

Date: February 10, 2025

To: **Mayor and Council.**

Name and title: Andy Beesley, Director Civic Facilities and Events

Subject: 2030 Bid for Special Olympics Canada Summer Games

Attachment(s): PowerPoint Presentation

Recommendation(s):

That Council

1. APPROVE administration submitting a bid for the 2030 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games and;
2. APPROVE funding in the amount of \$400,000 cash and up to \$100,000 in-kind from the Major Events Reserve Fund and;
3. APPROVE the responsibility of financial deficit associated with hosting the Games, if any, as described in the report dated February 10, 2025, from the Director of Civic Facilities and Events, titled '2030 Bid for Special Olympics Canada Summer Games'.

Purpose:

For Council's consideration for submitting a formal bid to host the 2030 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games.

Background:

With the massive success of the 2015 Canada Winter Games, sport tourism became recognized as a strategic way a boost to local economy, community pride, and citizen engagement in Prince George. Throughout the past ten years, City staff, along with Tourism Prince George have created connections with sport organizations, both local and national, to build and increase sport hosting with high-level tournaments and events. One of the focal points in the sport hosting plan has been to host the BC Special Olympics Games, to be held this July, which would allow us to prepare to host the Special Olympics Canada Games.

Discussion:

On December 16th, Council approved staff to submit a letter of intent to submit a bid on either the 2028 Special Olympics Canada Winter Games or the 2030 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games. The letter of intent was approved by Special Olympics Canada and a bid intention meeting was held on February 6th. In order to take the next steps to examine the feasibility of committing to submitting a bid, city staff coordinated an internal team to review and assess both bid opportunities as well as to meet with Special Olympics Canada. In collaboration with Tourism Prince George, staff has done the research and have determined that we are highly prepared with accommodations, venues, support, and experience to host the 2030 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games. Work

has begun on the bid document as there was a tight turnaround with the deadline for submission being March 1st. If shortlisted, Special Olympics will come to Prince George for a site-visit in late spring with the announcement of the Host City in early summer.

The Special Olympics Summer Games is the country's largest multi-sport event for people with intellectual disabilities. Approximately 1,700 inspiring Summer Games participants would come to Prince George in early July 2030 to compete in 10 sports over 5 days, with a total stay of 7 days. We are very proud to already have high-quality venues that are required for all 10 sports: Athletics, Basketball, Bocce, 10-Pin Bowling, Golf, Powerlifting, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Soccer, Softball, and Swimming. Our local hotels have ample room to support the participants, plus family and friends who attend, as well as additional options of campgrounds and student dormitories. Venues such as CN Centre, Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park, PG Conference and Civic Centre, and Canada Games Plaza are ideal places to host ceremonies and special events that shows the vibrancy of our City.

Financial Considerations:

The economic impact of the 2030 Summer Games will be over \$8 million directly to the City and over \$12.5 million across the country. Special Olympics Canada does not require a specific bid financial commitment, but similar to the 2015 Canada Winter Games, the City would act as guarantor in the event of a deficit. As an example, the estimated budget for Medicine Hat hosting the 2026 Canada Special Olympics Summer Games is \$3.4 million. Special Olympics Canada commits \$500,000 towards the event, and athlete registrations provide another \$170,000. Special Olympics Canada works with the Federal Government for additional grants and has a number of large national sponsors who commit to supporting cash and/or in-kind donations. Special Olympics Canada has confirmed that there has never been a deficit for any Games; the majority have had a healthy surplus where 70% of the legacy stays with our Local Special Olympics. To assist with funding, staff are suggesting \$400,000 cash and \$100,000 in-kind be provided for the Games from the Major Events Reserve Fund. This could be done incrementally over the next 5 years in order to allow for funding opportunities for additional major events.

Strategic Priorities:

Social Health and Well-Being:

Create a complete community that welcomes people of all backgrounds and abilities.
Promote the use of public spaces as places for outdoor community connection.

Economic Diversity and Growth:

Promote Prince George as a place for business to thrive.
Build a strong, diverse and resilient economy.

City Government and Infrastructure:

Engage the community in exploring expectations, needs and priorities.
Advance reconciliation through collaborative action on shared priorities.

Summary and conclusion:

Bidding for the 2030 Special Olympics Canada Summer Games presents a valuable opportunity for Prince George to showcase its commitment to inclusivity and sport tourism. With a well-established infrastructure, ample accommodations, and strong community support, the city is poised to host a successful event that will not only enhance its reputation but also bring significant economic benefits. By securing this event, Prince George can further establish itself as a welcoming, vibrant destination while aligning with its strategic goals of social well-being, economic growth, and infrastructure development.

Respectfully submitted:

Andy Beesley, Acting City Manager/Director Civic Facilities and Events

Prepared by: Debbie Heywood, Manager, Event Services

Meeting date: [2025/02/24]