

Rise in recreation fees supports new centre

By **Brendan Shykora**
Vernon Morning Star

The City of Vernon is adjusting its parks and recreation fee structure, with council opting for an increase as it prepares to open the Active Living Centre (ALC).

Council gave first three readings to the municipal fees and charges bylaw on Sept. 8, locking in fees for a three-year period, from 2026 to 2028.

Among the changes is a 2.5 per cent annual fee increase across those three years, which will help Recreation Services to meet its overall cost recovery target of 65 per cent.

In tweaking the bylaw, staff have been playing a delicate balancing act of creating a fair fee structure for Vernon residents who are on the hook as taxpayers for the \$136 million project, without pushing away non-Vernon residents whose attendance is needed for the city to gain the required revenue to



BRENDAN SHYKORA/MORNING STAR

Construction is ongoing on Vernon's Active Living Centre, which is slated to be completed in the fall of 2026.

support the facility's ongoing operations.

In the end, council approved a fee structure that will see non-Vernon residents pay 30 per cent more than Vernon residents for recreation facility access. That's down from the 50 per cent premium non-Vernon residents would have had to pay under a previous proposal.

A report to council notes the new recreation fee admission rates are designed to support increased membership sales at

the ALC "with the intent to acknowledge the contribution made by Vernon residents without establishing a barrier to access for non-residents," all while hitting the 65 per cent cost recovery target.

Council already approved the fees at its May 25 and June 8 meetings, and staff have now formally incorporated them into the bylaw that was approved on Tuesday.

The bylaw includes a previously unaccounted for revenue

stream: rental rates for meeting rooms, gymnasiums, the track and the pool area, which have been scaled to support the 65 per cent cost recovery target.

Staff believe these rental rates will help maximize utilization of the ALC.

"While programs and public access are the core of ALC operations, providing the opportunity for public and private rentals increases the overall financial stability of the ALC," the report says. "This is a new revenue opportunity that was not previously contemplated during the design phase of the project and is expected to increase the revenue potential of the facility."

Promotions will also be offered as part of the ALC's launch, supporting pre-sales of memberships through a Founding Member offer. This will give purchasers a free first month when buying monthly or annual passes with a minimum three-month commitment. The

promotion will be on sale Nov. 1 to Dec. 31, 2026. The deal also offers a commemorative gold membership card and 10 complimentary guest passes.

Additionally, a 2.4 per cent credit card surcharge is going to be applied on facility rentals, leases and licences to help offset the more than \$74,000 in annual processing fees the city currently pays. A one per cent monthly compounding interest charge is also being added to overdue accounts to encourage timely payments.

Coun. Brian Guy expressed his appreciation for staff's work on the bylaw.

"I'm impressed with the effort and the thought that's gone into this, and I really like the adjustments," Guy said. "There's several new concepts here, sort of at another level of granularity that I really like, for example these promotional pieces that I think are going to be great right out the gate."

Public Notice



Notice is hereby given to interested persons or persons who deem their interest in property affected by the proposed **Temporary Use Permit TUP00021**:

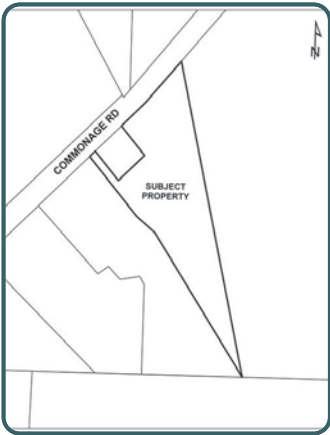
Location: 677 Commonage Rd (see map at right)
Purpose: To permit the temporary use of the **manufacturing and installation of marine canvas, upholstery, and flooring for boats** in the AGRS zone on the subject property.

Enquiries relative to the above proposed temporary use permit should be directed to the **Planning and Community Services Division** located at the Community Services Building, 3001 32nd Avenue, Vernon, BC or by calling 250-550-3634. Copies of the proposed permit and background documents are available for inspection during normal business hours (8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.), Monday to Friday inclusive (excluding Statutory Holidays) from October 15 to October 29, 2026. Documents may also be viewed at vernon.ca/dvp-publicinput.

Should you wish to make a written submission regarding this proposed permit, please deliver in writing to the General Manager, Planning & Community Services, City of Vernon, 3400 30th Street, Vernon BC V1T 5E6 or by sending an email to planning@vernon.ca. Please include **TUP00021 - Temporary Use Permit for 677 Commonage Rd** in the "Subject" line. All correspondence received by October 29, 2026 shall be considered. Written submissions must include your name and civic address.

NO SUBMISSIONS RELATED TO THIS APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER OCTOBER 29, 2026.

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