

Report to Council



Date: June 16, 2025
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Montana's Brier Economic Review
Department: Sports & Event Services

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Event Development Manager dated June 16, 2025, regarding the economic benefits achieved from the 2025 Montana's Brier.

Purpose:

To provide Council with information on the economic impact of the 2025 Montana's Brier.

Council Priority Alignment:

Economic Development

Background:

The Brier is the annual Canadian men's curling championship sanctioned by Curling Canada. The tournament has been held since 1927 where the winner goes on to represent Canada at the World Curling Championships of the same year. The Brier is considered the world's premier curling event and by far the best supported curling competition in terms of paid attendance and attracting large crowds in-venue and television audience. Canada has long distinguished itself as the number one curling nation in the world with the Brier being the ultimate showcase in demonstrating the country's talent and desire to be the best.

Event Services staff identified the Montana's Brier as a valuable hosting opportunity for its several economic and social benefits, including:

- **Economic Stimulus:** An estimated \$8M - \$15M economic stimulus during the 'shoulder season'.
- **Community Profile:** Significant exposure through visitation and a highly-viewed television broadcast highlighting community and natural assets.

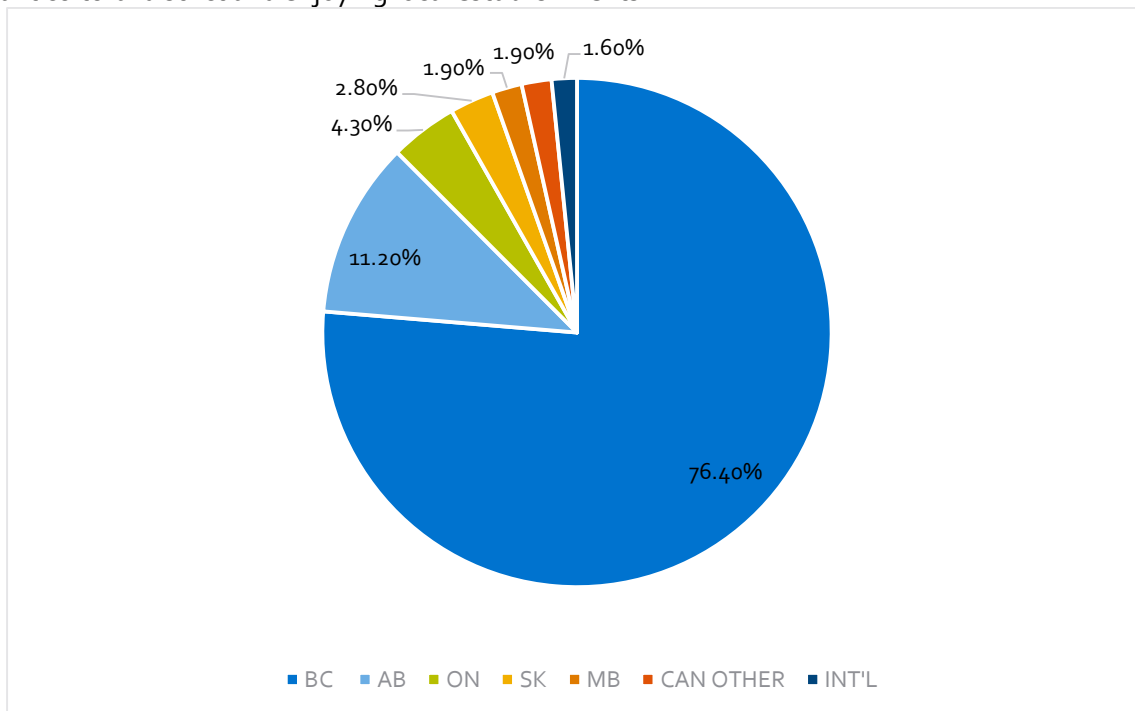
- **Hosting Capacity:** Bolster hosting resume which will support future bid opportunities for other marquee events.
- **Community Appeal:** Rare opportunity for the event calendar that targets a broad demographic.
- **Direct Gain:** Tangible benefit in terms of percentage of net profits to the Host Committee.

In 2019, Kelowna submitted a bid and was awarded the 2021 Brier (at the time known as the Tim Hortons Brier) however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic this event was cancelled. Subsequently, staff targeted the 2025 Montana's Brier due to it being a pre-Olympic year, and Curling Canada granted this request, hosting the event in Kelowna from February 28th to March 9th.

Discussion:

The 2025 Montana's Brier was a resounding success, surpassing expectations in both economic and social benefits. Residents, visitors, and businesses alike provided overwhelmingly positive feedback. This unique event boosted business patronage during the off-season, offered residents and visitors a rare experience, garnered extensive national coverage for Kelowna, and left a lasting legacy for our local curling club. Following the event, an economic impact assessment was conducted using the Destinations International Event Impact Calculator with data collected by Curling Canada, Destination BC and social media testimonials.

The tournament featured 24 draws and attracted a total attendance of 89,108 spectators, with 26,000 unique visitors and 36% coming from out of town. The majority coming from BC and Alberta but with representation from across Canada and internationally. Between draws and in the evenings, spectators flocked to the 'Patch' at the Delta Hotel for food, drinks, and entertainment, while also exploring our vibrant cultural district and enjoying local establishments.



The majority of visitors' choice of accommodation was hotels/motels (58.7%), followed by friends & family (25.6%), short term rentals (14.8%), and alternative accommodations such as B&B's and hostels (0.9%). Visitors' length of stay ranged from 1 to 11+ nights.

In terms of advertising, between February 17th and March 18th, over 4,300 articles were published that included the keywords, Kelowna, Brier, and Tourism. These articles equate to a reach of 2.31 billion with a dollar value of \$21.25 million. A 30 second Kelowna destination video ran on the TSN broadcast a minimum of one time per draw, for a total of 24 draws, which equates to 9,469,000 P2+ gross impressions, valued at over \$15,000. In addition, the Kelowna web ad generated 84,397 impressions.

The 2025 Montana's Brier generated substantial online attention and strong engagement across all social media platforms. Comments and interactions reflected a positive perception of Kelowna – not only as an attractive destination, but also as a leading host city for major events. Feedback from local businesses, accommodations, and residents was significantly positive throughout and after the event.

Following a post-event audit which is scheduled to be complete in September (2025), the host volunteer organization (Kelowna Curling Club) will receive 1.5% of the event net ticket sales and a portion of the 50/50 sales operated in the arena as an event legacy contribution. The proceeds of these legacy funds will be used exclusively for the advancement of curling in Kelowna through the creation of programs that will address junior, senior, and coach development.

Overall, the 2025 Montana's Brier generated a local economic impact of \$15,200,744.00 with 121 jobs supported in Kelowna and \$95,827.00 contributed to local taxes.

	Direct	Indirect/Induced	Total
Business Sales	\$15,200,744	\$7,548,955	\$22,749,699
Jobs Supported	121	42	163
Local Tax	\$95,827	\$6,963	\$102,789
Provincial Tax	\$1,719,820	\$501,987	\$2,221,807
Federal Tax	\$955,781	\$356,481	\$1,312,262

Events of this magnitude and impact are inherently complex, presenting numerous challenges both before and during their execution. The City's Event Services team plays a pivotal role from the identification and procurement stages through to delivery and post-event responsibilities. These include negotiations with relevant organizations, coordinating permit requirements with internal and external agencies, leading and contributing to host committee tasks, engaging the community through event activations, pageantry, stakeholder engagement, and addressing unforeseen challenges. These efforts are supported by the City's major event program, ongoing collaboration with Tourism Kelowna and other community stakeholders, along with contributions from various City departments.

Conclusion:

The 2025 Montana's Brier was considered a success as measured by increased business patronage during the off-season, positive feedback from residents and businesses, extensive national coverage for Kelowna, legacy programs for local curling, and a direct economic impact of over \$15M.

Internal Circulation:

Active Living & Culture
Communications

Considerations applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations:

The hosting fee for the 2025 Montana's Brier was \$750,000.00. The City's major event program contributed \$264,300.00 which helped leverage additional funds as required which included:

- Tourism Kelowna \$200,000.00
- BC Fairs Festivals Events Fund (Grant) \$185,700.00
- Provincial Grant \$100,000.00

Communications Comments:

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Consultation and Engagement:

Submitted by: C. Babcock, Event Development Manager, Sport & Event Services

Approved for inclusion: J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture