

BRIEFING

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Item # 14.1

Infrastructure Services Briefing to

**Regular Meeting of Council
2023 June 06**

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Alberta 2030 Commonwealth Games Bid Update

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

In early 2023, Council approved exploring a community-led bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games at multiple venues across Alberta including in Calgary, allocating up to \$1 million to the Alberta 2030 Commonwealth Games Bid Corporation (AB2030) for bid exploration work. Council also received Administration's internal governance structure for undertaking The City of Calgary's contribution to that work and directed an update by end of Q2 2023.

Administration has been working with AB2030 and partners to confirm feasibility details and hosting plans that will inform Council's decision on whether to advance to the next stage as a bid partner. This briefing fulfils Council's direction for a Q2 update, and pending alignment with AB2030 and partners, a final report for Council decision is anticipated in Q3 2023.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

The Commonwealth Games are an international multi-sport and cultural event that brings together over 4,000 amateur athletes from 72 nations to compete in approximately 20 summer sport disciplines. The Games are held every four years and have been hosted four times in Canada, the most recent being in Victoria, British Columbia in 1994.

Led by community builders and leaders, AB2030 was formed to explore a joint bid that would see the Games hosted in August 2030 at venues across Alberta, including in Calgary, Edmonton, Tsuut'ina and Enoch First Nations, and communities in the Bow Valley. In 2023 February, the Alberta bid was officially endorsed by Commonwealth Sport Canada as the Canadian candidate, and AB2030's Expression of Interest was accepted by the international Commonwealth Games Federation. In addition to Council's support of up to \$1 million for AB2030's exploration of the bid, similar financial commitments were made by The City of Edmonton and the provincial government.

The bid process involves a number of phases. The Dialogue and Feasibility Phase ended May 31, and during the current Candidature Phase, AB2030 will be seeking formal agreement from all partners to proceed with the bid in order to complete their application by August 31. The Commonwealth Games Federation will officially award the Games in 2023 November.

Bid Exploration

During the Dialogue and Feasibility Phase, AB2030 engaged interested parties and bid partners to understand potential impacts, opportunities, venue options and other information to assess feasibility. Partnership and engagement amongst all groups has been strong. The key deliverable by AB2030 for this phase was the Feasibility File, a questionnaire used to assess the ability to host the games. A City Internal Working Group coordinated the compilation of City interests and requirements to inform the Feasibility File.

Administration supports the vision AB2030 has developed for a Commonwealth Games that will meaningfully improve the lives of citizens, bring people together around shared aspirations, and deliver enduring legacies to better communities. AB2030 plans for the Games to be a partnership with governments, Indigenous groups, and community partners. They envision that community engagement and participation will be at the core of planning and activities, and that the Games will

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emphasize sustainability, legacy, and environmental best practices while promoting human rights and the values of equity, diversity, inclusion, and fair play.

The bid exploration work to date has confirmed that The City could be positioned to contribute key components related to sport hosting, venue requirements, safety and security, accommodations, transportation, and more. Administration is working with AB2030 and partners to leverage existing funding for planned sport and recreation projects, with investments proposed to address current service gaps and respond to increased demand for year-round, multi-use sport and recreation spaces. Financial implications related to capital funding, staffing, security, and other resources tied to hosting are being assessed, and high-level estimates will be available once AB2030 finalizes plans during the current bid exploration phase.

Administration has identified a number of key risks at this stage related to timing, capacity, and uncertainties about components of the hosting plan still under development. Work continues to mitigate these risks by collaborating with all partners, advocating for City interests, aligning reporting and approvals, providing input to support engagement efforts, clarifying the scope of partner roles, confirming financial and other resources required to support a successful bid, and reviewing legal agreements and guarantees.

Exploring opportunities to bid for major events such as the Commonwealth Games aligns with Council's Focus Areas of hosting and hospitality and enhancing our global position and reputation, and also with The City's aim to attract more events that build culture, enhance vibrancy, and support the tourism industry. Council's strategic direction highlights that these sorts of events are an integral part of achieving the Downtown Revitalization Plan, updating Calgary's brand on the international stage, and increasing the city's competitive edge through international exposure. The proposed plans align with The City's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, as AB2030 aims to work collaboratively with Indigenous partners, incorporating a legacy of respect, reconciliation, and celebration. The draft hosting plans also align with The City's Sport for Life Policy that recognizes the importance of sport in building a thriving and resilient city, and with the Eventful City Strategy that recognizes that festivals and events enhance quality of life and provide opportunities for celebration, connection and innovation.

Anticipated benefits and return on investment identified by AB2030 include developing and renewing sport and recreation facilities and amenities; promoting healthy and active living; enhancing social equity, inclusion and diversity; advancing Truth & Reconciliation; promoting arts and culture; increasing volunteerism, and driving economic impacts through jobs, tourism, branding and positioning Calgary and partner communities for attraction and retention of people and businesses. Benefits will be further refined by AB2030, including through their community engagement activities. While it is recognized that the current bid phase offers limited time to fully engage the public, AB2030's engagement is expected to be ongoing, and if awarded the Games, will continue in the years ahead.

Next Steps

As AB2030's hosting plans are confirmed, more information will be shared with Council, including interim updates as available and a final report to inform Council's decision on whether to proceed as a bid partner in Q3 2023. To augment Administration's report, AB2030 is also planning to share information more broadly about their finalized hosting plans to support partner decision-making. Council's consideration of whether to proceed may be contingent on decisions and funding from other orders of government, which, due to their internal processes, may not consider the bid until later in the fall. All partners continue to work together to align their approval processes.