CITY OF NANAIMO
THE HARBOUR CITY



BUSINESS PLAN 2027

Parks, Recreation and Culture

COMMUNITY SERVICES

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

In 2026, Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) reported through the Community Services Division and continued to enhance community well-being by providing facilities and venues, parkland, trails, programs and events, while supporting community organizations to deliver recreation and cultural experiences in Nanaimo and helping preserve the City's natural surroundings.

In fall 2026, the department was divided into two departments: Parks, Recreation and Culture and Facilities. Both departments report through the Community Services Division. As part of this transition, the new Facilities Department was joined by the Facilities Asset Management Planning section, which had previously reported through the Engineering and Public Works Division. Although Recreation and Culture, Parks Operations and Facilities operated in distinct specialized areas, the departments continued to nurture strong community partnerships that supported active public participation and engagement through a diverse range of programs, services and events.

Throughout 2026, Recreation and Culture continued to focus on individual and community wellness through program delivery, program development, community special events and the provision of recreation and culture facilities and amenities.

The Recreation section managed multiple recreation facilities across the city and worked with a variety of organizations to provide drop-in and registered programs, facility rentals, sport and activity amenities and support for community events. This section also oversaw park use permits and sports field bookings. Many community groups maintained connections with Recreation Services through agreements, leases and licences.

The Culture and Special Events section focused on building community through arts, culture and events. This section supported Nanaimo's arts and culture community, including active independent non-profits, collectives and individuals working across a range of disciplines.

The Culture team coordinated the public art inventory and maintenance programs, as well as the Poet Laureate programs; oversaw $705,421 in project, operating and downtown event revitalization grant funding; and maintained co-management agreements with major community arts and culture facilities such as The Port Theatre (The Port), the Nanaimo Art Gallery (NAG) and the Nanaimo Museum (the Museum). The Culture team also provided staff support to the Vancouver Island Military Museum (VIMM) and the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild (NPAG) Advisory Committee and collaborated on bid submissions for regional, provincial and national cultural conferences. The Special Events team supported major event organizers to deliver community events in City spaces, curated the annual Concerts in the Park summer series, collaborated on bid submissions for regional, provincial and national sporting events and supported numerous large-scale City and community events throughout the year.



Recreation and Culture worked collaboratively across City departments, applying a recreation and cultural lens to community planning, infrastructure projects and other initiatives in alignment with the City's strategic priorities and City Plan. PRC also collaborated across the division through integrated services, including administration, clerical support, custodial services and marketing support for promotion and communication.

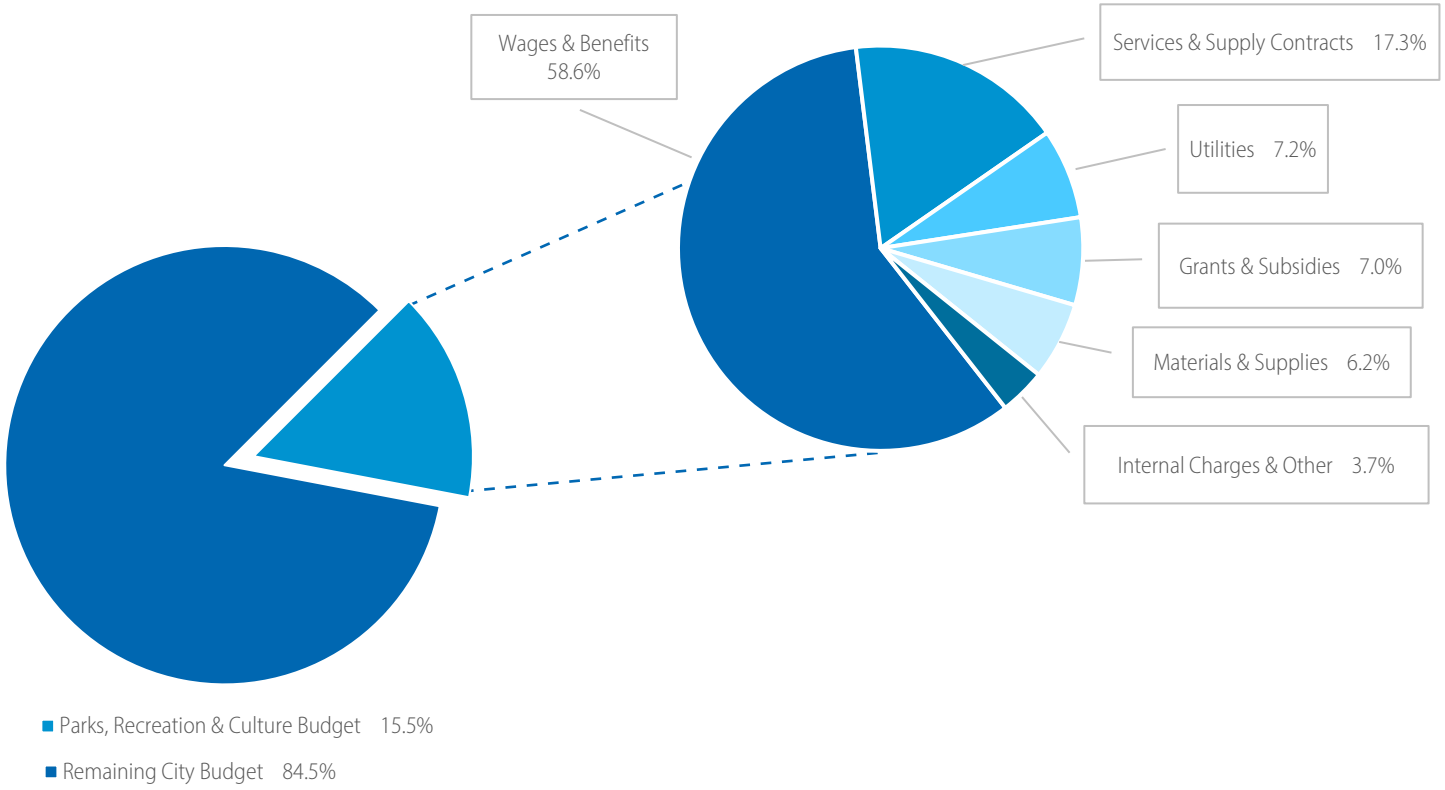
Parks Operations oversaw the care and maintenance of City-owned parkland, multi-use trail systems and outdoor activity venues. This section also shared responsibility for maintaining Nanaimo's urban forest and natural areas and for controlling the spread of invasive plant species.

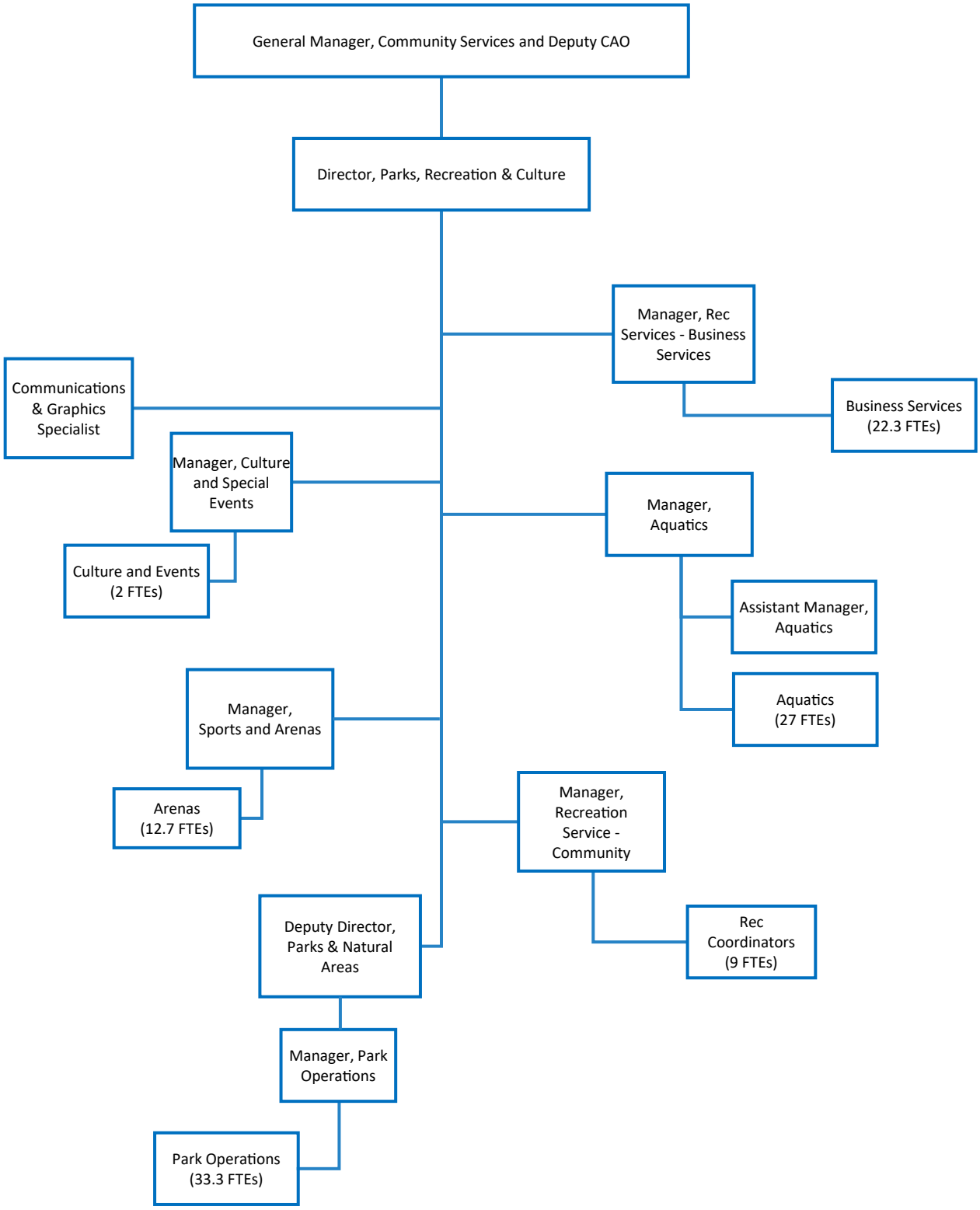
The new Facilities Department oversaw the care, maintenance and stewardship of many City-owned facilities, including civic and recreation facilities and provided custodial services. With the addition of Facilities Asset Management Planning, the department advanced asset management plans, condition assessments, project planning and preventative maintenance planning for City facilities.

Parks Operations and Facilities both supported implementation of the Capital Plan, with staff contributing to operational maintenance and capital project delivery.

Together, the departments continued to use an integrated service approach, working collaboratively with administration, clerical support, custodial services and marketing staff to support advertising, promotions and communication.

Department's Share of the Operating Expense Budget: $37.0M
(includes 50% of General Manager, Community Services/Deputy CAO)




General Manager, Community Services and Deputy CAO
Director, Parks, Recreation & Culture
Manager, Rec Services - Business Services
Business Services (22.3 FTEs)
Communications & Graphics Specialist
Manager, Culture and Special Events
Culture and Events (2 FTEs)
Manager, Aquatics
Assistant Manager, Aquatics
Aquatics (27 FTEs)
Manager, Sports and Arenas
Arenas (12.7 FTEs)
Manager, Recreation Service - Community
Rec Coordinators (9 FTEs)
Deputy Director, Parks & Natural Areas
Manager, Park Operations
Park Operations (33.3 FTEs)

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Recreation and Culture

- The Recreation and Culture section includes: Aquatics, Arenas, Business Services (administration), Community Recreation and Culture and Events. These sections manage, plan and implement programs, events and services. They oversee operation of the following:
- Five major recreation centres including: Beban Park, Beban Social Centre, Beban Pool, Frank Crane Arena (FCA), Cliff McNabb Arena (CMA), Bowen Recreation Complex (Bowen), Nanaimo Aquatic Centre (NAC), Nanaimo Ice Centre (NIC) and Oliver Woods Community Centre (OWCC).
- Three activity centres including Kin Hut, Rotary Fieldhouse and Centennial Building.
- The Old Victoria Arts Centre (the OV) performing arts space.
- Included in these facilities are: two indoor swimming pools, one outdoor pool, one lifeguarded lakefront, four sheets of ice, two fitness centres, two gymnasiums, one covered multi-sport court, three outdoor lacrosse boxes, two picnic shelters and many other multi-use programming spaces.
- Facilitates allocation of over 30 sports fields and nearly 40 sports field user groups throughout the City each year.
- Facilitates allocation of nearly 50 ice user groups and 10 dry floor user groups throughout the City each year.
- Oversees the coordination of the expansion and operation of three major facilities, Serauxmen Stadium (Serauxmen), q'unq'inuqwstuxw Field and Rotary Bowl within the Stadium District that are home to Nanaimo United FC, the Nanaimo Night Owls, the VI Raiders, VIU Mariners and the Nanaimo Track & Field Club.
- Allocation of rentable programming space for community groups, government agencies, local organizations, families and individuals within indoor facilities, sports fields and outdoor amenities.
- Supports and assists community driven events and festival organizing committees, enabling them to offer community events in City facilities, parks and outdoor venues in a safe, effective and efficient manner.
- Works inter-departmentally to provide guidance, support and collaboration of public art, community events and achievements and other community-based initiatives.
- Administers co-management agreements and provides support to the partners who operate City-owned cultural facilities, including the Museum, The Port, NAG, the OV and the VIMM.
- Administers a variety of co-management agreements, licenses and leases at City-owned sport and recreational facilities such as Kin Pool, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Nanaimo United Football Club, Nanaimo Curling Club, Rotary Bowl, Serauxmen Stadium, Nanaimo BMX, VIEx, Island Health (at NAC), NIC, facility concessions and vending and more.
- Coordinates an administration hub that includes all accounting services as well as overseeing a centralized switchboard for PRC and front desk services for all facilities which provide program registration, drop-in admissions, membership sales, customer care/inquiries and administers the Leisure Economic Access Program (LEAP).
- Coordinates inclusive programs, workshops and citywide events for all ages in community parks and facilities.
- Coordinates a variety of summer camp opportunities for children throughout City venues.
- A number of free and accessible summer playground programs are offered.
- Develops, delivers and maintains the City's public art programs, Poet Laureate Program, Youth Poet Laureate Program and Concerts in the Park Summer Series.
- Provides in-house graphic design, communications, promotions and marketing for all of PRC's programs and services.
- Hosts local, provincial, national and international events, competitions and tournaments.
- Links with various organizations that access City funds and administers six grant streams, including; Cultural Operating, Cultural Project, Downtown Event Revitalization Fund, Travel Assistance, Sport Tournament and Community Program Development grants.

- Supervises and provides public safety measures through lifeguards, the Water Safety Education Team, attendants at gymnasiums and weight rooms and skate patrol at arenas.
- Provides staff support to the Council appointed Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) and staff support to the newly formed NPAG Advisory Committee.
- Collaborates with Tourism Nanaimo, cultural and community partners and local government agencies to produce bid packages for large-scale regional, provincial and national conferences and events.
- Coordinates annual community achievement awards such as the Culture Awards and Civic Merit Awards.

Parks Operations

Acquires, maintains, develops and conserves over 1,125 hectares of parkland and environmentally protected areas, divided into:

- 13 City destination parks and over 90 neighbourhood parks, including 843 hectares of natural area, of which 270 hectares are designated environmentally sensitive.
- 32 sports fields, including five artificial turf fields.
- 74 playgrounds.
- Three water parks and one spray park.
- Three youth/skateboard parks.
- Over 186 kilometres of multi-purpose trails.
- 12 dog off-leash parks.
- Mountain bike facilities including skills parks, pump tracks and single track trails.
- Sport and activity venues including, but not limited to, box lacrosse, tennis, pickleball, disc golf, basketball and sand volleyball.
- Space for community groups including community gardens, greenhouses, lawn bowling, disc golf course and others.
- Maintains horticulture areas, including planting beds, planters, hanging baskets, trees and naturalized areas.
- Urban forest management (all publicly owned trees including street trees) ensuring the health of Nanaimo's urban forest and responding as trees are affected by disease, droughts and climate change.
- Invasive plant and natural area management to protect ecosystems, including working with volunteer groups to steward parks, control invasive plant species and restore ecological diversity.



- Maintains paved and hard surface trails, bridges, stairs and boardwalks, as well as beach access points.
- Provides and oversees landscape maintenance of civic and recreation facilities, cemeteries, medians and public boulevards.
- Conducts facility maintenance to all park outbuildings, picnic shelters and amenities.
- Maintains all City-owned irrigation systems in parks, boulevards and medians.
- Works with a wide range of citizen organizations, land agencies and individuals in the management of parks and leased properties.
- Provides and oversees snow and ice removal at civic and recreation facilities, sidewalks bordering City-owned properties and all bike / multi-use trails.
- Works alongside Bylaw Services to ensure appropriate bylaw enforcement in all parks and trails, ensuring the safety of park users and park neighbours.
- Develops parks and open space plans, with consultation from parks users and the community.
- Reviews development applications and land acquisition opportunities and requests for park, natural areas and trail dedications to meet future community needs.
- Communicates topical parks issues and promotes opportunities for residents to engage with their parks.

*Currently under review.

2026 ACHIEVEMENTS

Recreation and Culture

Aquatics

- Connected with the community through hosted special events and swims, including Activate New Year's Swim, Family Day, statutory holiday public swims, Halloween Howl, Snowball Swim, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR), Dive-In Holiday Movie and Pro-D Day swims.
- Participated in the Central Island Multicultural Society (CVIMS) Newcomers Welcome event at the VICC and provided a water safety presentation to members of the CVIMS.
- Continued to build the Nanaimo Drowning Prevention Coalition (NDPC) to support awareness, education, interventions, skills development and research. This multi-sectoral coalition brought together organizations, stakeholders and supporters in the drowning prevention effort and attended three community events in 2026.
- The Water Safety Education Team returned in 2026 and provided water safety information at eight community events throughout the summer, as well as visits to PRC summer camps.
- A total of 5,720 children and adults participated in Swim for Life and swimming lesson programs.
- A total of 360 participants completed advanced aquatic courses, including Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross, National Lifeguard Award, Lifesaving Instructor, National Lifeguard Waterfront, Airway Management & Oxygen Administration (AMOA) and Swimming Instructor.
- Collaborated with Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools (NLPS) to offer advanced aquatic training in Lifesaving Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross to 19 successful participants in grades eight and nine.
- The Swim to Survive program provided drowning prevention training to 2,115 Grade 3 and Grade 7 NLPS students.
- Partnered with Canucks Autism Network (CAN) to provide swimming lessons at Beban Pool during winter, spring and fall programming, with 30 participants per session.
- Six recertification sessions were programmed for 2026.



- The 2026/2027 Swim Instructor recertification cycle focused on meeting the needs of diverse swimmers through online adapted swim instructor training offered by the Lifesaving Society in partnership with CAN.
- The course equipped instructors with skills to teach neurodivergent swimmers, including swimmers on the autism spectrum, alongside their peers in aquatic settings by creating predictability and structure, applying effective communication strategies, using visual supports and implementing motivation techniques.
- Fall in-service training included a review of these skills and hands-on practice for staff.
- Partnered with Special Olympics Nanaimo's swim program to provide pool space for swim training for athletes with intellectual disabilities.

- Continued to implement the Aquatics Growth and Development Plan by hosting a variety of in-services on topics such as preschool lessons, water tests and pool chemistry, lifeguard skills, first aid skills, public relations and incident and accident reports.
- Onboarded several new casual lifeguard instructor staff and added another permanent full-time Aquatics Coordinator.
- NAC hosted 13 special events in 2026, including three provincial meets: two for artistic swimming and one for speed swimming. The Masters Provincial Meet resulted in 12 new Canadian records and one world record being set at NAC.
- Hosted 12 Lions' Free Swim sessions with a total of 1,589 participants.
- First Beach at WWL had lifeguards on site from noon to 5:30 p.m., seven days a week, throughout July and August, including statutory holidays.
- Weekly aquatic summer camps served 96 children aged 8 to 15 in 2026 through the Junior Lifeguard Club (JLC) Camp and Swim Stars programs.
- The JLC Pro-D Day Camp served 53 participants.
- The Aquafit program continued to grow with the addition of Aqua Yoga and new pre-registered classes on Sunday mornings and Thursday evenings. In 2026, 22 classes were offered each week and Shallow Water, Deep Water, Therapy, Zumba and Aqua Yoga classes served 541 registered swimmers, with 28 participants on a waitlist.
- In fall 2026, a new evening drop-in Aqua Zumba class was added on Tuesday evenings.
- The partnership with the Nanaimo Diamonds successfully offered Intro to Synchro and AquaGo! programs to 82 swimmers.

Arenas

- The Winter Wonderland event at FCA offered 39 free public sessions, with anticipated attendance of more than 9,000 participants and support from more than 30 local community sponsors.
- Hosted 27 Lions' Free Skate sessions with a total of 6,400 participants.
- A total of 488 students attended school skating lessons from January to March 2026 and approximately 380 students participated from September to December.
- RecSkate had a total of 3,950 registered participants in 2026.
- Arena summer camps ran at 90% capacity throughout July and August.
- City arenas hosted 13 hockey and lacrosse tournaments, as well as Dry Grad, WrestleFest, the Island Times Gymnastics Competition, the Vancouver Island Regional Skating Competition and the Nanaimo Figure Skating Club Ice Show.
- The dry floor season supported seven lacrosse user groups, including the Sr. A Timbermen, Jr. A Timbermen, Jr. B Timbermen, Sr. C Snuneymuxw Sun Devils, Sr. Women, Masters NDLA and two ball hockey leagues for adults and youth. Nanaimo Minor Hockey also used the dry floor season for shooting clinics and floor hockey sessions.
- Hosted the BC Ball Hockey Association Men's B and D Provincials, with more than 20 teams in attendance.
- Facilitated the annual ice user and dry floor user meetings.
- Partnered with CAN to provide ongoing on-ice fall and winter programming.
- All four arenas received new rubber flooring in dressing rooms, common areas or both.
- Installed automatic washroom door openers at CMA and NIC, in addition to the existing openers at Frank Crane Arena, to improve accessibility.
- As part of the broader Beban Park 50th anniversary, celebrated the 50th anniversary of FCA with a commemorative ice logo in collaboration with the Nanaimo Clippers.
- Cliff McNabb Arena underwent an evaporative condenser renewal, allowing continued provision of the ice surface for user groups and generating an estimated annual electricity savings of 18,000 kWh.

Business Services

- Completed negotiations to renew the District 68 Field and Recreation Services Agreement.
- Continued implementation of LEAP review recommendations by creating processes for community adjudicators and agency referrals.
- Collaborated with The Port to offer free tickets for LEAP clients to attend "A Simple Space" as a pilot through the Theatre Angels program, with 74 free tickets issued.
- Continued the partnership with BC Transit and the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to support sales of the new BC Transit UMO fare service and expanded HandiDart sales at all five recreation centres.

- Facilitated Recreation operating grants for McGirr Sports Society, Kin Pool, VIEx and PacificSport.
- Used new advertising and marketing opportunities to promote PRC programs and services, including movie theatre advertising, monthly neighbourhood magazines such as The Jingle Pot and The Hammond Bay and increased online advertising through NanaimoNewsNow and the Nanaimo News Bulletin.
- Increased PRC's online social media presence by boosting posts on Facebook and Instagram to reach larger audiences.
- Continued to share information about PRC services with potential clients and partner organizations, including Service Canada, the Newcomers Club and CVIMS.
- The City celebrated and recognized National AccessAbility Week from May 26 to 31, 2026.
- Implemented a membership marketing and retention strategy for Active Passes, including a new partnership with VIU residences and retention initiatives for current members.
- Front desk staff participated in a Social Prescribing awareness campaign to share information about the program and how the primary health care referrals work by wearing buttons that said, "Ask Me About Social Prescribing".
- Finalized the Hammond Bay School multi-purpose space agreement and added the facility to the allocations team's facility rental portfolio.
- Maintained ongoing collaboration with governing bodies such as BCRPA and RFABC.
- Installed assistive hearing devices at the front counters in all community recreation centres, funded through a SPARC BC grant.
- Worked with the Nanaimo Division of Family Practice to expand Group Medical Visits into OWCC.
- Provided staff liaisons to various committees such as ACAI, Tourism and Sport Tourism, Special Event Advisory Committee, Youth Advocates Committee, Nanaimo Early Years Partnership, Nanaimo Youth Resiliency Strategy Steering and more.
- Continued to represent PRC on the steering committee for Social Prescribing to help isolated seniors access recreation and culture services in the City through primary healthcare referrals.

Facility Allocations

- Allocations clerks liaised with community members and organizations to coordinate facility rentals for a variety of events and tournaments, including the following:
  - Nine major events with more than 5,000 attendees were supported, including Nanaimo Pride, Canada Day, VegFest, Bathtub Weekend, Silly Boats, Mid-Autumn Festival, the Night Market and National Indigenous Peoples Day.
  - Twenty-two major events with 1,000 to 5,000 attendees were supported, including the FIFA event, Love Your City, WWL Dragon Boat Regatta, Food Truck Fridays, Nanaimo Blues Festival and Hub City Soap Box Derby.
  - A total of 171 other large events were supported, including craft fairs, performing arts events, ticketed sporting events, home shows, the Maple Sugar Festival, Island Fantasy Ball, proms, dry grads, Diwali, indoor and outdoor farmers markets and wrestling events.
  - 774 birthday parties.
  - 43 weddings.
  - 19 celebrations of life.
  - Eighteen tournaments were supported, including hockey, lacrosse, figure skating, soccer, badminton, pickleball, softball, baseball and aquatic sports.
  - 23 production rentals at The OV Arts Centre.
  - 13 blood donor clinics.
  - A total of 124 large outdoor events such as Night Owls games, Harbourside games and VI Raiders games were supported at locations including various parks (e.g. Maffeo Sutton Park, Stadium District and Departure Bay).
  - Sixteen Fun Day special events were supported, including Healthamongus, Terry Fox events, private cultural and community events, Super Hero swims, Halloween Howl swim and Snowball Swim.

Community Recreation

- Planned and implemented Activate 2026!, an event planned to make New Years' resolutions easy and fun! The event hosted over 900 people at Beban Park with an action packed family fun event.
- Completed construction of the outdoor classroom at Beban Park and held an opening ceremony with mayor and council, the ACAI committee and Afterschool Kids Club.

- Hosted a joint Family Day celebration and the 50th anniversary of Beban Park at the Beban Social Centre. Approximately 5,000 people attended. The event activated the entire Beban complex, including the Social Centre, FCA, CMA, Beban Pool and the NAC. Activities included inflatables, a photo booth, mini golf, arts and crafts, swimming and skating. Community organizations, including Nanaimo Science, along with various Beban user groups, participated and provided engaging activities for attendees throughout the day.
- Hosted Canada Day Celebrations at Maffeo Sutton Park, which saw estimated 18,000 people in attendance over the course of the day.
- Hosted a Family Fun Night blending four events into one big event including a FIFA watch party and drone show. The City received a $15,000 grant from the Ministry of Tourism, Sport, Arts and Culture. A second Family Fun Night was held at WWL.
- Hosted Nanaimo's first ever drone show which was funded by a $75,000 grant from the Nanaimo Foundation and Stanley De Vos Fund.
- Added a new event on New Year's Eve that will include a New Year's countdown, swimming, skating, bouncy castles, arts and crafts, food, truck, musical entertainment and much more.
- Healthamongus, continued in 2026. The five-day event was held at the recently opened Harewood Centennial Turf Fields (HCTF) in a long-time partnership with NLPS and sponsorship this year from Country Grocer. A total of 3,400 students from Kindergarten to Grade 5 from 21 schools participated in the enjoyable and physically engaging games. Additionally, 29 staff members were recruited to oversee the activities.
- Partnered with NLPS Early Learning & Care to offer multiple Ready, Set, Learn events at various elementary schools throughout the City, at no cost.
- Celebrated Youth Week (May 1 - 7, 2026) which featured 16 mini-events for youth in Nanaimo. Events included free activities such as; drop-in sports, youth lounge, pizza nights, pop up in the park and swimming
- Welcomed back the Nanaimo Social Club. Provided ongoing support to this free program for adults with diverse abilities that meets once a week for different social activities and outings. Staff have expanded this program to include a social club for youth ages 12-18 with diverse abilities.
- Bowen Park Seniors memberships have reached 2,286 as of September 29, 2026.



- PRC staff hosted an interactive booth at 11 Thursday Night Markets on Commercial Street. Each week staff hosting the booth had a different theme and activity to engage market attendees.
- Formed a collaborative partnership with VIU, NLPS and PRC to create a reimagined Recreation Prescription (Rec Prescription) project to promote health and wellbeing to Grade 5 and 6 students. Rec Prescription launched Fall 2024 and runs through Fall and Winter at three identified schools in the NLPS district focusing on mental health, social connectedness and physical activity, targeting youth at risk as identified in the Nanaimo Youth Resiliency Strategy. The research from the project will be used to help expand the program to more sites and communities in the future – positively impacting as many youth as possible
- PRC was awarded $23,000 in funding through the Canada Summer Jobs Program which was dedicated to support six full-time summer leader positions.
- Recruited and trained 54 summer leaders to lead day camps and programs over the summer.
- Revamped free playground program that offered a location at Departure Bay playground full time and an additional roving playground which visited five parks and open spaces in various neighborhoods throughout the summer.
- Eight summer day camps were offered in various locations throughout the City for children and youth aged 3-14 years including; Tree Frog Camp, Girls Get Active, Tennis Camp, Camp Wild, Camp Holidaze, Jr LIT Camp and Centennial Sports Camp.

- A total of 8,125 day camp spaces were made available, with 7,396 registrations, representing 91% fill rate. The City also partnered with several local business to provide specialized day camp experiences such as cooking, paddling, golf, theatre and dance. These programs saw 424 registrations of 493 spaces that were available.
- Camp Sunsation returned in 2026. Sunsation ran for four weeks and saw 71 children with diverse abilities attend the camp at Hammond Bay School. Fourty-two children with diverse abilities were also successfully integrated into mainstream summer camp programs with a one-to-one leader ratio. Camp Sunsation and Integration was made possible in partnership with and supported by $206,000 in funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- Launched online placement registration for the summer Leaders In Training (LIT) and Quest programs. Integrating the sign-up and selection experience into our existing Xplor registration systems created more accessibility and access for youth and families. This year registration for the LIT and Quest programs ran at 100% capacity, with LIT having a significant waitlist, demonstrating strong interest from the community.
- Continued to promote health and activity to school-aged children through the Active Pass program. Distributed Active Passes to 1,248 Grade 5 students and 1,229 Grade 6 students. The passes have been scanned to access activities such as; swimming, skating and drop in sports 9,541 times. In collaboration in NLPS we were able to provide an Active Pass to every single Grade 5 and 6 student in the district.
- Environmental stewardship volunteer programs continued to thrive in Nanaimo with 61 work parties happening in community parks supported by 1,293 volunteers.
- Coordinated the Civic Merit Awards recognizing gold medal winners at a Provincial, National, Western Canadian or International championship level for sport or culture in 2025. One-hundred thirty-nine nominations were received and 76 people attended council to receive an award. Partnered with the RDN to include people from Areas A,B,C and the District of Lantzville.
- As part of the equipment replacement plan, the weight rooms continue to add new equipment to improve the experience of the user, with nine new pieces installed during facility shutdowns. The two weight rooms continue to exceed revenue expectations.
- Collaborated with the Parks Department to start the design of an invasive plant public education and awareness campaign.

Culture

- Received the Creative City Network of Canada's 2025 Creative City Impact Award for Cultural Events (for Luminous Paths: Nanaimo's 150 and Beyond, presented in October 2025)
- Received Honourable Mention, Events & Festivals Excellence in the BC Recreation & Parks Association 2026 Awards of Excellence for Luminous Paths: Nanaimo's 150 and Beyond.
- The City, In partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation (SFN), co-curated Lighting a Path, a special art installation at Sway-a-Lana (MSP) honouring the Land through featuring artwork by seven Snuneymuxw artists.
- Administered $705,421 in grants to 40 community organizations. Grants included the Downtown Event Revitalization Fund, Culture Operating Grants and Culture Project Grants. Recipients include the Nanaimo Arts Council, Crimson Coast Dance Society, Reconciliation Theatre, L'Association des Francophones de Nanaimo, Vancouver Island Symphony, Rang South Asian Arts & Culture Society and many more.
- Highlighted the positive impact of the City's Culture and Event Grants in a June 2026 episode of The Sweet Layered Podcast featuring the Nanaimo Arts Council, Reconciliation Theatre, Crimson Coast Dance and the City's Culture Coordinator.
- Held a successful Call to Artists for the 2027 Luminous Paths Festival. This biannual festival invites artists to reimagine public space through illumination, projection, sound and interactive artworks that encourage curiosity, play and connection. The Culture team received 26 submissions, including submissions from BC, Alberta, Ontario, France and Sweden.
- Provided continuing support for the NAG working group's work on a business plan in support for a new Nanaimo Art Gallery.
- Continued to support the NPAG Advisory Committee, a community-recommended and Council approved long-term operating model set in place for the operation, programming, promotion and maintenance of the OV Arts Centre. Supported the Guild to develop a communications plan and to host regular office hours and monthly Open Houses at the OV Arts Centre to increase community awareness of the facility.

- Worked in collaboration with the VIMM to realign the Museum's operating model in support of the transition to a sustainable business model and successful ongoing operations.
- Facilitated the 2026 Culture Awards at the Port Theatre to honour recipients for Excellence in Culture, Honour in Culture and Honour in Heritage. This event displayed a range of local talent for an audience of close to 300 people.
- Selected two new Temporary Public Art projects for 2026 – Forest Flowers by Eliza Gardiner and Isaiah Kingdon and Encrustation: Barnacles of Belonging by Twyla Exner. Installed Forest Flowers in May 2026. Encrustation: Barnacles of Belonging is scheduled for Installation in fall 2026.
- In collaboration with Aquatics and Facilities Asset Management, supported the installation of new public art projects at NAC.
- Facilitated numerous Urban Design Roster public art projects including Wind Phone by Mauro Dalla Costa, located in Bowen Road Cemetery, Memory Makers by Tarcila Neves, located at the new Beban Park outdoor classroom and play space, as well as many utility kiosk art wraps throughout the city.
- Worked with Active Transportation staff, in partnership with neighbourhood associations and the Urban Design Roster, to explore the development and installation of decorative asphalt art in select intersections, promoting safety, beautifying public space and bringing communities together.
- Attended and presented at the 2025 Creative Cities Summit in Kingston, Ontario (October, 2025) and will attend the 2026 Summit in Calgary in October, 2026.
- Supported the Poet Laureate, Neil Surkan, through a series of free public lectures, readings and classes for the community in service of raising the profile for the literary arts. This included the Poetry in the Harbour reading series and the Read, Reflect and Write workshops.
- Held a farewell poetry reading at the VICC in honour of outgoing Youth Poet Laureate, Paige Pierce and began the process to select a new Youth Poet Laureate.
- Selected the 2026 Street Banners design by Grade 11 student and local artist Solana Van de Leur.



Events

- Continued to support and help facilitate large-scale community-led events (5,000-10,000+ attendance) such as Silly Boat Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, VIEx, Blues Festival, Marine Festival and the Commercial Street Night Market.
- Supported over 400 community events in 2026. These ranged in scale and scope and included Pride, BC Bike Race, Marine Festival, triathlons, fun runs, block parties, Canada Day and many more.
- Supported a number of new events in Nanaimo such as the Margins of Sound Society music festival, a mix of free and ticketed performances and workshops held between July 26-28 at the Bowen Amphitheatre, the Bowen meadow and the OV.
- Curated and presented the 2026 Concerts in the Park summer series, supporting 14 concerts featuring 16 acts of various genres performing at eight different City parks from late April to late August. 2026 continued to see a large influx in artist applications with staff reviewing close to 100 submissions.
- Collaborated with Tourism Nanaimo, cultural and community partners to submit bids for large-scale sport and culture events.
- In collaboration with The Port Theatre and Tourism Nanaimo, successfully won the bid to host Pacific Contact 2026. Pacific Contact is the BC Live Performance Network's annual performing arts showcase and 2026 will mark the first time in the organization's 50-year history that Pacific Contact has been held on Vancouver Island.

- Collaborated with the CVIMS to organize and present the annual Newcomers Welcome Event at the VICC.
- Continued to support the Commercial Street Night Market by providing $26,970 in grant funding, logistical support from the Special Event Coordinator and collaborative liaison work across City departments.
- Continued to develop and enhance relationships with VIU through presentations to Event Planning students, connections with the Visual Art and Writing departments and sharing volunteer opportunities.
- Continued to offer active transportation options for events through the use of Bike Valets and a perpetual agreement with RDN for transit shuttle service for Canada Day.
- In partnership with Tourism Nanaimo, Vancouver Island University, the Nanaimo Track and Field Club and Legion 10 succeeded in a bid to host the 2028 and 2029 Legion National Youth Track & Field Championships

Parks Operations

Park Amenity Capital Projects

- Continued work at Rotary Bowl for track and field improvements with new high jump and pole vault facilities and new turf and irrigation in the infield area.
- Neck Point Park parking lot improvements including new pavement.
- Various small amenity upgrades including new spray pad controllers at Departure Bay and Mansfield Park, new benches and bleachers at various locations and new drinking fountain at Pipers Lagoon Park.
- Installation of improved disc golf course in Bowen Park.
- Collaboration with NUFC to work towards installation of new practice level lighting for soccer at the Beban Park Athletic Fields
- Section of community dock replaced at Brechin Boat Ramp.
- Sport court improvements and public art surfacing at Deverill Park sport court.
- New playground installed at Barney Moriez Park.
- Shade sail feature installed in Westwood Lake Park.
- Installation of larger netting at McGirr Sport Fields to improve safety.
- Planning and installation of renamed Bill Merilees Viewing Tower in Buttertubs Marsh with donations from The Nature Trust of BC and the community.
- Continued condition assessments of aging park and trail assets and amenities.
- Updated and created user group agreements with community partners.

Trail Amenity Capital Projects

- Ongoing improvements to stairs and boardwalks in parks, including Shores Drive.
- Installation of new mountain bike skills park in Harewood Centennial Park.
- Collaboration with SD68 to improve pedestrian access through Chase River Corridor Park.
- Trail improvements in Five Acres Farm Community Park.
- Extension of E&N trail with a new soft surface trail (1.2km) between Hecate and Seventh Street and between Junction Avenue and Extension Road (900m).
- New mountain bike flow trail in Westwood Lake Park in collaboration with Nanaimo Mountain Bike Club.

Park Planning

- Continued collaborative planning with 7 Potatoes (Central Vancouver Island Japanese Canadian Cultural Society) and the Japanese Canadian Legacies Society regarding funding and design of a Japanese Canadian Heritage site.
- Continued design and planning for future washroom facilities at MSP, with consideration of Lions' Pavilion green room and event storage needs.
- The design of Phase 3 improvements at WWL Park's First and Second Beach including more lake shore, recreational amenities and enhanced accessibility.
- Ongoing implementation of the Beban Park Master Plan and planning for future infrastructure needs at the Beban Park central facility development area including new design and Class D cost estimate of improvements.
- Harewood spray park design and cost estimating work to add signature spray feature and replace paved surfacing.
- Continued design development and planning for expanded change rooms, washrooms and storage space in the "Stadium District Centre".

- Continued planning, design and community engagement work for a paddling and rowing facility and park improvements at Loudon Park.
- Administered $20,000 of Community Watershed Grants, allocated to groups for projects based in City parks.
- Collaboration with planning teams to complete communities' plan for Woodgrove Mall area and Woodgrove Area Plan.
- Acquisition of new public properties including ongoing development planning review with a lens for new park and trail acquisitions through development and collaboration to develop Land Acquisition Strategy including key parks and trails purchases.
- Staff training and accreditation under the Rick Hansen Accessibility Certification Program for enhanced design review and internal ability to perform accessibility audits.

Natural Area Management

- Major Natural Area restoration project at Neck Point Park.
- Underbrush clearing and fire prevention at Bowen Park.
- Continued assessment of urban tree canopy.

Partners In Parks (PIP) Natural Area

- Facilitation of beach cleanup work parties with community partners and the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup.
- Removal of broom throughout City in partnership with Broombusters.
- Invasive plant removal at many park sites in partnership with various community partners.

PIP Amenity Projects

- Collaborating with local groups to provide future recreational neighbourhood park amenity improvements, including working with Sunview Park Committee to install a new playground in Sunview Park.

2027 OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS

Recreation and Culture

- Utilize City Plan to guide programs and services and follow-through on Council endorsed Integrated Action Plans (IAPs).
- Continue to seek solutions to staffing shortages in all areas, while building successful initiatives developed in 2024 such as NLPS Advanced Aquatic Training Program.
- Proceed with Capital Development Plan for South End Community Centre (SECC) including schematic designs, financial analysis and Class "C" cost estimate, further public engagement, risk management planning, delivery method assessment, transportation impact analysis and zoning analysis.
- Establish a municipally significant event criteria and application process for large-scale community events.
- Continue to work with user groups to maximize allocation of pool space and expand programming (aquafit/school lessons).
- Commission a piece of public art for the NAC natatorium.
- Increase community awareness of PRC programs and services through the newly re-branded PRC Promotions Team, a staff team designed to identify creative marketing and promotional strategies.
- Develop a plan for implementing the Beban Park Master Plan while incorporating Capital expenditures and community driven development opportunities.
- Continue working with community partners including Island Health, Nanaimo Division of Family Practice (NDFP) and VIU to implement a Social Prescribing program for Nanaimo residents.
- Support the advancement of the NDFP Group Medical Visits in community centres.
- Continue to work with wide variety of community agents on developing and extending recreation and culture programming for diverse abilities.

- Continue to engage with user groups and members of the public to meet the demand for drop-in sports. New delivery methods will include indoor court rentals and group rental rates.
- Diversify community recreation and culture programming by offering programs outside of our core facilities such as school gyms, parks and the Vancouver Island Conference Centre. This aligns with City Plan urban nodes/ neighborhood pockets.
- Continue to expand programming at Ecole Hammond Bay School, Vancouver Island Conference Centre and Footholds School via the Shared Use Agreement for PRC and community access to multipurpose rooms during non-school hours. There is also the potential to provide sports programming in the gymnasiums.
- Collaborate with 7 Potatoes to offer Japanese cultural programming to the community in a renovated performing arts cultural space at Beban Park Social Centre.
- Offering 15+ free information/education seminars for seniors on a variety of topics including health, technology and estate planning.
- Continue to grow the Stadium District as a premier special event location. Build relationships through organization of a Stadium District Working Group with representation from all parties.
- Implementation of the Sponsorship Policy into identified facilities and programs.
- Continue the implementation of the Building Safer Communities initiatives, Rec Prescription and Youth Lounge through Youth Resiliency grants.
- Continue to partner with the NAG Working Group in support of the creation of a future new Nanaimo Art Gallery.
- Continue to facilitate the Concerts in the Park summer concert series to support local artists, encourage wellness and quality of life and highlight Nanaimo's many picturesque parks.
- Continue to collaborate with the CVIMS to grow and improve the annual Newcomers' Event.
- Support the development and delivery of new event initiatives to attract residents and visitors, in promotion of building vitality, stimulating business activity and enhancing Nanaimo's profile as a destination of choice.



- Subsidized/free swimming lessons over spring break alongside the Swim for Life Instructor course. Hosting BC Summer Swimming Association (BCSSA) summer swim meet at NAC August 16-22. Nanaimo was a host venue for this event in 2023 and welcomed 2,000 athletes and 4,000 spectators. (In Camera until late August 2026).
- Continue to work cooperatively with the NPAG Advisory Committee towards maintaining the OV and providing advisory support.
- Continue to implement ACAI recommendations in efforts to make public art programming and cultural events and initiatives more accessible and inclusive.
- Implement the second annual Luminous Paths festival, a winter art festival that is a celebration of light, art, land and community. Luminous Paths amplifies awareness of Nanaimo's arts, culture and heritage community, attracting visitors from Vancouver Island and the Mainland.
- Culture staff will implement a communications strategy that brings better awareness to how culture grants support events, programs and organizations throughout Nanaimo.
- Culture and Active Transportation staff will be working together in partnership with neighbourhood associations to explore the development and installation of decorative asphalt art in select intersections, promoting safety, beautifying public space and bringing communities together.
- Continue to evaluate and look at ways to provide an easy and efficient experience for customers to register for programs and services following the Activity Guide release.

- Work with SFN to support youth sport and recreation program opportunities offered in the Nation's facilities.
- Continue working with SFN to find ways to share cultural skills and knowledge with Nanaimo residents.
- Staff will continue to participate as a Knowledge Partner on Te'tuxwtun Project, specifically focusing on the gathering space and outside active spaces.
- Continue partnering with local organizations to support the LEAP program as designated referral/adjudicator agencies.
- The Activity Guide will see the addition of videos of our programs and services into our online Activity Guide (software upgrades happening should allow this to happen). These may also be shown on screens in our facilities with the planned upgrade of higher quality lobby screens (smart TVs) in community recreation centres.
- Continue to partner with SFN on public art tours and opportunities highlighting the work of Snuneymuxw artists.

Parks Operations and Park Amenity Planning

- Continue to assess and update existing amenities based on condition assessments, evolving community needs, accessibility improvements and sport user group input.
- Continue conversion of inventories and work orders into Cartographic and CAMS systems.
- Development of tennis facilities and additional pickleball courts at Beban in collaboration with community partners.
- Continue improvements to the Stadium and Third Street Sports Zone including parking and spectator improvements.
- Increased equipment and staff training to maintain growing demands and needs for artificial turf fields and high levels of maintenance for artificial turf fields.
- Continued planning of improvements at WWL including accessible swimming dock and connections to Second Beach.
- Continue to work with neighbourhoods and recreational groups under the PIP Program.
- Update and create user group agreements with community partners.
- Collaborative planning of public realm, street trees and parks/plazas through the Design Commercial and Terminal Ave Improvement Projects.
- Trail planning and trail amenities:
  - Implementing the Beban Park Master Plan and expanding the perimeter trail in conjunction with storm water management projects and Community Works Building project.
  - Continuing to develop connection trails that link existing trail systems into loops. Open space accessibility improvements.
  - Continued restoration and safety work at Linley Valley, Cottle Lake Park and Linley Point Park.
  - Signage streamlining and updating including inclusive and interpretive signage at key parks and trail heads with WWL Park trails as a pilot/priority site.
  - Continued paving of key connector trails and parking lots to increase universal access and reduce recurring maintenance issues.

Park Planning

- Continue to expand the park and trail system to provide recreational opportunities and protect natural areas for future generations. New park acquisitions, assets and park development will be balanced with service and resource demands.
- Amend the Business Licence Bylaw to facilitate a ban of the sale of invasive species and collaborate with vendors and the community through education.
- Begin review of natural asset management and urban tree canopies, linked with City Plan.
- Compilation and engagement for the Park and Environmental Management Plan at Linley Valley Park and Nanaimo Lakes Road Park.
- Continuing to plan for implementation of key park plans including Five Acres Farm Community Park and East Wellington Park.
- Ongoing work to manage invasive plants and their impacts on natural park assets including development of a toolkit for best practices around invasive removal and what to do with the plant material after removal.
- Continue to work with community and provincial groups under the PIP Program to grow food on public land, improve ecosystems and provide meaningful park amenities.

- Creating education campaigns around vernal pools and seasonal wetlands at Lotus Pinnatus Park with local and provincial partners.
- Improve marketing and way-finding materials to better communicate and showcase the park and trail systems with innovative and accessible signage and web-based tools.
- Continue to implement the Beban Park Master Plan with increased trail connections, integrated comforts and seating, shade trees, artwork and site servicing to allow for future development of the central heart of Beban.
- Continue to provide public access to water with improvement planning for MSP, WWL Park, Diver Lake Park and Lakeview Park.
- Continued efforts toward reconciliation including connections to key sites including Saysutshun, appropriate knowledge sharing and appropriate restoration.
- Complete planning of capital projects such as the Beban Nekkei Legacy Project and WWL Park Phase 3.

Natural Area Management

- Ecosystem restoration project work at key nature parks including Pipers Lagoon, WWL Park, Linley Point Park and East Wellington Park.
- Ongoing work with partners to maintain, enhance, showcase and research the Buttertubs and Third Street Marsh areas.
- Ecological assessments and environmental management planning on key nature parks. Continuing to restore Garry Oak ecosystems and monitor restoration at key sites including Pipers Lagoon Park.

PIP Natural Areas

- Working with partners to create new programs such as Butterfly Rangers, Free the Tree.
- Ongoing partnerships with diverse community groups and external funders to remove invasive plants, restore natural areas and plant trees in the extensive natural park system that makes up 70% of Nanaimo's parks.
- Continued implementation of community driven projects under the Community Watershed Restoration Grant program.
- Consideration of pilot pollinator gardens and boulevards on City property with partners.



PIP Amenity Projects

- Continued collaborative projects with recreational groups such as the Nanaimo Disc Golf, Sand Volleyball and Nanaimo Mountain Biking Clubs.
- Continued collaboration with 7 Potatoes and community partners to create heritage sites and interpretive materials that recognize past history and Japanese Canadian community in Nanaimo.
- Meeting neighbourhood needs as they evolve for local level amenities such as playgrounds, seating and food gardens.

2027 KEY INITIATIVES

Strategic Priority: Implementing City Plan
IAP Priority Action #15 – Continue to work with the Pacific Salmon Foundation, Departure Creek Streamkeepers and Snuneymuxw First Nation partners to enhance the Departure Creek intake and side channel project with riparian restoration and consider creating wetland habitat and flood management at Departure Bay Centennial Park on Departure Creek.
IAP Priority Action #16 – Update the Urban Tree Canopy Management Strategy, conduct a tree canopy assessment and update tree protection bylaws and development guidelines to bring urban tree management into alignment with City Plan objectives.
IAP Priority Action #17 – Implement actions in the Buttertubs and West Marsh Co-Management Plan.
IAP Priority Actions #18 and #169 – Implement actions in the Linley Valley Park Management Plan.
IAP Priority Action #34 – Secure bike racks/lockers are available at City recreation facilities. PRC also works collaboratively with EVO bikes to facilitate movable end of trip parking at major events in destination parks.
IAP Priority Action #44 – Work with user groups and bike groups to continue to maintain and expand the diversity of single-track trails at Westwood Lake Park.
IAP Priority Action #78 – Increased equitable access to recreation programs for children ages 10 and 11 through the delivery of the Recreation Prescription program in partnership with NLPS and VIU.
IAP Priority Action #78 – PRC staff support equitable access to City recreational programs and facilities through programs such as LEAP and Health Hub, Lions Free Swim sessions in partnership with the Lions Club and through offering access to free recreation opportunities during the year such as on Family Day, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Canada Day.
IAP Priority Actions #81 and #105 – PRC management and staff are committed to the development, design and future programming of the SECC. Land Assembly complete.
IAP Priority Action #86—Implement East Wellington Park Improvement Plan.
IAP Priority Action #90 – Continue to implement the 933 Park Avenue (Five Acre Community Farm) Land Use Plan.
IAP Priority Action #91 – Continue improvements at Westwood Lake Park including universal access, fishing, beach access and harvesting.
IAP Priority Action #93 – Implement actions in the Sport Tourism Strategy.
IAP Priority Action #94 – Aquatics management aim to maintain and advance current services through ongoing hiring to increase casual lifeguard/instructor staffing numbers. Maximizing resources and Incorporating efficiencies where possible to accelerate the recruitment process.
IAP Priority Action #95 – Beban Park Working Group continue to work on the phased implementation of Beban Park Master Plan and Beban Park Facility Plan, incorporating capital plans and community driven opportunities supported through City plan.

IAP Priority Action #96 – Aquatics staff facilitate and prioritize communication with the community, user groups and event organizers to host events at the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, which align with the actions in the Sport Tourism Strategy.
IAP Priority Action #99 – Conduct a research project to identify potential barriers which may inhibit participation in community wellbeing programs and identify implementable actions to reduce barriers.
IAP Priority Action #101 – Undertake a comprehensive review and update of park and facility allocation guidelines with a lens of equity and inclusivity.
IAP Priority Action #104 – Implement the Ecole Hammond Bay School and Footholds School Shared Use Agreement for PRC and community use of multipurpose rooms during non-school use times.
IAP Priority Actions #106 and #162– Implement the Loudon Park Improvement Plan including a community activity centre and outdoor park improvements.
IAP Priority Action #109 – Develop and support a variety of reconciliation events and learning opportunities such as the ongoing partnership with Snuneymuxw First Nation, School District 68 and others, to plan and host events including National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21 and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, September 30.
IAP Priority Action #109 – Engage and partner with SFN on recognition events on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and engage with TRC Calls to Action.
IAP Priority Action #116 – Continue to hold an Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness to meet the Accessible British Columbia Act.
IAP Priority Action #117 – Implement Phase 2 of the LEAP program review and take steps to build partnerships within the community for administering the LEAP program.
IAP Priority Action #117 – Offer the LEAP program to support citizens in financial need to access culture community programs and services.
IAP Priority Action #118 – Supported the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness (ACAI) as required by the Accessibility BC Act through development of an annual work plan with input from all City departments.
IAP Priority Action #119 – Implement recommendations from the ACAI committee, such as a focus on accessibility and inclusivity, during the 2027 Luminous Paths Festival.
IAP Priority Action #120 – Continue to explore and implement different platforms of engagement that improve access to public art programming and experiences with consideration for varied accessibility needs.
IAP Priority Action #124 – Continue to make beaches throughout the City more accessible.
IAP Priority Action #130 – Continue to implement the Culture Grants Communication Strategy to raise awareness of how the Culture Grant program supports the delivery of arts and culture activity.
IAP Priority Action #131 – Ongoing collaboration with VIRL in Youth Poet Laureate program, including poetry reading events and exhibiting youth poetry.
IAP Priority Action #131 – Collaboration with cultural organizations including the Nanaimo Art Gallery, the Nanaimo Museum, the Vancouver Island Military Museum and the Port Theatre on programming related to the Luminous Paths Festival.
IAP Priority Action #132 – Work to include public art and natural/ cultural interpretation as part of the ongoing upgrades to Beban Park.
IAP Priority Action #133 -- Continue to partner with the Nanaimo Art Gallery Working Group in support of the business plan for a future new Nanaimo Art Gallery.
IAP Priority Action #134 – Work with the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild and community cultural partners to explore options for cultural space in the SECC.
IAP Priority Action #135 – Continue to seek out opportunities to integrate public art into the Stadium District as development continues and in complement to ongoing facility upgrades.

IAP Priority Action #137 – Continue to seek opportunities to offer cultural programming at the VICC such as the Poet Laureate "Poetry in the Harbour" series.

IAP Priority Action #140 – Work with the Japanese Heritage Society (7 Potatoes) and partners to design and create a Japanese History interpretive landscape and signage feature in a public space in Maffeo Sutton Park.

IAP Priority Action #144 – Select two new Temporary Public Art projects for 2027.

IAP Priority Action # 146 – Implement a fun and interactive public art treatment to enhance the campus presence of Beban Park facing Bowen Road. Refer to the Beban Park Master Plan.

IAP Priority Action #151 – Continue to provide the Downtown Event Revitalization Fund grant stream.

IAP Priority Action #157— Implement the Beaufort Park Improvement Plan including wellness walkways.

IAP Priority Action #161 – Complete and implement a Park Improvement Plan for Linley Valley Park.

IAP Priority Action #164 – Continue construction initiatives and continued planning for the development of the Stadium District, as a primary area for sporting and outdoor event development.

IAP Priority Action #188 – PRC staff are represented on the Tourism Nanaimo Meetings and Events Advisory Committee.

IAP Priority Action #190 – Focus on creating a signature tourism event across the City in the off-season as a call to action to visit the City, such as mountain biking, swimming tournaments, Provincial field lacrosse and other niche events aligned with the Sport Tourism Strategy, drawing on the regional markets in southern BC, Puget Sound and Alberta cities with regional air connections.

Strategic Priority: Social, Health and Public Safety Challenges

Contribute to upstream solutions by bringing art into public spaces and by producing events like Luminous Paths, Concerts in the Park and Poetry in the Harbour to build a sense of community in the core.

Work collaboratively with Active Transportation staff and neighbourhood associations to develop and install decorative asphalt art in select intersections, promoting safety, beautifying public space and bringing communities together.

Prioritize community health and safety by providing and maintaining facilities and open spaces that can serve as emergency service centres and offer heating and cooling locations around the City.

Strategic Priority: Maintaining and Growing Current Services

Continue development of the SECC. Staff moving forward with communications plan and coordination of the Capital Development Plan.

Expansion of the annual Winter Wonderland skating event to add an additional 8 sessions, including evening adult sessions, in addition to the existing parent & tot, family and everyone welcome sessions.

Administer the 2027 Culture Operating, Culture Project and Downtown Event Revitalization Fund grant streams to support vibrant, varied organizations, projects and events in the City.

Continue to collaborate with the Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society to grow and improve the annual Newcomers' Event.

Continue to grow the Concerts in the Park summer concert series to support artists, encourage wellness and showcase City parks throughout the city.

Through the Downtown Event Revitalization Fund, support the development and delivery of new events.

Continue participation in and support for, the Nanaimo Art Gallery Working Group.

Continue to support the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild Advisory Committee to advise on OV Arts Centre maintenance, administrative and operational matters for the facility.
Continue to work with the Vancouver Island Military Museum to realign the operating model and establish a co-management agreement.
Continue the design of a program (Leisure Buddy) to assist in supporting people with diverse abilities to participate in recreation and wellness programming and seek grants opportunities to support long term financial sustainability of this program.
Strategic Priority: Capital Projects
Nanaimo Ice Centre – Dehumidifier Renewal. This lifecycle renewal will maintain optimal arena humidity, supporting consistent, high-quality ice conditions for all user groups. The electrified unit is expected to reduce emissions by approximately 64 tonnes of CO_2e, supporting the City's corporate greenhouse gas targets with no impact to operations.
Support the planning for key capital projects by advising on opportunities for public art integration and opportunities to ensure event readiness.
Oversee Calls to Artists, selection and installation of 2027 Temporary Public Art.
Explore options for the inclusion of recreational, cultural and community spaces within a future SECC.
Continue to follow the Weight Room Equipment Replacement Plan.
Continue the development of a community amenity building at Loudon Park.
Continue work towards improved change room and washroom facilities within the Stadium District.
Continue work on Westwood Lake Park Phase 3 improvements, including accessibility and beach improvements.
Replacement of the Merle Logan turf field at Beban Park.
Continue the development of an amenity building at Maffeo Sutton Park, to include accessible washrooms and green room adjacent to the Lions Pavilion.
Improvements to lighting and power infrastructure at Harewood Skatepark and Harewood Centennial Park.
Deliver playground improvements at Daynes Park.
Design and installation of improved way-finding and direction signage at Neck Point Park.
Court resurfacing at Beban Park.
Complete an update to the Urban Forest Management Strategy.
Installation of new CCTV at Harewood Centennial Park, adjacent to the turf field.
Install public art at Colliery Dam Park, to be delivered through an artist call and commissioning process.
Continued work towards establishing partnerships with community groups for park and playground development under the Partners in Parks Program.

Continued work on the bench and bleacher replacement program, including the replacement of 10 benches and two aluminum bleachers.
Reconditioning of the football field at May Richards Bennett Pioneer Park.
Widen and repave the walkway to the Maffeo Sutton Park Playground.
Reconstruct the wooden staircase from Waldbank Road to Sealand Park.
Resurfacing of approximately 1.8 km of lakeside trail at Westwood Lake Park.
Upgrades to the Diver Lake tennis courts, including surface repairs, fencing improvements, new nets and line repainting.
Design and construct an outdoor classroom at Five Acres Farm Community Park.
Complete FireSmart review and remediation at Bowen Park, as it is considered high-risk.
Strategic Priority: Communicating with the Community
Continue to host annual user group meetings for those groups operating in City of Nanaimo sport and recreation facilities, such as ice users, dry floor users, field users, gym users and Stadium District users.
Work with Tourism Nanaimo and the Sport Tourism Committee to identify potential bid opportunities, evaluate grant submissions and identify areas of strength and opportunity within the City to improve the City's position as a sport-hosting destination.
Continue to support the Nanaimo Performing Arts Guild Advisory Committee to advise on operation of the Old Victoria Arts Centre at 25 Victoria Rd and to host Open Houses and regular office hours at the facility.
Continue to host information sessions regarding grant criteria and application process for Culture Operating and Project Grants and the Downtown Event Revitalization Fund.
Facilitate public engagement opportunities and communicate with neighbourhood associations in the ongoing development and implementation of public art programming and projects in urban nodes/neighbourhood pockets.
Continue to partner with CVIMS to grow and improve the annual Newcomers' Welcome Event.
Implement the second annual Luminous Paths Festival, a winter art festival that celebrates light, art, land and community.
Through continued implementation of the Culture Grants Communications Strategy, continue to raise awareness of the role Culture plays, through culture grants, in supporting the production and delivery of arts and culture activity in the City.
Strategic Priority: Governance and Corporate Excellence
Continue to implement ACAI recommendations in efforts to make public art programming and cultural events and initiatives more accessible and inclusive.
Engage with neighbourhood associations to help guide the development of new recreation and wellness programs and initiatives such as the summer playground program.

PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

	2026 Approved Budget	2027 Draft Budget	2028 Draft Budget	2029 Draft Budget	2030 Draft Budget	2031 Draft Budget
Revenues						
Aquatic Operations	$ 2,742,281	$ 3,030,930	$ 3,061,239	$ 3,091,851	$ 3,122,772	$ 3,154,000
Arena Operations	1,952,900	2,199,159	2,221,151	2,243,362	2,265,797	2,288,454
Community Development	1,486,619	1,552,200	1,552,200	1,552,200	1,552,200	1,552,200
Community Services Administration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Culture & Events	32,600	37,600	32,826	23,054	23,284	23,517
Parks & Facilities Administration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Parks Operations	758,794	935,289	944,113	953,027	962,027	971,118
Parks, Recreation & Culture Administration	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recreation Operations	3,295,388	3,675,141	3,711,892	3,749,010	3,786,499	3,824,364
Recreation & Culture Administration	13,000	20,000	20,200	20,402	20,606	20,812
Annual Operating Revenues	**$ 10,281,582**	**$ 11,450,319**	**$ 11,543,621**	**$ 11,632,906**	**$ 11,733,185**	**$ 11,834,465**
Expenditures						
Aquatic Operations	$ 7,409,766	$ 8,301,185	$ 8,613,969	$ 8,841,419	$ 9,059,540	$ 9,295,738
Arena Operations	3,154,187	3,387,465	3,510,817	3,594,004	3,686,131	3,770,868
Community Development	54,500	54,500	54,500	54,500	54,500	54,500
Community Services Administration	75,411	172,123	180,596	185,530	189,896	194,396
Culture & Events	3,360,125	3,483,443	3,516,317	3,625,751	3,654,066	3,759,394
Parks & Facilities Administration	111,365	-	-	-	-	-
Parks Operations	11,754,704	12,867,966	13,258,018	13,585,047	13,840,757	14,141,247
Parks, Recreation & Culture Administration	582,699	427,547	451,398	464,939	476,627	488,797
Recreation Operations	7,307,706	8,021,274	8,284,955	8,504,612	8,698,274	8,922,488
Recreation & Culture Administration	222,906	237,286	244,542	250,808	256,844	263,145
Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 34,033,369**	**$ 36,952,789**	**$ 38,115,112**	**$ 39,106,610**	**$ 39,916,635**	**$ 40,890,573**
Net Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 23,751,787**	**$ 25,502,470**	**$ 26,571,491**	**$ 27,473,704**	**$ 28,183,450**	**$ 29,056,108**
Staffing (FTEs) - Budgeted	**150.9**	**116.7**	**116.8**	**116.7**	**116.7**	**116.7**

**Community Services Administration includes 50% of the General Manager, Community Services/Deputy CAO*
***For 2026 funding for the new CUPE contract and management increases is budgeted in committed contingency under Corporate Services*
***Following approval of the 2026 budget, a corporate restructuring established a new Facilities Department within Community Services through the reallocation of existing FTEs from other departments.*

	2026 Approved Budget	2027 Draft Budget	2028 Draft Budget	2029 Draft Budget	2030 Draft Budget	2031 Draft Budget
Expenditure Summary						
Wages & Benefits	$ 19,893,786	$ 21,650,950	$ 22,537,116	$ 23,162,705	$ 23,742,939	$ 24,348,457
Services & Supply Contracts	5,671,579	6,383,616	6,453,335	6,634,050	6,698,082	6,879,576
Materials & Supplies	2,077,510	2,276,004	2,330,068	2,371,527	2,414,372	2,467,609
Utilities	2,556,780	2,680,136	2,738,453	2,797,304	2,849,173	2,910,236
Internal Charges & Other	1,292,974	1,385,916	1,438,435	1,474,736	1,502,880	1,531,770
Grants & Subsidies	2,540,740	2,576,167	2,617,705	2,666,288	2,709,189	2,752,925
Annual Operating Expenditures	**$ 34,033,369**	**$ 36,952,789**	**$ 38,115,112**	**$ 39,106,610**	**$ 39,916,635**	**$ 40,890,573**