



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Dave Semple
Director of Parks and Public Works Operations
Re: Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team (REACT) and Status of Community Events

Date: October 3, 2008
File: 11-7200-01/2008-Vol 01

Staff Recommendation

That the report Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team and Status of Community Events be received for information.

Dave Semple
Director of Parks and Public Works Operations
(604-233-3350)

Att. 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY			
ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Olympic Business Office.....		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Film Coordination Office.....		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications.....		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation & Culture.....		Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY TAG		YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>AK</i>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
			REVIEWED BY CAO
			YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>AS</i>
			NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee meeting of July 29, 2008, the following referral was made:

“That staff report back on the Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team (REACT) and the status of events.”

The purpose of this report is to provide background information on the City’s REACT Committee, the status of events in the community and outline the options for addressing increased growth of major events in Richmond.

Background

The City of Richmond welcomes events and festivals into our community. Events and festivals contribute significantly to our City’s social and economic well being. They are also beneficial for enhancing a community’s identity and profile regionally, nationally and internationally.

The City has a long history of facilitating events and festivals, while working to protect the safety of our citizens and civic assets, and to minimize disruption to our residents and businesses.

At the Regular Council Meeting of April 10, 2007, Council approved the vision and the 2007-2012 Major Events Plan for Richmond. The vision is: “Richmond, the premier events destination in Canada”.

Over the past two years, there has been a considerable increase in the number, size and complexity of events being held in Richmond. Some key factors that have contributed towards this growth include:

- a growing interest by the City, community groups and event promoters wanting to capitalize on the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games;
- increased capacity for hosting events due to new event hosting infrastructure in Richmond (e.g. Richmond Oval, Terra Nova Park, Hugh Boyd Soccer Development Centre etc.);
- increased capacity for organizing and hosting City run major events due to the addition of a Civic Events Development Manager and other support from the Richmond Olympic Business Office;
- increased interest by local sport groups in hosting large participation and high calibre sport tournaments and events;
- increased interest by event promoters in hosting large multicultural events in Richmond (e.g. Lantern Festival);

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- increased interest by non-profit groups in hosting large charitable events in Richmond (e.g Harmony Festival, Global Village Day); and
- increased interest by community groups in hosting agricultural markets and events (e.g. Steveston Farmers Market).

To deal with this growth, the City has developed a team of representatives from several City departments and public safety agencies involved in approving and providing services to events held in Richmond. This team is known as the **Richmond Events Approval Coordination Team (REACT)**.

REACT

In January 2004, the Community Safety Division formed a cross-departmental committee called the Safety Operations Steering Team (SOS) to provide an integrated approach to deal with operational safety issues affecting multiple agencies. In 2005, an events approval component was added to the mandate of this committee. REACT only approves external events not internal city events or events organized by the City.

With the increase in community safety issues and major events leading up to 2010, the role of the SOS team had expanded to a point where it was timely to split community safety issues from approvals and coordinating of City services for community events.

In January 2007, a cross-departmental committee events review team called the Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team (REACT) was formed under the guidance of Eric Stepura – Manager Sports and Community Events. The purpose of the committee is to review event applications, initiate event approvals by various departments and agencies, ensure coordination of City services, and provide a one-stop approval process for event managers. REACT only deals with events that require multi-departmental and multi-jurisdictional approvals. Smaller events that do not require multi-departmental approvals (such as youth sports tournaments) are handled by the Rentals Clerk or Manager of the host facility.

REACT's department/agency representation consists of:

Parks	Transportation	Business Licensing	RCMP	Fire	Corporate Services
Bylaws	Recreation & Cultural Services	Building Approvals	Health	BC Ambulance	ICBC

External Groups and individuals producing an event to be held in Richmond apply to the City's Parks Division (Rentals). Applications are reviewed and copies sent out to all REACT members whose departments/agencies may need to regulate or may be affected by the proposed event

regulatory guidelines and to provide expertise and assistance to event organizers. Many events also require monitoring by City staff or other agencies to ensure that regulations are followed throughout the event.

The amount of work involved in processing event applications varies considerably from event to event, depending on the complexity of the planned activities. Some events require very little staff time and City resources, especially if the venue is suitable and the activities are low risk. On the other extreme, there are some events that require considerable staff time, involving several departments/agencies, to ensure that regulations are understood and adhered to, and that events are operated safely with minimal disruption to residents and businesses.

REACT meets monthly during the Fall/Winter, then bi-monthly from April to August. The purpose of these meetings is to review the previous month's events, discuss the more complex upcoming event applications and to coordinate the various event approvals needed for successful and safe events. Ad hoc meetings are also held to hear new major event proposals. The REACT Committee occasionally denies event requests if they are deemed to be inappropriate land uses, or pose considerable risk to the City, its residents or businesses.

Over the past few years, there have been an increasing number of applications for events to be held in Richmond that has required the REACT committee's approval/coordination. Many of the new events attract large numbers of participants. These large crowd events involve more complex regulations and requirements, such as temporary food permits, litter disposal/recycling, parking control, traffic control, security and emergency/incident response. There are also changing and stricter standards for the preparation and serving of food, traffic safety, security, risk management and permits that need increased attention by event producers to meet increased regulatory requirements.

To improve efficiency of the event approval process, the following improvements are being developed by REACT in an attempt to further streamline the event approval process. They are:

On-line Event Application Process

- Once completed, event organizers will be able to access the City's web site to find out what approvals they need and complete all event permit application forms on-line.

Blanket Insurance Policy

- Staff are exploring the merits of purchasing a blanket insurance policy to provide liability insurance coverage for smaller community events. Groups may be charged a fee to recover the costs of this insurance policy. This would greatly reduce the effort involved for event organizers to get insurance coverage for community events, and reduce the amount of staff time spent collecting event insurance certificates from community event organizers.

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Event Application Fees

- Currently there are no application fees or cost recovery formulas related to the event approval/coordination services provided by REACT. The REACT committee is looking at whether or not private and commercial event promoters should be charged application fees, particularly in the situation where considerable time is invested by City staff to review and approve applications, coordinate City services and monitor event activities.

Status of Events

Festivals and events held in Richmond fall into several categories such as:

Community Events organized by Richmond based groups such as:

Nibbles and Bites
Nations Cup
Multifest
Dolphin Park Classic

Commercial Events and Events held on Private Property such as:

Night Market
Greater Vancouver International Lantern Festival
Steveston Farmers Market
Events held at River Rock Casino and Resort
Live broadcast of the 2008 Olympic Opening Ceremony at Aberdeen Mall.

Major Events such as:

BC Seniors Games
Tall Ships
World Speed Skating Championships
Salmon Festival

City Produced Events such as:

Winterfest
Seniors Week
O Zone for the 2010 Games period
Halloween Fireworks
Remembrance Day Ceremony

Private Events held on Public Property such as:

Picnics
Receptions

Openings such as:

Richmond Olympic Oval
Park Projects
Canada Line

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City Promotion/Community Engagement such as:

Oval roof signing
Olympic Speed Skating Team Receptions

Corporate Stewardship Events such as:

Microsoft Day of Caring
Telus Day of Service

Growth in Major Events

There is a growing trend to increased participation in events and festivals. In the recent survey completed by the PRCS Needs Assessment project, over 74% of Richmond residents have attended a festival or event in Richmond and 52% attend regularly. There also appears to be a growing trend, possibly caused by rising gas prices, that Richmond residents are seeking entertainment, activities and events closer to home.

The number of events that were dealt with by the REACT committee grew from 61 events in 2006, to 70 events in 2007 and 83 events in 2008. An estimated 324,350 participants attended events approved by the REACT committee in 2008. (Attachment I) is a list of events approved by the REACT Committee in 2008, and their estimated participant attendance.

There are also several large events that occurred in Richmond in 2008 that do not go through the REACT Committee for approval. They include events held at Richmond arenas, aquatic centres, cultural centres, school and community centre gymnasiums, Gateway Theatre, and non-profit run or private sport and entertainment facilities such as the Richmond Curling Club, golf courses, racquet clubs, churches, temples and the River Rock Casino and Resort.

Some of the new 2008 events included the Steveston Farmers Market, the Greater Vancouver International Lantern Festival, the Tzu Chi Foundation Harmony Festival, the Wild BC Seafood Festival, the Children's Hospital Charity Gala and the Global Village Day.

Some annual community festivals have also grown in size and complexity. The Steveston Salmon Festival, Nations Cup Soccer Tournament, Dolphin Park Classic Basketball Tournament, Richmond Maritime Festival, Richmond Dragon Boat Festival and Multifest all report increased participant and spectator attendance.

A further increase in the number of major events is expected in 2009, due to pre 2010 Olympics related celebrations, improved access to Richmond via the Canada Line, the availability of new event hosting facilities at the Richmond Oval and the Richmond Oval Plaza and the 2009 Richmond BC Seniors Games.

Infrastructure

There is an increase in City facilities and infrastructure that better lend themselves to hosting events, such as the Richmond Oval, the Richmond Oval Plaza and Terra Nova Park. The Ozone program concept, increased participation in Olympic related events (such as the opening of

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Beijing Games at Aberdeen Mall) and the Oval roof panel signing have also contributed to increased community excitement about the Olympics coming to Richmond.

Tournament hosting facilities that the City has built in recent years are also attracting more large sporting events. The Hugh Boyd Soccer Development Centre, the new Blundell Park baseball tournament facilities and the new artificial turf fields at King George Park and Minoru Park provide excellent venues for hosting soccer, football, field hockey and field lacrosse tournaments.

Economic Benefits of Events

In addition to increased community profile and socio-cultural benefits, there are significant economic benefits to a community from hosting events. The benefits can be seen in several business sectors including: accommodation, retail, food and beverage, event hosting services, recreation, entertainment, attractions and transportation. One example of an event that will provide an economic boost to local businesses is the 2009 Richmond BC Seniors Games. The BC Seniors Games Society estimates that over 3,500 participants will spend approximately \$2.25 million in our community.

Support For Events

The City provides a wide range of support to events held in Richmond. Several City departments have funding resources to deal with event hosting. These include: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services, Corporate Services, Richmond Olympic Business Office, Fire, RCMP, Bylaw, Traffic and others.

City run events such as Winterfest and civic facility openings access considerable City resources which include staff time, equipment and supplies.

Events that are co-sponsored by the City and Richmond based community associations (such as Multifest, Steveston Salmon Festival and Nibbles and Bites) receive partial support from the City which may include: event insurance funding, extra grounds maintenance, litter services, traffic control and loan of equipment (such as bleachers, tents, a stage and barricades).

Some private events (such as the Greater Vancouver International Lantern Festival) may require considerable City support to assist them with coordinating various event approvals such as fire safety, security, traffic and parking control, health permits, building permits, planning approvals etc.

The City requires that all events held on City property or events, which involve the provision of City services, must have insurance. The City's Special Event Insurance Policy currently provides community associations with \$20,000 in funds to offset event insurance.

STATUS OF MAJOR EVENTS DELIVERY STRATEGY

The focus of the Major Events Plan 2007-2012 is to establish a Civic Events Office, develop a Major Events Implementation Plan and proceed with implementing the goals, objectives and actions outlined in the Implementation Plan.

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The Major Events Plan was adopted by Council at their Regular Council Meeting of April 10, 2007. Since then, staff has done the following work in response to the delivery strategy key actions:

1. *Build Capacity to Host Events*

- A Civic Events Development Manager (Anne Phelps) has been hired to develop the Major Events Implementation Plan, provide corporate support to the Olympic business office and to work with corporate, private and community organizations to ensure the development of new major events.
- The Major Events Implementation Plan is nearing completion and will be brought forward to Council in the near future.

2. *Continue to support existing community events*

- REACT Committee has been established to coordinate event approvals and the City's event services for event organizers.
- Work is underway to develop an on-line event application process.

3. *Promote and Market Events*

- Modifications have been made to allow staff and community groups to promote their events on the City's web site.

4. *Establish Major Event Hosting Partnerships*

- Staff has developed partnerships with many corporate businesses and non-profit groups to co-host and/or sponsor major community events such as Winterfest.

5. *Bids for New Major Events*

- City staff assisted Richmond Sport Council to prepare a successful bid to host the 2009 BC Seniors Games.

6. *Acquisition of Financial Resources*

- A fund of \$20,000 has been allocated in annual operating budgets to provide funds to offset the cost of insurance for community events organized by Richmond based community associations.

Need For Event Hosting Resources

Support of festivals and events in Richmond is now well beyond the capacity of existing City operating budget resources. To address the increased number and complexity of events, staff will be submitting an additional level request of \$100,000 to address the increased number of major community events.

The funding would be used to purchase event hosting equipment (i.e. tents, portable fencing, sound equipment, signage etc.) and event services such as transportation of event materials and equipment and additional staff to do event setup/takedown and event supervision.

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Without additional resources, staff will be faced with turning away requests for events and/or be recommending that event producers cover the City's costs of supporting their events. An additional level request of \$100,000 will be forwarded for consideration in the 2009 annual budget.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact resulting from this report.

Conclusion

There is an expectation by residents, the local business community and Council, that the City host and support major events. Events are economic generators for the City in terms of tourism dollars, business growth and increased community profile. Events provide opportunities for residents to connect with each other, build community pride and make communities appealing and liveable.

City staff have responded to the delivery strategy outlined in the 2007-2012 Major Events Plan. The result has been significant growth in the number, size and complexity of events being held in the City. This growth is expected to increase significantly in 2009 due to pre 2010 Olympics related celebrations, improved access to Richmond via the Canada Line and the availability of new event hosting facilities at the Richmond Oval.

To address the increased number and complexity of events and to further support the delivery of the 2007-2012 Major Events Plan, additional resources are required effective 2009.



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ATTACHMENT I

2008 REACT APPROVED EVENTS

EVENT	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
100 Miles of Appetizers and Wine Tasting	65
8 Hour Response Team Relay	800
Activate Seniors Wellness Fair	400
Airport Authority Summer Party	175
Amateur Radio Field Day	60
Amp Your Game: Mobile Gaming Experience	10,000
Annual Corn Party	700
Battle of Atlantic Commemoration Ceremony	200
BC Soccer Boys BCSA Cup Provincials	2,200
BCSA Senior Provincial B Cup	700
Bethany Baptist Church Picnic	400
Big M Car Show	100
Block Party Town Fiesta	600
Buddha's Light Summer Carnival	700
Burkeville Daze	1,000
Cambie Halloween Fireworks	800
Canadian Cancer Society Relay for Life	500
Canadian Ismaili Games	250
Chefs to the Field	1,600
Children's Hospital Charity Gala	1,000
City Centre Celebration	12,000
City Centre Children's Festival	1,100
Coastal Thursday Challenge	100
Conservative Party Summer Picnic	300
DBF Walk	700
Dolphin Park Classic	1,100
E-Venti Marathon	140
Fish for the Future	300
Flatlands Marathon	500
GK Walk	400
Global Village Day	5,000

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Hamilton Family Festival	1,000
Hamilton Halloween Fireworks	800
Harmony Festival	1,200
Harvest Fundraiser	70
Heart and Stroke Foundation Big Bike Ride	1,000
Huckin for Hearts	300
Jimmy Ng Tournament	700
Kajaks Country Meet	500
Labour Day Weekend Race	800
Kajaks Ice Breaker Race	400
Kajaks Review International Track Meet	4,000
Kid's Safe	1,300
Kigoos Ice Breaker Swim Meet	850
Kigoos Junior Development Swim Meet	180
La Carnaval	1,000
Lantern Festival	20,000
Lions Sockeye Run Car Show	100
Mahmood Awan Picnic	300
Maritime Festival	15,500
Minoru Halloween Fireworks	5,000
Move for Health Day/Walk Richmond Kick Off	90
Multifest	3,200
National Aboriginal Day	200
Nations Cup	6,000
Nibbles and Bites	15,500
Oval Events	15,000
Paws for a Cause	200
Police Week	250
Remembrance Day	2,200
Richmond Christian School Terry Fox Run	350
Richmond Dragon Boat Festival	450
Richmond High Terry Fox Run	300
Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion	300
Rivermania BC's 150 th Birthday	4,000
River Rock Staff Family Day	500

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Salmon Festival Bullhead Derby	200
Sea Island Halloween Fireworks	300
Seniors Week Opening Ceremony	200
South Arm Halloween Fireworks	800
Spectacle of Lights	800
Steveston Farmers & Artisans Market	50,000
Steveston Labour Day Race	500
Steveston Salmon Festival	100,000
Summer Softball Slam 2008	400
Super Cities Walk for MS	200
Tamkang University Alumni Assoc. Picnic	200
Terry Fox Run	400
Walk for ALS	370
Wild BC Seafood Fest	2,000
Winterfest	20,000
World Food Day	100
Zenith 2008 Global Citizenship Conference	450

TOTAL

324,350