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The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-EDT-5
Date: February 6, 2024

Subject:

Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games Final Report and Legacy Fund

Recommendation:

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends to Regional Council:

- A) That the Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games Legacy Fund of \$145,579 be distributed as follows:
 - i) Durham Community Foundation "Durham Region Adaptive Sport & Recreation Legacy Fund": \$112,000.
 - ii) Adaptive Sport Festival: \$30,000.
 - iii) Community Tree and Shrub Planting: \$3,579.

 - B) That, prior to the distribution of funds to any agency receiving funding from the 2023 Ontario Parasport Games Legacy Fund, the Region enter into an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding which prescribes appropriate reporting requirements, and which are otherwise in a form satisfactory to the Commissioner of Finance.
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Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 At the Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting on June 6, 2023, report [2023-EDT-7](#) provided highlights of the Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games and indicated that a subsequent report would provide the financial and economic impact results of the Games. This report summarizes the final financial results of the Games, provides an update on 2019 Games legacy initiatives, and makes recommendations for the distribution of the \$145,579 Games Legacy Fund.

2. Background

- 2.1 From February 3 to 5, 2023, Durham Region welcomed more than 400 athletes, athlete assistants, coaches, managers, officials, and provincial sport organization representatives, as well as hundreds of spectators to the Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games, building on the momentum from hosting the Games in 2019.
- 2.2 Athletes competed in 11 sports at eight sport venues, throughout five municipalities across the Region. The Games also included four demonstration sports, a new addition to the Games intended to elevate the profile of emerging sports within Durham Region and beyond.
- 2.3 The final report for the Games was submitted to the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS) on November 23, 2023, following the completion of an independent financial review by Deloitte LLP.
- 2.4 The Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games were a resounding success. The Games received tremendous support throughout planning and execution from the entire regional community in the way of sponsorship, volunteerism, spectators, contracted services, headband knitting, athlete support through the 'Be The Roar' campaign, attendance at special events, and much more.

3. Games Financial and Economic Impact Results

- 3.1 Sponsorship and fundraising activities for the Games generated nearly \$267,000 (\$179,774 cash and \$87,028 in-kind), demonstrating the overwhelming support of partners from Durham Region and beyond, and surpassing the initial sponsorship target by nearly 165 per cent.

- 3.2 Other sources of financing for the Games included \$135,000 from the Ontario MTCS (\$125,000 hosting grant and \$10,000 legacy fund grant following Regional Council approval of Games Legacy Fund recommendations) and \$99,120 from the Region of Durham (\$40,000 cash and \$59,120 in-kind for internal transportation provided by Durham Region Transit).
- 3.3 The Games surpassed the initial budgeted surplus/legacy target of \$60,230 by approximately 240 per cent, resulting in a Games Legacy Fund of \$145,579.
- 3.4 According to the economic impact assessment completed using the Sport Tourism Canada Sport Tourism Economic Impact Assessment Model (STEAM2.0), the Games generated an estimated \$872,991 in economic activity across the Province, \$702,853 of which occurred in Durham Region.

4. Durham Region 2019 Ontario Parasport Games Legacy Initiatives

- 4.1 The Durham Region 2019 Ontario Parasport Games generated a Legacy Fund of \$111,900. On November 5, 2019, report [#2019-EDT-17](#) identified the initiatives that would receive those funds. Updates on these initiatives are provided below.
 - a. 'Their Opportunity': Since its launch in August 2021, the Parasport Games Legacy Fund Grant, administered by Oshawa-based national children's charity, Their Opportunity, has provided funds for 64 youth to participate in four adaptive or all abilities sport programs in Durham Region. The current balance of the fund is \$19,000. A new, streamlined application process is being launched in January 2024.
 - b. 'Parasport School Grow It Program': Economic Development and Tourism staff established a partnership with Abilities Centre to lead this program to introduce parasports to selected schools in Durham Region, in collaboration with the DASC. Teacher training on boccia and sitting volleyball was delivered to a group of Durham District School Board teachers, but the pandemic impacted the delivery of the full scope of the program. Abilities Centre is currently working on a revised program approach in partnership with the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association, with the goal of completing a pilot with one school by the end of June 2024.
 - c. Parasport Festival: This initiative was put on hold due to pandemic impacts. However, in celebration of the 100-day countdown to the 2023 Games, the Games Organizing Committee hosted school and community try-it sessions featuring three parasports. The legacy funds from the 2023 Games will be added to remaining funds for this item. Together with the Durham Adaptive

Sport Collective (DASC), community partners, and contracted resources, a fulsome Adaptive Sport Festival will be planned and held in 2024 or 2025. The Festival will provide community members with information on local adaptive sport programs and other resources, and will offer try-it opportunities. An Adaptive Sport Festival will also be planned.

- d. The Town of Whitby's Iroquois Park Sports Centre Arena 3 Sledge Hockey Accessibility Upgrades: In June 2022, modifications were completed to improve accessibility for sledge hockey at Iroquois Park Sports Centre. The upgrades improve the playing experience for sledge hockey players and provide increased opportunities for Durham Region to host sledge hockey events in the future. Modifications included replacing the boards at the players' benches and penalty boxes with clear polycarbonate viewing panels; adding 36-inch-wide gates to the players' benches and penalty boxes; lowering the entrance area to players' benches and penalty boxes; and replacing fixed benches with removable benches.

5. Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games Legacy Fund Initiatives

5.1 Economic Development & Tourism staff updated the criteria established for the distribution of the 2019 Games Legacy Fund, to guide the distribution of the 2023 Games Legacy Fund of \$145,579. The criteria were approved by the Ontario MTCS. Legacy initiatives must support the nurturing and growth of parasport in Durham Region and deliver one or more of the following benefits:

- a. Increased adaptive sport participation.
- b. Increased awareness of adaptive sport opportunities.
- c. Accessibility upgrades that improve the playing experience for athletes of all abilities.
- d. Increased opportunities for hosting adaptive sport events, i.e., sport tourism benefits.

5.2 The majority of the Legacy Fund (\$112,000) is proposed to be directed to the Durham Community Foundation. It is proposed that Durham Region will enter into a partnership with Durham Community Foundation (DCF) to administer a newly established Donor Advised Fund called the "Durham Region Adaptive Sport & Recreation Legacy Fund." The purpose of the Fund will be to support adaptive/parasport activities, programs, and events offered in Durham Region, including but not limited to, competitions such as the Ontario Parasport Games, to grow adaptive sport opportunities and participation. Economic Development and Tourism staff are working with DCF and the Region's Legal and Finance

departments on a “Gift Agreement” between the Region and DCF and developing fund criteria and a governance model for the disbursement of funds. The Durham Adaptive Sport Collective (DASC) will review fund applications and recommend disbursements from the Fund, but final decisions will be made by DCF’s Board of Directors. Examples of initiatives that could be funded include painting bocchia lines on courts in a local gymnasium and an adaptive sport and recreation information sharing and try-it event for the Grandview Kids Adolescent Transition Program. Legacy funds from other adaptive sport events and other community initiatives could also be contributed to this fund in the future so that it continues to grow.

- 5.3 An Adaptive Sport Festival will be developed in collaboration with the DASC and other partners, using its \$30,000 share of the Legacy Fund to provide school groups and the broader community with adaptive sport try-it opportunities and information about local programs. Since hosting the Games in 2019 and again in 2023, new programs and teams in adaptive sports such as Sitting Volleyball, 5-a-side/Blind Soccer, Bocchia and PowerHockey (hockey played by individuals who use power wheelchairs), have launched in our community. The objective of this Adaptive Sport Festival is to foster the growth of existing programs and to identify opportunities to bring new parasport programs to the region. Funding from the 2023 Games Legacy Fund, together with the \$15,000 allocated from the 2019 Ontario Parasport Games Legacy Fund, will support implementation of the first Festival; and may enable enhancements such as creating a multi-day event or expanding the Festival.
- 5.4 The remaining \$3,579 is proposed to be directed to a partnership with Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF) and the Town of Ajax to organize an event to plant more than 100 trees and shrubs in the spring of 2024. Although this initiative does not relate directly to the criteria outlined in 5.1, it aligns with broader sustainability goals of the Games. The trees and shrubs will be planted in honour of Games participants and volunteers to help offset the carbon footprint from the Games. This was a commitment communicated to Games participants and volunteers during the Games.
- 5.5 These Games Legacy Fund recommendations are supported by the MTCS.

6. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 6.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:
 - a. Goal 2: Community Vitality

- Item 2.5 – Build a healthy, inclusive, age-friendly community where everyone feels a sense of belonging.
- b. Goal 3: Economic Prosperity
- Item 3.2 – Leverage Durham’s prime geography, social infrastructure and strong partnerships to foster economic growth.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Hosting the Durham Region 2023 Ontario Parasport Games created significant economic impact in Durham Region and has resulted in legacy funds for distribution.
- 7.2 The \$145,579 Games Legacy Fund will support the continued growth of adaptive sport opportunities, awareness and participation in Durham Region and beyond, and it is expected to enhance the lives of many individuals with disabilities living in Durham Region.
- 7.3 Durham Region Finance Department has reviewed this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE
Commissioner of Planning and
Economic Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer