

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Meeting Date: December 6, 2016

Subject: Wood Buffalo Sport Connection Community Engagements

APPROVALS:

Toni Elliott, Acting Director
Dale Bendfeld, Executive Director
Marcel Ulliach, Chief Administrative Officer

Administrative Recommendation:

THAT the following be recommended to Council for approval:

THAT Administration support community stakeholders in the creation of a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection as a separate, non-profit society supporting sports in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

Summary:

The need for an organization like the Wood Buffalo Sport Connection (WBSC) has been identified as a gap in the current sport delivery model and aligns with the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo's Strategic Plan and the Alberta Sport Connection 10-Year Alberta Sport Plan. As directed by Council, the Community Services Department (CSD) conducted public engagements to determine the support of key stakeholders in creating such an entity, finding that there is community interest in the venture.

The WBSC would focus primarily on "sport development" programs and sport development outcomes through a community-driven and strategic approach (non-profit sport, recreation activities and high performance, physical literacy and/or active participation efforts). The WBSC would increase growth and development of both the capacity and level of success of athletes, coaches and officials.

Background:

On January 26, 2016, representatives from the Board of Directors of the 2015 Western Canada Summer Games (WCSG) reported that the Municipality will receive a cash legacy of \$604,701 to be used for the community. Council approved the following:

"THAT the 2015 Wood Buffalo Western Canada Summer Games presentation be accepted as information;

"THAT the legacy funding of \$604,071 be allocated to the Games Legacy Reserve Fund; and

"THAT Administration investigate options for the proposed creation of a "Wood Buffalo Sport Connection", and bring forward its recommendations to the Sustainable Development Committee, no later than April 15, 2016, along with a recommendation for the final allocation of the \$604,071 legacy funding."

As directed, Administration investigated options and reported back to the Sustainable Development Committee on April 5, 2016, recommending that CSD complete an inclusive community engagement process to contribute to the establishment of a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection, and that the WCSG surplus remain in the Games Legacy Fund to be allocated through the Community Investment Program to a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection once it is formally established and able to request funding.

On April 12, 2016, Council approved the following recommendations of the Sustainable Development Committee made on April 5, 2016:

“THAT the Community Services Department complete an inclusive community engagement process to contribute to the establishment of a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection;

“THAT the \$604,071 from the 2015 Western Canada Summer Games (WCSG) surplus remains in the Games Legacy Reserve Fund to be allocated through the Community Investment Program to a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection once it is formally established and able to request funding; and

“THAT the final presentation be brought back to Council through the Sustainable Development Committee.”

Working with the Public Affairs Branch, CSD conducted community consultation from September 26, 2016, to October 25, 2016, reaching out to community sport organizations, stakeholders and residents to give them an opportunity to “Have Their Say.” Feedback was solicited through one-on-one meetings and telephone calls; 37 of 39 respondents supported the establishment of a Wood Buffalo Sport Connection. An online survey was carried out from October 3, 2016 to October 17, 2016, and a in person survey was done during an engagement session at MacDonald Island Park on October 5, 2016. Of the 256 surveys completed, 217 respondents (82 percent) supported the creation of the Wood Buffalo Sport Connection.

Rationale for Recommendation:

Successful sport development depends largely on effective partnerships and networking with a wide range of community groups, service providers, facility operators, national and provincial governing bodies, local authorities and volunteer groups.

Currently, there is no coordinated approach or leadership between sport organizations and stakeholders in the Municipality. A Wood Buffalo Sport Connection would be the point of contact for all sport organizations for sport development. This would address the need for greater collaboration, engagement and communication with outcomes that are community-driven - connecting people and communities through regional leisure and wellness activities and programs and helping to increase opportunities for local participation in large-scale sporting events.

Strategic Plan Linkages:

Pillar 3 – Building a Vibrant Economy Together

Pillar 7 – Building for a Healthy and Active Lifestyle