



To: Richmond City Council **Date:** June 5, 2003
From: Councillor Harold Steves **File:** 7400-00
Chair, Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Services
Committee
Re: **SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee, at its meeting held on June 4th, 2003, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

Committee Recommendation

That:

1. *the special event guiding principles, as defined in the report (dated May 26, 2003 from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services), be adopted;*
2. *the interim special event process and the city's role, as defined in the report (dated May 26, 2003 from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services), be adopted; and*
3. *City staff continue to develop a final special event and sponsorship process for Council's consideration in the Fall of 2003; and*
4. *the staff report on this matter be referred to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Community Working Group and to the Economic Advisory Task Force for review and to report to Council prior to a final decision being made on this strategy.*

Councillor Harold Steves, Chair
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee

Attach.

VARIANCE

Please note that staff recommended the following:

That:

- (1) *the special event guiding principles, as defined in the report (dated May 26, 2003 from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services), be adopted;*
- (2) *the interim special event process and the city's role, as defined in the report (dated May 26, 2003 from the General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services), be adopted; and*
- (3) *city staff continue to develop a final special event and sponsorship process for Council's consideration in the Fall of 2003.*

Staff Report

Origin

Council at their special meeting of January 30, 2003 made the following referral:

“That staff draft City Sponsorship Event Guidelines and recommendations as to whether or not Council should sponsor events.”

This report was prepared on the basis of discussions held by a cross-divisional team comprised of staff from Community Safety, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, and Economic Development.

To address the referral, this report presents:

1. special event guiding principles for consideration;
2. a definition of the City’s role in special events;
3. proposed changes in the interim period; and
4. development of final special event guidelines for Council.

Benefits

Special events contribute to our city’s social and economic well-being. They build a sense of belonging, community pride, and identity. Events such as fairs, festivals, concerts, sporting activities, parades, and others, bring together people from different backgrounds and different neighbourhoods throughout the city. Currently the City supports 65 of these special events each year.

It is important that the City play a role which encourages and supports events that bring the community together. Such events provide an excellent opportunity for members of Council to showcase the City’s role and support in a positive manner.

Best Practices

A review of how nine other communities handle special events was undertaken in search of best practices. The nine communities investigated have many similar traits such as recognizing the value of special events, the development of guidelines and processes; and addressing the issue of resources. In particular, Seattle and Surrey have many common worthy components which stood out.

The information gathered help to define the City’s role and development of the interim processes and will eventually assist in the development of written information packages for event customers; and the development of guidelines to determine the level of City support in terms of

money, staff time, equipment, and/or facility use. Information gathering and evaluation of municipal best practices will continue as the final event guidelines are developed.

Event Categories

Events are defined by two key factors: size (including impact on park/place and public services); and variety, which are detailed below:

Size - events are placed into three size categories and can be further categorized based on the potential impact on the park/place and public services. Examples are:

Small (under 300 people): Block Party; Sports Days; KidSake Day

Medium (300 - 1500 people): Nibbles & Bites; Remembrance Day Parade; Halloween Fireworks; Youth Dance; Multi-Fest; Marathons; Sports Tournaments and Track Meets

Large (+ 1500 people): Steveston Salmon Festival; Richmond Tall Ships 2002

Variety - The second factor variety, refers to the event home base. For example, community-based or those that go beyond our borders. Some recent examples are the Mt. McKinnley Team Fundraising Climb (representing citizens of Richmond outside our community); Canada's Olympic Bid (representing our nation); and the United Way campaign (based in another City).

The defining of events by these two key factors is a starting point. The factors will need to be tested and expanded as part of the final guideline development process to ensure an appropriate fit.

City Goals – Guiding Principles

Eight guiding principles have been developed that reflect the City's goals contained in the Corporate Plan; Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services 2001 Needs Assessment, and the Art Strategy documents. The guiding principles are:

1. *Benefit the community in an economic, social, and/or environmental way that supports the City's vision and goals.* This supports our corporate goal of a sustainable community, given our socially changing demographics of a growing, aging, culturally diverse, and active population. Our goal of economic development is also met through the supporting of special events and subsequent economic benefits to the businesses and support the City's commercial tax base.
2. *Promote and encourage community involvement.* This includes our desire to promote and encourage community involvement through attendance; volunteer opportunities; development of future event leaders; and will encourage support by other community leaders.

3. *Contribute to the liveability of Richmond.* This contributes to increasing community pride and impacts how others view our community.
4. *Safe and well-organized.* This would support our corporate goal of community safety and signal to the community the City's support for their well-being and its support for enjoyable and well-organized events.
5. *Balance community benefit and cost within the City's fiscal means.* This would allow the City to consider the cost of an event and weigh it against the overall community benefit.
6. *Financially well-managed.* This would support our desire to reduce both financial liability and limit the City's risk against possible legal action.
7. *Clearly define the City's involvement and contribution.* This would support our corporate goal of long term financial management. It will allow the City to balance financial pressures and evaluate event requests by providing efficient and effective use of limited City resources.
8. *Are diverse in size and in type.* This would allow the City to pursue annual goals around event venue types; size; location; and focus.

In addition to these eight guiding principles against which all applications would be measured, the City will also need to clearly define its priorities on an annual basis. Priorities would likely include references to preferred venue types; location; and/or areas of focus. Some focus area examples might be waterfront activities, youth, seniors, arts, heritage, and culture.

Defining the City's Role

Four main roles, which the City plays in special events, have been identified below.

1. *Take a proactive role in encouraging and facilitating events.* The majority of municipalities that were checked for best practices proactively encourage and facilitate events. The benefits of serving this type of role are detailed in the guiding principles and support the corporate goals.
2. *Receive, process, and make decisions on special event applications.* All special events, including those hosted by the City, would run through an application process. The majority of communities surveyed have an event application process to guide potential sponsors.
3. *Ensure customer-friendly process that use a corporate and multi-jurisdictional approach to event application review.* The best event application review processes involve a variety of key players internal and external to the City. This is of benefit to event organizers and service providers by providing improved responsiveness and turnaround time.

4. *Encourage a signature community event.* Signature events define a City and put it on the map (eg. Vancouver Fireworks and Indy Race; Cloverdale Rodeo; Merrit Mountain Music Festival; Calgary Stampede). Richmond has the Steveston Salmon Festival and more recently Richmond Tall Ships 2002. Encouraging a signature event can mean many things ranging from leading the event; developing future leaders to take over the role, or simply providing some form of resources and/or facilities.

The degree to which the City supports an event relates back to the event size and variety and takes into consideration the annual areas of focus. The degree of support whether it is resources; facilities; equipment; and/or funding will be clearly defined as part of the final event guidelines.

Interim Period

Until the final guidelines are adopted by Council, the following changes are proposed in the way special event requests are handled:

1. All event requests would run through a formal application process;
2. An information package would be developed to guide potential event applicants through the process and communicate City event goals;
3. An appropriate single point contact to be developed; and
4. A one-stop shopping event committee would be formed, comprised of appropriate cross-jurisdictional agencies and departments. It would be used to process applications of the medium to large varieties. For expediency, small events would trigger an electronic review versus meeting process.

The interim period will allow for the guiding principles to be tested; feedback obtained from event organizers (applicants); and an evaluation of the model. The determination of the appropriate level of City resources will be addressed as part of the final guidelines.

In the City of Richmond a significant number of events occur throughout the year. The City will continue to be asked to support many special events. Some upcoming event examples are: Wooden Boat Festival; Richmond's 125th Birthday, Wheel in Motion Tour, World Table Tennis Championships, Salmon Festival, World Junior Badminton Championships, and Richmond Tall Ships 2005.

The City's support for event requests in 2003, prior to the adoption of the final event guidelines, should be considered as a pilot (without prejudice of any future decisions).

Final Guidelines

A cross-divisional staff team will undertake a review of special events. Best practice information from other municipalities will continue to be gathered and analyzed; feedback from various stakeholders will be sought; an evaluation of the interim service model will be undertaken; and a

funding framework will be developed. The findings will be incorporated into the final guideline document.

Draft information will be prepared and at the appropriate points, discussed with event beneficiaries and external support agencies. Examples of the two groups would include (but not be limited to):

Beneficiaries - the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Richmond Asia Pacific Business Association, and Tourism Richmond.

External Support Agencies - BC Ambulance, Coast Guard, Coast Mountain Transit, Community Associations, and Richmond Health Services.

Financial Impact

None at this time.

Conclusion

The development of a Corporate approach to address the issue of special events is in keeping with the goals outlined in the City's Corporate Plan and 2001 Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Needs Assessment. The development of guiding principles; defining of an interim approach, and definition of the City's role provide a basis upon which final event guidelines can be built for Council's consideration in the Fall 2003.

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