

APPROVAL REPORT

Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Policy

ISSUE

At its November 22, 2021 Regular Business Meeting, City Council was informed that the draft Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Policy would be brought back to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services for approval at a future date. The proposed policy is included in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommend to City Council that the proposed Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Policy, as outlined in this report, be approved.

BACKGROUND

At its November 22, 2021 Regular Business Meeting, City Council approved that:

“the proposed Recreation and Sport Grant Program be a tax abatement-only program.”

City Council was also informed that a policy to address implementation of that decision would be brought back at a future date for approval.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Administration developed the Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Policy (Policy) which establishes guidelines and criteria for consideration when reviewing applications for an abatement (see Appendix 1). Administration reviewed similar programs and best practices from other municipalities and used this as a template for the Policy. Some key components that were incorporated into the program include the following eligibility criteria:

- 1) compliance with municipal policies, bylaws, codes and legislation;
- 2) non-profit or charitable status;
- 3) alignment with the City’s plans and programs;
- 4) organizations must own the building and land; and
- 5) the property receiving the abatement must be available to the public.

The proposed Policy would ease financial burden for qualifying organizations, resulting in more funds being available to those organizations for reinvestment, capital improvements, or operational expenses. A policy-based process ensures requests for tax abatements are treated in a fair, consistent and transparent manner, and supports City Council as the final approval in the process, since the actual award of tax abatements cannot be delegated.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At the 2022/2023 Business Plan and Budget deliberations, City Council approved annual funding of \$100,000 for this program in 2022, and \$200,000 in 2023.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental, privacy, or CPTED implications or considerations.

NEXT STEPS

Pending City Council's approval of the proposed draft policy, Administration would promote public awareness of the Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Program. This new tax abatement program would also be highlighted and referenced on the Community Services webpages. Further to this, as with all new policies, this policy will be reviewed no later than five years after its enactment, and any changes will be presented to City Council for consideration and approval.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Notice for a Policy of this nature is required due to the inclusion of tax abatements being considered (see Appendix 2). The notice will be posted a minimum of seven days prior to the Policy being considered by City Council.

APPENDICES

1. Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Draft Policy
2. Public Notice – Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Mike Libke, Manager, Special Use Facilities and Capital Planning
Reviewed by: Andrew Roberts, Director of Recreation and Community Services
Approved by: Lynne Lacroix, General Manager, Community Services

SP/2022/RCD/PDCS/Recreation and Sport Tax Abatement Policy/gs