

Report to Council



Date: February 11, 2019
File: 0610-53
To: City Manager
From: Chris Babcock, Event Development Supervisor
Subject: 2018 Kelowna Outdoor Events Summary

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Event Development Supervisor dated February 11, 2019 regarding the 2018 Outdoor Event season.

AND THAT Council endorses, in principle, the updated Event & Festival Framework, as outlined in Appendix B in the report from the Event Development Supervisor dated February 11, 2019.

Purpose:

To endorse the proposed Event & Festival Framework and provide Council with an update on the 2018 outdoor event season and an overview of the 2019 Event Services Branch plans.

Background:

Events provide a platform to celebrate Kelowna's community by reflecting its values, diversity, and overall quality of life. They contribute to a strong local economy and provide a range of opportunities and experiences through culture, sport, and celebrations for all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

The City's Event Services Branch strives to foster a healthy event landscape that contributes to community-wide objectives and ensures variety, accessibility and quality in events while being mindful of Kelowna's citizens. Through collaboration, ongoing relationships, and research, staff continue to advance the 'one-stop-shop' approach to enhance customer service, optimize staff resources, maintain current events and position Kelowna as a strong contender in procuring major events.

2018 Overview

In terms of event hosting in Kelowna, 2018 proved to be an extremely successful year with a record number of permitted events (180), and tournaments (85) being held, providing citizens and visitors alike

with numerous opportunities to celebrate and share experiences within the community. This number of events/tournaments has steadily risen since 2012 and is reflective of our vibrant, event-friendly city. To support the growth and development of these events, staff administered over \$50,000 of grant funds in 2018 and continued to expand the list of services and resources available to event organizers. Event highlights include:

Returning Events

Kelowna was host to a number of returning events in 2018 which have become staples in the community that serve to connect our citizens and contribute to our identity. They include: *Canada Day Festival, Okanagan Pride Festival, Jack Brow Track Meet, Great Okanagan Beer Fest, Sunflicker Ultimate Tournament, Across the Lake Swim, Vaisakhi Parade, May Days, Valley of Champions Baseball Tournament, Fat Cat Children's Festival, Ribfest* and more.

New Events

Kelowna also welcomed several notable new events that offered unique and beneficial opportunities to the community. These events involved a competitive bid process and were only available to host on a predetermined cycle. They included: *Nitro Circus, BCAA Flag Football Provincial Championships, Break Out West, Pickleball National Championships, the World Mixed Curling Championship* and more.

Bids

City staff are consistently seeking out new, large-scale events that would provide Kelowna with a healthy economic stimulus, legacy and development opportunities, and overall positive impact for the community. The event procurement process is done collaboratively with Tourism Kelowna and aligns organizational objectives and resources in order to put forward the strongest bid possible in a growing, competitive market. Successful bids in 2018 included: *2019 Skate Canada International, 2019 BC High School Track & Field Championships, 2019 Field Lacrosse Nationals* and *2020 Memorial Cup*.

2018 Challenges

There are a number of ongoing challenges associated with hosting events held outdoors. While there are no simple solutions, City staff continue to explore ways to mitigate the challenges and improve the services and opportunities available. Based on staff attendance at events, event monitor reports, debrief sessions and ongoing relationships with event organizers, three main challenges emerged in 2018:

Event Costs

Costs related to staging events in city parks and roadways were again noted as a major challenge to hosting events in Kelowna. Examples include: site limitations, logistical equipment needs, permit requirements, and trained personnel expenses.

Event Space

Kelowna has a limited amount of 'event specific' sites outside of the downtown core making it difficult to manage and balance the increasing number, type and requests for events hosted in Kelowna.

Weather

The excessive smoke caused by wildfires resulted in the cancellation of some noted events such as the *Apple Triathlon* and *Dragonboat Festival*, and lower attendance at several others. As a result, some organizers have requested date changes in 2019 to support the successful delivery of their event.

2019 Plans

As the Event Services Branch strives to improve and support a dynamic event landscape, staff continue to prioritize plans and develop strategies that address challenges and showcase Kelowna as an eventful city. Specific areas of focus for 2019 include:

Measuring Event Impact

Traditionally, event impact is associated with economic gain; however, events also have important influences on cultural, social, and image aspects for the community. An objective of the Event Services team will be to review and develop evaluation techniques that use multiple indicators to help determine the community's capacity for events, what type of events are effective in meeting the priorities of the city, and what areas need to be addressed in order to improve results.

Policy Development

Outdoor event permits are issued by the City of Kelowna pursuant to the Outdoor Events Bylaw (#8358) and the Active Living & Culture Fees and Charges Bylaw (#9609). As the event landscape continues to evolve and the City's capacity to address these progressions has increased, a review of related bylaws and guidelines is warranted to ensure accuracy, flexibility and prosperity moving into the future.

Strategic Event Framework

The Event & Festival Framework (Appendix A), endorsed by Council in 2012, was developed to provide guidance for a proactive approach to event management, align City and stakeholder efforts and reduce barriers for event organizers. To continue advancement in a dynamic event landscape, City staff have led discussions with various stakeholders to review event priorities and identify focus areas. As a result, an updated, proposed Framework (Appendix B) has been developed that is rooted by four main pillars: event development, event support, event management, and event spaces. Each of these pillars consist of specific objectives that have been identified for further review and development. An overview is provided below:

Event Development: Align goals and objectives with key stakeholders for the promotion and advancement of events hosted in Kelowna.

Event Support: Provide assistance for event and organizational development through a variety of resources to further support the creation, growth and sustainability of events in the community.

Event Management: Strengthen and augment application and regulatory processes to improve customer experience and internal operations.

Event Spaces: Develop and maintain event infrastructure and explore other spaces that bolster event possibilities.

City staff are committed to building an eventful city that positively reflects Kelowna's community, diversity, and values. The Event Services team will continue to identify a clear direction for the procurement, regulation and support of events, and will work with internal and external stakeholders to enhance the experiences of event participants.

Internal Circulation: Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture; Sport & Event Services Manager; Communications Advisor

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements
Existing Policy
Financial/Budgetary Considerations
Personnel Implications
External Agency/Public Comments
Communications Comments
Alternate Recommendation

Submitted by:

C. Babcock, Event Development Supervisor

Approved for inclusion by:

J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

Attachments: Appendix A – Event & Festival Framework - 2012
Appendix B – Proposed Event & Festival Framework - 2019
Outdoor Events Powerpoint Presentation – 2019

Cc: Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture; Sport & Event Services Manager; Communications Advisor