Agenda – Council – June 25, 2026

Report – Executive Policy Committee – June 16, 2026

Item No. 9 Grant to the Winnipeg Soccer Federation (WSF) Inc. to install new turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex (RCSC).

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 16, 2026, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the following to Council:

1. That, subject to confirming a Northern Super League soccer franchise in Winnipeg, a grant of $600,000 be provided to the Winnipeg Soccer Federation Inc. to support installation of new artificial turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex, funded by reallocating the money approved in the 2026 Adopted Capital Budget for a watermain replacement in Kildonan Park from the Regional Parks Capital Program.

2. That the $600,000 for the watermain replacement in Kildonan Park in Recommendation 1 be funded from the Water Main Renewals budget in the Water Utility in 2026.

3. That the City enter, execute and deliver one or more new agreements and amend any existing agreements with the Winnipeg Soccer Federation Inc. and any other parties relevant to this development to implement Recommendation 1, and that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to approve such agreements in accordance with this report, and such other terms deemed necessary by the City Solicitor/Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Agenda – Council – June 25, 2026

Report – Executive Policy Committee – June 16, 2026

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 16, 2026, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to Council.

David Grant submitted a communication in opposition to the matter.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Grant to the Winnipeg Soccer Federation (WSF) Inc. to install new turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex (RCSC).

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
M. Dryburgh	J. Dunford	T. Graham	J. Dunford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Winnipeg Soccer Federation (WSF) Inc. is upgrading the main field of the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex (RCSC) with new artificial turf and lighting. The City will provide a grant of $600,000 towards the estimated $1.5 million cost of this project.

WSF will fund the remaining cost of this project from its own funds and financial support from the Province of Manitoba.

This project is required to support a potential new women's professional soccer team playing in the Northern Super League (NSL) in 2027 and is part of a larger upgrade to RCSC to be paid for by the owner of the new NSL team.

The City's grant to WSF will be funded from money in the 2026 Approved Capital Budget for a watermain replacement in Kildonan Park. That project can instead be funded from the Water Main Renewal Program within the water utility.

Council approval is needed to add the Kildonan Park water main replacement project to the 2026 Water Main Renewals Program. If approval is granted, this program can accommodate the $600,000 needed for this project. This will not impact water rates or operation of the utility.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That, subject to confirming a Northern Super League soccer franchise in Winnipeg, a grant of $600,000 be provided to the Winnipeg Soccer Federation Inc. to support installation of new artificial turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex, funded by reallocating the money approved in the 2026 Adopted Capital Budget for a watermain replacement in Kildonan Park from the Regional Parks Capital Program.

2. That the $600,000 for the watermain replacement in Kildonan Park in Recommendation 1 be funded from the Water Main Renewals budget in the Water Utility in 2026.

3. That the City enter, execute and deliver one or more new agreements and amend any existing agreements with the Winnipeg Soccer Federation Inc. and any other parties relevant to this development to implement Recommendation 1, and that the Chief Financial Officer be authorized to approve such agreements in accordance with this report, and such other terms deemed necessary by the City Solicitor/Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Council approval is required to provide new grants to external organizations and to enter into agreements for this purpose.

Council approval is required to reallocate funds for approved capital projects to other projects.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject to Council approval of the recommendations, the Public Service will enter into the necessary grant agreements with WSF Inc. to facilitate a grant to support installation of new artificial turf and lighting at RCSC.

HISTORY / DISCUSSION

There is considerable momentum to establish a new women's professional soccer franchise in Winnipeg to join the current six team Canadian Northern Super League (NSL).

Discussions are ongoing involving the NSL, a potential owner, the local soccer community and government, that would see a new NSL franchise play in Winnipeg at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex (RCSC) in 2027.

The NSL began operating in 2024, launching its first season in 2025. It is a top-tier professional women's soccer league that currently has six franchises with most of these teams playing out of stadiums with capacities of 4,000 to 6,500.

RCSC requires upgrades to accommodate this potential NSL expansion opportunity. This includes the installation of new artificial turf, new lighting to accommodate TV broadcasting standards, additional seating, new concessions and locker rooms, and expanded washroom facilities.

The NSL plans to address these requirements mostly by using portable structures that are built offsite, which it has successfully done in other cities. The new team owner and/or the NSL would pay for the cost of these structures, potentially offset by federal and/or provincial infrastructure funding opportunities.

The City would contribute $600,000 towards the estimated $1.5 million cost to replace the turf and upgrade the lighting on the main field at RCSC with the rest of this cost paid for by the WSF with support from the Province of Manitoba. Any provincial support for this project will be in addition to the annual grants that it gives to the City of Winnipeg.

The new turf and lighting would benefit the NSL as well as the amateur soccer community that will continue to use the main field at RCSC.

The City will source its grant to the WSF from the $600,000 that is currently approved in the 2026 Tax Supported Capital Budget for a water main replacement in Kildonan Park from the Regional Parks capital program.

The Kildonan Park water main replacement can then instead be funded in 2026 from the Water Main Renewals Program within the water utility. The current forecast for 2026 can accommodate the $600,000 needed for the Kildonan Park Water main renewal as an extra contract within this program. This will not impact water rates or operation of the utility.

The Water Main Renewals Program budget is approved only for water main assets in the public right-of-way. The Kildonan Park water main is on City owned property instead of the right-of-way, so Council approval is needed to use these program funds for this project.

Funding water infrastructure from the utility that is not in the public right of way is not the City's standard practice. However, doing so in this case will allow this project to be funded and completed as planned and the new grant to WSF to be approved, without the need to increase the City's overall capital budget in 2026.

Approval of the grant to WSF is required now to ensure that funding is in place to install the new turf and lighting this summer or fall in time for the start of the 2027 NSL season. It will also help to leverage provincial and federal funds for the remaining stadium upgrades.

The WSF's lease with the City for RCSC has expired. The City will propose a new lease with WSF to accommodate the NSL opportunity. The WSF will then enter a sublease or an equivalent arrangement with the new NSL team on terms that are acceptable to the City. This will be brought forward for Council's consideration in a separate administrative report.

There are still some details that need to be quickly finalized to make this opportunity a reality in 2027. A formal decision by the NSL on whether to proceed with this new team in 2027 is expected shortly.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** May 26, 2026

Project Name: **First Year of Program** **2026**

Grant to the Winnipeg Soccer Federation (WSF) Inc. to install new turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex (RCSC).

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ 600,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	600,000	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Canada Community-Building Fund	600,000	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ 600,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	$ -	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments:

Expenditures represent the grant to Winnipeg Soccer Federation Inc. to support installation of new artificial turf and lighting at the Ralph Cantafio Soccer Complex. Funding is available by reallocating money approved in the 2026 Adopted Capital Budget for a watermain replacement in Kildonan Park from the Regional Parks capital program. The watermain replacement in Kildonan Park will instead be funded from the 2026 Water Main Renewals budget in the Water Utility.

Randy Bernard

Randy Bernard, CPA
Manager of Finance & Administration (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Public Works
- Water and Waste

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Economic Prosperity – 3.16 Optimize Facility Access – Maximize the use of existing municipal assets to promote recreation, community development, and social interaction while optimizing equitable access, infrastructure reinvestments, service delivery methods and resource management.

Good Health and Well Being -4.9 Inclusive Public Places – Provide and Promote the amenities and the design and maintenance standards necessary to ensure accessible, safe and sanitary conditions in gathering spaces frequented by the public.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to this report's alignment with this plan and it was determined that it is not applicable in this case.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to alignment with this strategy, and it was determined that this strategy is not applicable in this case.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
Prepared by: Matt Dryburgh Interim Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Date: May 26, 2026