

Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association Request for Additional Funding

Recommendation:

THAT Council approve a 1 year 2% increase to the Operating Funds for the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association Agreement effective January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026, while the City reviews the granting process for community groups.

AND

THAT Council approve a one time ask of \$19,750 for 2026 to support Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association's 125th Anniversary celebration.

Report Purpose and Summary Statement:

To obtain Council approval for a 1 year 2% increase to the Operating Funds for 2026 provided under the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association operating agreement, effective January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026.
To obtain Council approval for the Association's request for the addition of \$19,750, in 2026, to support its 125th Anniversary celebration.

Financial Impact:

2% increase of \$340 to their 2026 Operating Funds.
An additional \$19,750 in 2026 for a total of \$20,090 in additional funds.

Funding Source:

Through one-time funding.

Strategic Alignment:

Engaged, Healthy Community; Diversified, Thriving Economy;

Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association Request for Additional Funding

BACKGROUND:

The City of Maple Ridge has been supporting the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agricultural Association (Agriculture Association) by providing Operational Funds to support a two-day Country Festival each year and towards the provision of agricultural and farming programs and services for 125 years. Country Fest draws approximately 23,000 people over the weekend.

The current Operating Agreement expires on December 31, 2028, and includes an annual amount of \$17,000 for operating funds.

The GSL (Planet Ice) Agreement with the City of Maple Ridge provides the City with 35 “Special Event” days between May 1 to August 15 each year in Cam Neely Arena at no charge. This is used to support Home Show, Country Fest, and other events.

In addition, the Recreation, Parks, Operations, Roads and Facilities staff provide support and resources to the organizers of Country Fest in pre and post event preparation.

The City also provides the following facility bookings at no cost to the Agricultural Association for the Country Festival which equates to \$39,595.85 of waived rental and site fees:

Location	Facility	Dates	Waved Fee's
Albion Fairgrounds & Park	Beef Barn	3rd Thursday in June - 1st Friday after the event	\$1,629.44
	Whole Fairgrounds*	1st Saturday of July – 1st Friday of August	\$26,149.44
Albion Sports Complex	Field #7	Thursday before event	\$24.08
	Field #8	Thursday before event	\$24.08
	All Fields (1-8)	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	\$2,650.08
	Parking Lot	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	\$1,500.00
	Beach Volleyball #1	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	Free
	Beach Volleyball #2	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	Free
	Beach Volleyball #3	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	Free
	Beach Volleyball #4	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	Free
	Picnic Shelter	Wednesday - Sunday of event weekend	\$367.50
	Banquet Room	Tuesday before event - Monday after event	\$2,225.44

Location	Facility	Dates	Waved Fee's
Curling Rink - GEWC	Concession	Tuesday before event - Monday after event	\$373.31
	GEWC Parking	Tuesday before event - Monday after event	\$3,50.00
	Lobby	Tuesday before event - Monday after event	Free
	Dry Floor	Wednesday before event - Wednesday after event	\$4,311.68
Planet Ice	Planet Ice Meeting Room	Friday - Sunday of event weekend	\$340.80
Dog Park	Designated dog park area	Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of Country Fest weekend	Free

*Whole Fairgrounds include the Beef Barn, Swine Barn, Dairy Barn, Camping on Grounds, Commercial Barn, Display Barn, Exhibition Barn, Kitchen, Picnic Area, Rings 1-4, Gravel Parking, Grounds Only, Overflow Parking, Riding Ring, Stables, Stage

ANALYSIS:

Discussion:

Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association formally requested a 2% inflation increase to the Operating Funds in their current 2024 – 2028 Operating Agreement. Staff are recommending a 1 year 2% increase to the Operating Funds effective January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026, while the City reviews the granting process for community groups

The additional funding request of \$19,750 is to support their upcoming celebration of the Fair's 125th anniversary.

Operating Funds Increase

Currently in the Operating Agreement with the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association the City provides Operating Funds in the amount of \$17,000 annually. The Operating Funds have remained at this level since 2015.

Country Festival Support

The Agriculture Association is seeking additional one-time funding in the amount of \$19,750.00 to support the following initiatives at the 2026 125th anniversary of Country Fest to mark this major milestone with meaningful programming that reflects the rich agricultural history of our community and highlights the Fair's ongoing impact:

- 1. Historical Exhibit – 125 Years of the Fair:**

We plan to research, curate, and display historical documents and artifacts that tell the story of agriculture in Maple Ridge and the evolution of the Fair over the past 125 years.

2. **Enhanced 4-H Programming:**

Additional funding will enable us to expand current 4-H initiatives, supporting youth-led storytelling projects that showcase family involvement in agriculture and long-standing ties to the Fair.

3. **Community Entertainment and Activities:**

We aim to feature local artists, musicians, and performers—many of whom have participated in past fairs—to provide engaging and inclusive entertainment for residents and visitors. This also supports tourism and contributes to the local economy.

4. **RCMP Musical Ride:**

In recognition of both the RCMP's 150th anniversary and the Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association's 125th anniversary. This would be a major attraction, drawing attendees from across Maple Ridge and neighboring communities.

Strategic Alignment:

Engaged, Healthy Community and Diversified, Thriving Economy.

Financial Impact:

Below is a summary of the total financial impact of the requests made from the Agricultural Association. To be funded through one time funding.

Year	Current Operating Funds	Proposed Operating Funds – 2% Increase	Additional Funding Requested	Total Additional 1 Year Funding Requested
2026	\$17,000	\$17,340	\$19,750	\$20,090

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion the City financially supports the Agricultural Association and Country Fest with a total of \$39,595.85 in waived rental and site fees, staff time and resources prepping the site pre and post event, and use of City equipment required to run the event.

For 125 years the Agricultural Association has been operating the annual Country Fest in Maple Ridge. The Agricultural Association is committed to promoting and educating the public about the importance of agriculture in our daily lives.

Prepared by: Cidalia Martin, Director of Recreation Services

Attachments:

- (A) 2024 - 2028 Agriculture Association Operating Agreement
- (B) Correspondence Email from Graham Vanstone, Manager of Country Fest
- (C) 2025 Financial Statements
- (D) 2026 Budget to 2025 Actual Report

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows Agriculture Association Request for Additional Funding.docx
Attachments:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 04-12-24 - Agricultural Association Operating Agreement - Signed.pdf- Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Agricultural Association.pdf- 2025 Financial statements unsigned.pdf- Copy of 2026 Budget to 2025 Actual report.xlsx
Final Approval Date:	Feb 12, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Carolyn Mushata, Director of Legislative Services and Corporate Officer

Scott Hartman, Chief Administrative Officer