

CITY OF HAMILTON

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Culture Division

Report to: Chair and Members Emergency & Community Services Committee	Submitted by: Joe-Anne Priel General Manager, Community Services Department
Date: October 26, 2007	Prepared by: Anna M. Bradford, Ext. 3967

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide)

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That staff be directed to prepare an Events Strategy for the City of Hamilton, which outlines the City's role in the delivery and support of Special Events within Hamilton.
- (b) That staff be directed to engage an event specialist to assist in the development of the Events Strategy for the City of Hamilton.
- (c) That the cost of developing the City of Hamilton's Events Strategy, to an upset limit of \$120,000 including the costs for the events specialist, be funded from the Unallocated Capital Reserve #108020.

Joe-Anne Priel
General Manager,
Community Services Department

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

For many years, Hamilton was a leader in special events and festivals although there was no formal structure, strategy, or direction towards their development and execution. Over time, changes within departmental roles and an increased number of events have resulted in significant gaps in the provision of services and support for events and festivals. Event organizers have expressed frustration over the lack of formalized

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 8

procedures and processes. In addition, clear roles and responsibilities for City departments need to be determined and adopted if we hope to achieve the goals of making Hamilton an *events friendly city*.

The City of Hamilton's Events Strategy will document and guide the City's future role for events and festivals in Hamilton. The purpose is to provide direction, which will enable the City to best align its programs, services, infrastructure, processes, organizational structure and budgets with the identified priorities, mission and objectives.

The purpose of Report ECS07058 is to seek approval to:

- Develop a comprehensive Events Strategy for the City of Hamilton;
- Engage an event and festival specialist to assist in the development of the Events Strategy; and,
- Identify a funding source for the associated costs to develop the Events Strategy.

BACKGROUND:

Rituals and celebrations are integral to the human experience. They nourish our sense of well-being and allow us to access the creative part of ourselves. There are many reasons to create celebrations:

- Promote community well-being;
- Sustain community beliefs, heritage, and traditions;
- Create a forum for the enactment of myths, stories, or legends;
- Educate; and,
- Simply, to have fun.

Council is aware of the many, many positive benefits that well executed and operated celebrations have for our community. These celebrations generally take on the form of events and festivals. Events and festivals can be broadly sorted into three distinct categories: Community Events, Growing/Emerging Events, and Tourism Events.¹

Community Events have a community focus and impact by bringing the community together to instill neighbourhood pride. Examples may include: Winterfest and It's Your Festival.

Growing/Emerging Events are those that have the potential to evolve to Tourism events. Examples may include: Mustard Festival and The Re-enactment of the Battle of Stoney Creek.

Tourism Events are defined as events that are large, compelling to a major market and possess high expenditure potential. Such events should also have the potential for international exposure and the ability to encourage multi-day visits. To be considered a

¹ City of Burlington Five Year Festivals & Events Strategy, City of Burlington 2005

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 3 of 8

true Tourism Event, a material share of total participation must come from overnight tourists/visitors. There are three categories for Tourism Events: Hallmark, Mega, and, Blockbuster. Examples may include: The World Road Racing Championships and the Bell Canadian Open.

Hamilton, at different times, has hosted combinations of all three categories of events. Currently, the majority of events are Community Events.

How are events delivered in Hamilton?

Events in Hamilton are delivered under a variety of different organizational structures:

- *City Staff* – operate civic events through the Special Events Section, Culture Services Division, Community Services Department;
- *Non-Profit Event Organizations* – those whose sole purpose it is to produce events such as Creative Arts Inc., Hamilton Carnival Committee, Hamilton Folk Arts, Around the Bay 30k Road Race Inc., Winona Peach Festival Inc., and Dundas Cactus Festival Inc.;
- *Non-profit and Charitable Organizations* – those whose purpose is other than producing events, but who may produce events in order to support their purpose. These would include Business Improvement Areas, service clubs, churches and cause-related organizations such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society;
- *For Profit Companies* – those companies whose purpose it is to produce events for generating income for an entrepreneurial business such as consumer shows (RV Show, Home Show), promoters and meeting planners;
- *Neighbourhood Committees* – those whose purpose it is to celebrate, profile or improve their neighbourhood through events such as Gourley Park Pumpkinfest, Easter Egg Hunts; and,
- *Grassroots Committees* – those whose purpose it is to produce an event on an ad hoc basis to meet a community need such as celebrating community milestones like VE Day, for example.

In addition, Tourism Hamilton is pro-actively promoting Hamilton as an events hosting city by pursuing a variety of sporting events such as the Canadian Open and Tim Horton's Brier.

Current Hamilton Situation for Event Organizers – Issues and Challenges

After consultation with key event industry stakeholders, which included staff from the Business Improvement Associations and local event organizers, it is apparent that there is considerable frustration and exasperation over the lack of a formal City process towards the presentation of events. The main issues can be categorized into four

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 4 of 8

areas. It should be noted that the following list is a synopsis only and each area has additional issues that will need to be addressed an Events Strategy:

1) Events – there is a lack of a:

- Process for the delivery of events in Hamilton by City Council and staff;
- Clear statement from Council on the importance of events to Hamilton;
- Strategy to address the growth of events;
- Classification system for events;
- Definition and consistency of what resources City departments provide to event organizers;
- Consistent policy and process around access to equipment and services; and,
- Direct City liaison (current Special Events Section was created to produce city-sponsored events such as arena and park openings, and civic events such as Canada Day. The Section has never been officially tasked with assisting and developing events taking place in the City.)

2) Funding – there is a lack of:

- A process that allows events to be recognized and funded appropriately at different times during their life cycle;
- A loan program that events could access as they grow (if applicable);
- Additional funding to recognize significant anniversaries such as Festival of Friends' 25th Anniversary; and,
- A funding program for major one-time events such as the World Road Race or the Canadian Open, for example.

3) Marketing – there is a lack of:

- City assistance and programs to market events;
- Web site development and support; and,
- A co-ordinated marketing effort between the City, Tourism Hamilton, and event organizers.

4) Definition and Development – there is a lack of:

- Training in strategic and business planning; and,
- City assistance in providing these services on an ongoing basis.

What would an Events Strategy address?

- Develop a Vision, Mission, Goals and objectives for all festivals and events operated by City staff and other organizations in Hamilton;
- Identify gaps and opportunities for festivals and events in Hamilton in support of achieving the Vision;

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 5 of 8

- Define the City's direct and indirect role in events and festivals;
- Define the roles and responsibilities of Council, Special Events Section, Operations and Maintenance (Parks, Roads Traffic), Public Health Services, Police Services, HECFI, Tourism Hamilton and the Special Events Advisory Team (SEAT);
- Develop a classification system for events and festivals that clearly defines their level of activity such as a Tourism Event, Community Event or a Neighbourhood Event;
- Determined by the classification system, the Strategy will outline what level of service each category will be assigned.
 - Levels of service will include:
 - Funding; and,
 - Marketing requirements
- Assistance with planning, servicing levels (such as equipment), staff and other considerations, and SEAT services;
- Create a flow chart that outlines job responsibilities on how each City department or section relates to the other through the provision of services for events. The chart would also outline key job functions – who is providing what service and where the event stakeholders fit into this process;
- Review the current Special Events Policy and make recommendations for improvements, as applicable;
- Development of a Special Events Tool Kit;
- Provide a current economic impact assessment of the economic value that festivals and events bring to Hamilton and determine the future economic value of events for the city;
- Determine a set of action recommendations to address resource deficiencies, confirmed roles and set the future direction for successful festival and event presentation in Hamilton.

Why will this help?

- It will clearly articulate the goal of making Hamilton an “events friendly city”;
- Both the City and stakeholders will gain valuable economic impact information. This will assist in positioning the importance of events to Hamilton;
- Event organizers will feel valued by the City for their significant contribution to Hamilton's social and economic well-being;
- Event organizers will clearly understand the role and services provided by the City;

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 6 of 8

- City departments will clearly understand their role in serving event delivery; and,
- It will assist in determining adequate funding strategies for sustaining both established and emerging events.

Process

The process by which the document will be prepared will consider factors such as:

- Internal staff and external stakeholder interviews;
- Public workshops;
- Research on comparative models and best practices in other municipalities; and,
- Alternative delivery models.

How much will it cost?

Expenses related to the development of an Events Strategy will include project management fees, consultant and communication costs. Based on similar projects, the budget is estimated at approximately \$120,000.

ANALYSIS/RATIONALE:

The role of events and festivals, as positive economic and social drivers, is increasingly recognized across the province and the nation. Currently, Hamilton has a number of events ranging from agricultural fairs, outdoor festivals, concerts, walk-a-thons and major races, neighbourhood celebrations, street theatre, and performances to religious parades. Such events and festivals generate an array of positive economic and social impacts for our community. These include:

- Showcasing the cultural diversity and heritage of Hamilton's communities;
- Highlighting the inventiveness, passion and creativity of the people in Hamilton;
- Stimulating economic cohesion and developing aspiration;
- Increasing cultural participation and audience development;
- Contributing to the City's pride and enthusiasm;
- Providing learning and skill development opportunities;
- Attracting visitors to the City and generating significant associated expenditures; and,
- Creating and enhancing a positive image and reputation provincially and nationally.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:

If the current provision for servicing events is maintained, the issues and challenges expressed by key event organizers will not be resolved. Some of the organizers have been clear that they are not going to continue to try to operate events under present conditions. Loss of events and/or the ability to incubate new events will have a direct

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 7 of 8

impact on the many positive economic and social benefits that events provide for our community. The status quo is being challenged and without strategic efforts, sustainability of events is in jeopardy.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Financial:

The cost of developing an Events Strategy for the City of Hamilton is estimated at \$120,000 and it is recommended to be funded from the Unallocated Capital Reserve #108020. Therefore, there is no direct impact on the tax levy.

Staffing:

There are no staffing implications associated with the recommendations of Report ECS07058; however, it should be noted that the current status quo is an unbudgeted cost to Operations and Maintenance's regular program delivery. It is anticipated that the Events Strategy will address this issue.

Legal:

There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations of Report ECS07058.

POLICIES AFFECTING PROPOSAL:

The City of Hamilton's Special Event Planning Policy and Procedures Manual (April 2005).

RELEVANT CONSULTATION:

Chair, Festivals and Events Hamilton

General Manager, Corporate Services Department

Manager of Capital Budgets and Development, Budgets Section, Budgets and Finance Division, Corporate Services Department

Senior Financial Analyst, Budgets Section, Budgets and Finance Division, Corporate Services Department

Director of Operations and Maintenance, Administration Section, Operations and Maintenance Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: City of Hamilton Events Strategy (ECS07058) (City Wide) - Page 8 of 8

Group Services Coordinator, Tourism and Convention Services Section, Economic Development and Real Estate Division, Planning and Economic Development Department

Special Events Supervisor, Administration Section, Culture Division, Community Services Department

CITY STRATEGIC COMMITMENT:

By evaluating the “**Triple Bottom Line**”, (community, environment, and economic implications) we can make choices that create value across all three bottom lines, moving us closer to our vision for a sustainable community, and Provincial interests.

Community Well-Being is enhanced.

Yes **No**

Public services and programs are delivered in an equitable manner, coordinated, efficient, effective and easily accessible to all citizens.

Environmental Well-Being is enhanced.

Yes **No**

Economic Well-Being is enhanced.

Yes **No**

Cultural industries are enhanced.

Does the option you are recommending create value across all three bottom lines?

Yes **No**

Do the options you are recommending make Hamilton a City of choice for high performance public servants?

Yes **No**