



**Subject:** *District Recreation Fund Policy Review*  
**To:** Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee  
**Date Prepared:** October 23, 2024  
**Related Motions:** C24(211)  
**Prepared by:** Jo Swinemer, Community Development Coordinator  
**Approved by:** Alana Tapper, Director, Parks, Recreation & Culture

### Summary

At the June 26, 2024 meeting of Council, motion C24(211) was made regarding the District Recreation Fund Policy as it relates to school playground recapitalization and review of the District Recreation Fund policy was requested.

### Financial Impact Statement

N/A

### Recommendation

That Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommend to Council to adopt the updates to the District Recreation Fund Policy.

### Recommended Motion

*Regular Meeting of Council (Policy & In-Camera) - November 12, 2024*

***Move that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommends to Council that Council give notice of intent to approve the District Recreation Fund Policy as attached to the Executive Committee agenda dated November 12, 2024; and that, A letter be sent to all 3 provincial parties and the next Minister of Education outlining Council's concern that recapitalization of school playgrounds is not a budget line item for Department of Education and Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education. The letter shall be CC'd to East Hants MLAs and NSFM.***

*Regular Meeting of Council - November 20, 2024*

***Move that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommends to Council that Council approve the District Recreation Fund Policy as attached to the Executive Committee agenda dated November 12, 2024.***

### Background

At June 26, 2024, Council meeting, motion C24(211) (*Moved that Council direct staff to prepare a report with respect to current policies on funding playground development and suggestions for policy improvement*) was made in response to District Recreation Fund report, specifically an application made by Enfield District School Parent Teacher Association where they applied for \$100,000 towards a complete playground recapitalization, with project cost estimated at \$230,434.

Under DRF policy, schools on their own cannot apply for funding. In the past, Home & School/Parent Teacher associations have applied for funding for playground enhancements, tables/benches for multipurpose cafeteria space, outdoor classrooms, and field improvements on school property, working with school administration and Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education (CCRCE). These prior projects were funded within DRF Policy with values ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

CCRCE does not currently budget for school playground recapitalization for its school sites. CCRCE can provide oversight from their operations department with regards to procurement and project management for these projects, but actual funds are not contributed to projects.

This Policy review was completed by the Policy Analyst, along with Community Development Coordinator and Senior Grant Review Committee.

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## Discussion

Staff have prepared a revised draft District Recreation Fund Policy showing several changes.

One change is the addition of section 2.3, specifying that approval is applicable for twelve months, and if project isn't actioned within this period, applicants must update the Municipality and may be required to reapply for funding. This change aligns with comparable Provincial programs, helps to ensure project readiness and can remove long-term commitments to projects that aren't viable.

A second change is the addition of sections 2.2 and 3.4 that outline a recommended change to the policy regarding projects on or for properties used by CCRCE, specifying a maximum of 33% of the total project cost; and that any such project must include guaranteed access for the Municipality.

In-kind contributions have also been updated in sections 3.5.1, 3.5.2, and 3.5.3 with reference to amounts based on minimum wage rather than static numbers that would require more frequent review.

There are also some administrative, template and wording changes that align with Municipal Grant Program Policy and some minor edits for clarity.

### STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

The recommended changes to the District Recreation Fund Policy align with Municipal Key Strategy of Strong Communities.

### FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

None at this time.

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## Alternatives

Committee may recommend other policy amendments as appropriate.

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## Attachments

DRAFT revised District Recreation Fund Policy (With Markup)