



REGIONAL  
DISTRICT  
OF NANAIMO

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO DISTRICT 69 SWIMMING POOL LOCAL SERVICE AREA  
ESTABLISHMENT BYLAW NO. 899 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the RDN Board receive the Bylaw No. 899 Community Engagement Summary and cover staff report for information.

## **BACKGROUND**

Bylaw No. 899 gives the RDN the authority to operate Ravensong Aquatic Centre and recover the costs related to the facility. Bylaw No. 899 identifies the participants Electoral Areas F, G, H, Town of Qualicum Beach and City of Parksville and identifies the funding model of 50% property assessment and 50% usage in calculating the tax requisition for the Bylaw. The Bylaw was established in 1993 at the time the pool was built and amended in 2013 to change the funding from 100% property assessment to the current funding model of 50% property assessment and 50% usage.

The Board is currently considering two changes to Bylaw 899 as follows:

- Adding Electoral Area E (Nanoose Bay) as a participating area
- Changing apportionment of cost recovery to 1/3 assessment, 1/3 usage, 1/3 population based

At the September 6, 2022, Regular Board Meeting the following resolution was carried:

22-534

*That the Board approve the Engagement Plan (Attachment 1) and Detailed Schedule (Attachment 2) for community input from existing service contributors and Electoral Area E on changes being considered to the Regional District of Nanaimo District 69 Swimming Pool Local Service Area Establishment Bylaw No. 899*

The approved Engagement Plan and Detailed Schedule referenced in the above resolution are attached (Attachment 1).

The RDN implemented the Engagement Plan to inform residents of Electoral Areas E, F, G, H, the City of Parksville and Town of Qualicum Beach about the proposed changes to Bylaw No. 899 and to gather their thoughts about those proposed changes. To assist with the implementation of the engagement plan, the RDN hired the consulting firm RC Strategies. Firm personnel assisted in the design and implementation of communications and promotion materials; hosting of open house events; and survey design. The community engagement has now been completed.

RC Strategies analyzed the survey findings and authored the What We Heard Engagement Summary (Attachment 2). This summary describes the various tools utilized to inform residents of the Bylaw and the two changes the RDN Board is considering. The summary also presents the opinions of residents gathered throughout the process from both an online survey and additional comments provided.

The Consultant's What We Heard Engagement Summary is summarized as follows:

- A total of 796 surveys were received.
- Residents of Electoral Area E were the most involved in this process.
- A majority of respondents oppose the proposed change to the funding model.
  - Residents of Electoral Area E are strongly opposed to the proposed change of funding model.
  - A majority of residents from the other participants (Electoral Area G, H, City of Parksville, and Town of Qualicum Beach) support the proposed change to the funding model. Only 37% Electoral Area F resident respondents support the proposed change to the funding model.
- A majority of respondents oppose the addition of Electoral Area E in the aquatics service (Bylaw No. 899).
  - Residents of Electoral Area E are very much opposed to the inclusion of Electoral E in the aquatic service Bylaw No. 899.
  - A majority of residents from the other participants (Electoral Area F, G, H, City of Parksville, and Town of Qualicum Beach) support the addition of Electoral Area E into the aquatic service Bylaw No. 899.
- Two-thirds (66%) or 525 of survey respondents opposed the amendment being considered to change the funding model of ½ (50%) property assessment and ½ (50%) usage in calculating the tax requisition for the bylaw to 1/3 property assessment, 1/3 usage and 1/3 population.
- Three - quarters (83%) or 660 of respondents do not support the addition of Electoral Area E to as a funding participant to Bylaw No. 899.

Other input by way of comments made during the open houses and emails align with the findings of the survey results and provided further details on the reasoning behind respondent survey answers. Detailed comments from the engagement survey and public can be found in Appendices F and G in the RC Strategies Summary Report (Attachment 2) and RAC Bylaw No. 899 Public Correspondence (Attachment 3). In addition, a 533 (not verified) signature petition against both changes to Bylaw No. 899 was presented by a delegation at the regular RDN Board meeting on March 28, 2023.

As outlined in the September 6, 2022 staff report, that once presented with the summary of the community engagement, the Board would decide whether to amend Bylaw No. 899 and if so, what mechanism would be used to move forward with amending the bylaw.

A staff report authored by Jacquie Hill, Manager of Legislative Services titled Options for District 69 Swimming Pool Local Service Area Establishment Bylaw No. 899 Amendment following Public Engagement outlines options and methods for the Board to consider if amendments to Bylaw No. 899 are desired has been completed and is being presented concurrently at the April 18, 2023 Special Board Meeting.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications related to the recommendation. Should the Board decide to amend Bylaw No. 899, included in the 2023 - 2027 Five Year Financial Plan for Ravensong Aquatic Centre is \$120,000 for expenses related to changes that may be incurred in amending the bylaw. A cost of \$65,000 to \$80,000 was estimated to

complete the community engagement for Bylaw No. 899. Final costs have not yet been tabulated but are estimated to be \$28,000. These costs are being funded by the current participants of the Ravensong Aquatic Centre which includes the City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, Electoral Areas F, G and H.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT**

People and Partnerships - Develop a Communications Strategy to improve and enhance community engagement and public outreach.

People and Partnerships - Improve the governance and awareness of RDN activities for citizens throughout the Region.

Social Wellbeing - Make the Region a safe and vibrant place for all, with a focus on children and families in programs and planning.

### **REVIEWED BY:**

- J. Hill, Manager, Legislative Services
- T. Osborne, General Manager Recreation and Parks
- D. Holmes, Chief Administrative Officer

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Staff Report for Engagement and Referendum for the District 69 Pool Service and Expansion Regional District of Nanaimo Board September 6, 2022
2. Ravensong Bylaw No. 899 Community - What we Heard Engagement Summary - RC Strategies
3. RAC Bylaw No. 899 Public Correspondence - Wednesday, March 29 and Monday, April 10, 1:30 p.m.