event services they'd be willing to pay for if provided or arranged by the City.	Medium
25.	Review service levels and staffing requirements, especially for special events.	Medium
26.	Establish a Facility Rental Allocation Policy. Use the Ice Allocation Policy as a template.	Medium

Implementation Timeline

Implementation	Timeline
1. 5% (CPI) increase for 2024 (Jan 1)	Fall 2023 - Completed
2. Amalgamate child and youth rates for 2024 (Jan 1)	Fall 2023 - Completed
3. Remove programs from the Bylaw for 2024 (Jan 1)	Fall 2023 - Completed
4. Confirm process for data capture and level of granularity to show	Winter 2023
5. Establish annual users' meetings.	Winter 2023 - In Progress
6. Hire an event coordinator (ensure coverage for tournaments and events)	Winter 2023 - In Progress
7. Determine cost recovery goals and subsidy rates.	Winter 2023
8. Model subsidy scenarios for 2025 and 2026	Spring 2024
9. Establish a Discretionary Grant Process	Winter 2023 - In Progress
10. Share a portion of the MRDT to offset event and sport hosting costs.	Winter 2023
11. Establish a 2-year cycle for Fees & Charges Bylaw (in alignment with the Collective Agreement term)	Spring 2024
12. Develop an a la carte menu for fees (e.g., field lining, additional mowing, staging, room set up, etc.)	Spring 2024
13. Review service levels and staffing requirements	Spring 2024
14. Establish an Allocation Policy for fields and rentals. Use the Ice Allocation Policy as a template.	Summer 2024
15. Consider establishing a Renewal and Replacement Fund for field repair and replacement projects.	Fall 2024 through Fall 2025
16. Review the Accessible Access Pass Program	Winer 2024 through Fall 2025
17. Review low and no-cost options	Winter 2024 through Fall 2025
18. Review programs for premium and low-cost options	Winter 2024 through Fall 2025