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**2026 Alberta Summer Games Feasibility Report****Report Purpose**

To provide information for Council's consideration on the feasibility of Strathcona County hosting the 2026 Alberta Summer Games.

**Recommendation**

THAT Administration submit a bid to host the 2026 Alberta Summer Games and that the costs of hosting, estimated at \$1.9 million over three years starting in 2024, be approved for inclusion as part of the 2024 budget process.

**Our Strategic Goals**

Goal 4 - Municipal Excellence

Goal 2 - Healthy and Safe Community

Goal 2 Priority - A diverse, welcoming, inclusive, and an accessible community for all

Goal 2 Priority - A diverse, welcoming, inclusive, and an accessible community for all

Goal 2 Priority - Social supports that enhance community well-being and safety, and build community connection

**Report**

The Letter of Intent to bid on the 2026 Alberta Summer Games has been sent into the province. Over the past few weeks Administration has been talking to potential and essential partners to determine ability and interest in hosting the 2026 Alberta Summer Games.

The 4-day long Games welcome up to 2,500 athletes, coaches, officials and chaperones. For the 2026 Alberta Summer Games, Administration will be proposing to offer 13 sports: athletics, baseball, basketball, beach volleyball (tentative), lacrosse, mountain bike, rugby, soccer, softball, swimming, tennis and triathlon. A request to add handball will also be included in the bid package. Administration is still confirming with all the sports partners that they can participate and will support the Games.

Administration is looking at the sports that can be hosted within existing facilities or in external facilities within a half hour drive from Strathcona County. Minor upgrades to infrastructure are anticipated to be covered in the existing budget. Major capital upgrades would be dependent on additional budget approval and Administration would look for grant opportunities to fund these.

The Elk Island Public School Board and the Elk Island Catholic School Board have expressed their support for hosting the 2026 Alberta Summer Games. The Games would not be possible without their support as their spaces are required for both accommodations and sports activities.

Multisport games are resource heavy, both staff and financial. Administration is currently developing a games structure that will balance staff and volunteer resources with financial resources. The cost of the Games to Strathcona County is initially estimated at \$1.9 million. A final budget will be completed for the bid package. Confirmation of the games organizational structure, sports partners and site reviews will determine the final budget prior to bid package submission.

The bid package, due August 31, will include previous games experience, proposed organizational structure, proposed budget, proposed sports and locations. It will also include the food service plan, transportation plan, athlete and special guest accommodations, as well as a medical and security plan, and media and communications plan.

In September, the Multisport Games unit staff will conduct site tours of the communities that are submitting bids. A final decision and announcement of the host community will be made in November 2023. Representatives of the host community will be invited to attend the 2024 Alberta Winter Games on February 16 – 19, 2024 in Grande Prairie.

If Strathcona County's bid is successful, the planning for the Games would need to begin in 2024. First step is hiring a Games Manager who would lead all Games related planning. The second step is to recruit a Friends of the Games Committee with the Chair being appointed by Council. The third step is forming a not-for-profit organization for the Games that can apply for grants and casinos and fundraise.

### **Council and Committee History**

May 2, 2023                THAT Strathcona County submit a letter of intent by June 30, 2023 to host the 2026 Alberta Summer Games; and  
                                 THAT Administration prepare a report for Council's consideration on July 18, 2023 on the feasibility of hosting the 2026 Alberta Summer Games.

### **Other Impacts**

**Policy:** n/a

**Legislative/Legal:** n/a

**Financial/Budget:** Initial budget estimates project the total cost over three years at \$1,900,000, starting in 2024. Administration will present Council with refined budget numbers and timing, as well as a funding recommendation as part of the 2024 Budget deliberations for Council's awareness. Due to the timing of the bid submission, Council would be committing to the potential budget impacts (to be confirmed during budget) now, as withdrawing support/budget for the Games during budget deliberations would have significant negative impact on both the Summer Games and Strathcona County

**Interdepartmental:** Fleet and Facilities Management, Communications, Transportation, Engineering and Operations, Economic Development and Tourism.

**Master Plan/Framework:** n/a

**Alternatives** That Administration not submit a bid to host the 2026 Alberta Summer Games.

### **Enclosures**

- 1                            2026 Alberta Games presentation
- 2                            Letter of Intent to Bid 2026 AB Summer Games