



The Corporation of the District of Central Saanich

REGULAR COUNCIL REPORT

For the Regular Council meeting on Monday, May 12, 2025

Re: Community Partnerships Update 2024-2025

PURPOSE:

To provide Council with an update on 2024, and activity in 2025 for existing and proposed community partnerships, including Grant in Aid, Community Service Agreements, Community Partnership Program (Central Saanich Little League), Land and Facility Agreements (Newman Farm, Heritage Acres, Log Cabin), and Service Agreements (Peninsula Streams), and to seek direction on the renewal of Peninsula Streams Society Service agreement until the end of 2026.

BACKGROUND:

The District maintains a range of agreements with community partners, including financial contributions, land use, and facility use agreements, to support the delivery of services that enhance the quality of life for Central Saanich residents and align with District priorities. The management of these partnerships is service-based, with agreement renewals and negotiations overseen by the staff responsible for each functional area.

Many of these agreements are longstanding, having been developed and evolved over time. In recent years, the District updated its Grant-in-Aid and Community Funding policies to modernize and align short-term financial contribution programs with Council's strategic priorities. These policies provide shorter-term funding opportunities for services to provide programs within the community. This funding does not provide ongoing core operating funding.

1. The *Grant in Aid Program* provides modest seed funding of up to \$1,000 each year through two payment streams; community facilitated activities and new or special projects. This grant program is focused on providing seed money for new and special projects or one time community facilitated activities. Requests for ongoing operating funding or facility maintenance are not eligible. Council has also indicated that they wish to encourage applications related to sustainability, emergency preparedness, and accessibility. The Chief Administrative Officer has delegated authority to approve these grants.
2. To assist local community groups providing valued services, the District offers modest financial support through multi-year *Community Service Agreements*. Each Community Service Agreement is granted for a four-year term, providing financial certainty to organizations while aligning with Council's term and priorities. These agreements are not a guarantee of future funding beyond the term, but they ensure stability during the contract period to help deliver consistent, impactful community services.

3. The District's *Community Partnerships Program* provides a framework for working with community groups and volunteers to improve or develop community facilities, parks, and amenities, including expansions to existing agreements. The policy enables Council to conduct a coordinated review of partnership requests ahead of annual strategic planning and budgeting. This process ensures projects are assessed for alignment with Council and community priorities, resource needs, sustainability, funding plans, timelines, and compliance with procedural or legislative requirements.
4. When the Community Service Agreements program was updated to align with Council's strategic priorities and establish a standardized four-year funding model, it became clear that the *Peninsula Streams* and *Log Cabin* agreements fell outside the intent and scope of the updated program. These agreements focus more on land use, asset management, or service delivery functions rather than short-term financial contributions for community programming and therefore require separate oversight and renewal processes.
5. *Land and Facility Agreements* are formal arrangements between the District and external organizations for the use of District-owned lands or facilities. These agreements vary significantly in their history, purpose, and terms—reflecting how they were developed over time in response to unique circumstances. Currently, there is no structured system for managing these agreements, and no standardized templates or expectations are in place, resulting in inconsistent oversight and reporting. These agreements typically define permitted uses, responsibilities for maintenance and operations, reporting requirements, and the terms of occupancy or lease. They support public access, community benefit, and stewardship of municipal assets while ensuring alignment with District policies and priorities. Management of these agreements have historically been decentralized. Staff are currently implementing structural improvements by centralizing the oversight function, with subject matter experts responsible for partner management.

DISCUSSION:

1. Grant in Aid approved projects for 2025
(Appendix A, Approved Applications 2025)
2. Community Service Funding updates for 2024
The 2024-2027 Community Service Funding Program saw its first year completed in 2024. The programs support Council's strategic plan, specifically those that related to active transportation, a community of inclusion, diversity and accessibility, and a resilient local economy and thriving agricultural sector. Total program funding is approximately \$60,000 annually.

The current [Community Service Agreements](#) are in place for the 2024–2027 funding cycle and are aligned with the District's 2022–2027 Strategic Plan. A new call for proposals will be issued in 2027, following the adoption of the next Strategic Plan for the 2026–2030 Council term.
(Appendix B, Reports on programs provided in for 2024)
3. Community Partnership Program
Central Saanich Little League (CSLL) has submitted a proposal to install synthetic turf on Diamond 6 at Centennial Park. Initial discussions began in October 2023, with formal submission

and supporting materials provided between October 2023 and April 2024, followed by a presentation to Council in June 2024. Staff will continue supporting CSLL through the process and provide public updates as milestones are met, with final approval returning to Council upon completion of conditions.

4. Service Agreements

a. *Peninsula Streams*

The District maintains a service agreement with Peninsula Streams Society supporting ecological stewardship, restoration, and public education. Staff have renewed the service agreement for a two-year term (2025–2026), with a formal program evaluation in 2026.

This item is included in the Five-year Financial Plan.

b. *The Log Cabin Museum*

The Saanich Pioneers' Society is a non-profit charitable society, dedicated to the preservation of the historical records of the Saanich Peninsula. The Log Cabin Museum and Archives are in Saanichton Green Park. Staff have been working with the Society to through a service review. Their Board has done significant work over the last year in ensuring sustainability of their operations. Staff will be renewing the agreement for a five-year term at \$18,500 per year.

5. Land and Facility Agreements

- a. *The Farmlands Trust Society (FLTS)* operates an organic farm at Newman Farm under a Licence to Occupy expiring October 18, 2025. The agreement currently applies to the upper field, but the site as a whole includes arable land, heritage assets, trails, and environmentally sensitive areas. The District is undertaking a full review of the site as part of the Parks and Trails Master Plan process. Staff are working with FLTS to draft a revised lease agreement, with clear expectations for sustainability, reporting, and continuity. A five-year term with a five-year renewal option is under consideration.

b. *Heritage Acres (Saanich Historical Artifact Society)*

In 2004, the Province of British Columbia transferred the Heritage Acres property to the District of Central Saanich under the condition that the land be licensed to the Saanich Historical Artifact Society (the Society) for its continued non-profit use. With the original term of the lease being 20 years, the District has recently extended the lease by 10 years as per the renewal terms within the lease. This is the first of 4 renewal terms of 10 years each. The Lease permits the Society to use the property for a non-profit historical artifacts museum and related facilities, farming demonstrations, a miniature railway, a caretaker's residence, and municipal park purposes. Recently, the District has been approached by the Society to seek an amendment to the Lease. Moving forward, the District will work with the Society to ensure compliance under the Lease while also seeking opportunities to align the agreement with the current priorities and strategic direction of the municipality.

IMPLICATIONS:

Legal/Legislative

Under the delegated authority bylaw, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is authorized to approve leases and licenses of occupation for a community facility including any rights of renewal, under the conditions that the Chief Administrative Officer considers appropriate. Professional services that have

been included in the budget and are within the delegated amounts allowable in the Sustainable Purchasing Policy, are within the authority of staff.

Organizational Improvements

Land and facility agreements have historically been managed inconsistently across the organization, with varying levels of reporting, oversight, and monitoring depending on the agreement. As the District moves toward improved oversight and accountability, it is important that reporting requirements be consistently enforced and reviewed to ensure compliance with agreement terms. Ongoing evaluation will be necessary to ensure these community assets are being used to their highest and best purpose, aligning with Council's priorities. Strengthening oversight will require additional staff resources to manage and monitor agreements, review amendments, ensure compliance with zoning and regulatory requirements, and coordinate inspections or legal reviews as needed. A more structured framework for managing and evaluating these agreements is being developed and will be brought forward to Council in 2026 for consideration.

CONCLUSION:

The District's diverse portfolio of community partnerships—including financial contributions, service agreements, and land and facility agreements—provides valuable services aligned with Council's strategic priorities. While short-term funding programs have been modernized, other longstanding agreements require strengthened oversight to ensure alignment, accountability, and effective stewardship of municipal assets. As an interim step, staff are centralizing the oversight function to improve consistency in monitoring, reporting, and compliance across all agreements. This foundational work will support the development of a more structured framework for managing and evaluating community partnerships, which will be brought forward to Council for consideration in 2026.

Respectfully submitted by:	Christine Culham, Chief Administrative Officer
Concurrence:	Dale Puskas, Director of Engineering
Concurrence:	Emilie Gorman, Director of Corporate Services
Concurrence:	Fernando Pimental, Acting Chief Financial Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: Approved Grant In Aid Applications for 2025

Appendix B: Community Service Funding, Reports on programs provided in for 2024