

Report to Council



Date: November 27, 2017
File: 0610-53
To: City Manager
From: Chris Babcock, Event Development Supervisor
Subject: 2017 Outdoor Events Summary

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Event Development Supervisor dated November 27, 2017 regarding the 2017 Outdoor Event season.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an update on the 2017 outdoor event season as per Service Request #417516.

Background:

Events provide a platform to celebrate Kelowna's community by reflecting its values, diversity, and overall quality of life. They support a strong local economy and contribute to an active and inclusive city by providing a range of cultural experiences and active living opportunities for all ages and abilities.

The Event Services Branch strives to foster a well-balanced schedule of events that offer variety, accessibility and quality while being thoughtful and mindful of Kelowna's citizens. Staff continue to advance the 'one-stop-shop' approach to event delivery through collaboration, ongoing relations, research and trend-setting. This approach contributes to a more streamlined process for event organizers and staff, and better positions the City to respond to bidding opportunities and attract and maintain events in Kelowna.

In 2017, more than 150 outdoor event permits were issued to a variety of walks, races, festivals, parades, weddings, films, and more. Kelowna was host to a diverse selection of outdoor events providing citizens and visitors alike with many opportunities to get out and enjoy the community. An overview of the 2017 event season and a look ahead to 2018 is captured below.

2017 Overview

Events

In a year that saw our community deal with the challenges related to flooding and excessive smoke, events provided a sense of reprieve and gave us reason to celebrate and showcase our city's resiliency. Of 19 events that were affected by the flood, 18 were able to proceed through collaboration between event organizers, City staff, and external stakeholders.

In addition to the various events that Kelowna looks forward to each year, such as the *Okanagan Pride Festival*, *Centre of Gravity*, *Fat Cat Children's Festival* and *Rock the Lake*, the community was also treated to several new, or revitalized, events such as: the *World Wake Surf Championships*, *Gravel Fondo*, *Ski 2 Tree*, and a downtown *Farmers Market*.

Canada also celebrated its 150th birthday and the community enjoyed several Canada 150 themed concerts and events, including a spectacular fireworks show, which was held on August 5th (BC Day long weekend).

A complete list of events is included in Appendix A.

Initiatives

Staff continue to work with organizers, partners, and stakeholders to build a collaborative vision and streamline processes for successful events. Over the course of 2017, a number of initiatives have commenced that will improve service delivery, including:

Outdoor Event Committee (OEC) Review

The OEC is designed to gather input from internal and external stakeholders to consider all aspects of an event and establish conditions to ensure safe and effective delivery. Staff have initiated a review of the OEC and Bylaw to ensure that an effective process for event analysis is in place, and to further explore supportive solutions for events. Through surveys and interviews, staff are gathering information to aid in the update of the Outdoor Events Bylaw and provide clarity on the OEC roles & responsibilities.

Film Permitting Guidelines

The process of establishing film guidelines has been ongoing throughout the year with staff conducting municipal comparisons, attending workshops, and consulting with industry professionals. Once additional feedback is gathered from internal and external stakeholders, a follow up report will be provided to Council in Q1 of 2018.

Event Volunteer Program

Volunteerism remains a focus for event organizers and the Event Services Branch continues to create methods of support through education and the provision of resources. Guided by the *Special Event Volunteer Program Plan* of 2014 (see Appendix B), staff have taken steps in designing a volunteer page on the City website, creating a 'volunteer resource guide', and exploring the creation of a 'Volunteer Corps' to provide onsite support.

Challenges

Through staff attendance at events, event monitor reports, debrief sessions and ongoing relationships with event organizers, two common themes emerged as key challenges faced by event organizers:

Event Costs

Costs related to staging events in city parks and roadways remain noted as one of the main challenges to hosting events. Examples include site limitations and logistical equipment needs (i.e. generators, fencing and extra porta-potties), permit requirements, and trained personnel expenses (i.e. flaggers, security and RCMP).

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 and type of events hosted in Kelowna and requesting to be in the downtown area.

Staff recognize these as ongoing challenges associated with events held outdoors. While there are no simple solutions we continue to explore ways to improve the service and opportunities through application of the City Services Offset Grant, collaboration with event organizers and Outdoor Event Committee members, and inter-departmental discussions for future park enhancements.

2018 Plans

As we continue to explore ways to improve and support a dynamic event landscape, highlights of activities planned for 2018 include:

Resource Center

In an effort to provide customers with the knowledge and tools to host an event and to help streamline administrative processes, staff will be updating the event website to better serve as an online 'resource center'. The updated website will include information on the application process, tips on planning an event, required forms, volunteer guide, and much more.

Major Event Procurement

Staff will be reviewing the City's criteria for major event procurement and its alignment with the Event Development Fund to ensure Kelowna is aptly positioned to compete for large-scale significant events that will provide unique experiences and have a positive impact on the community. In addition, staff will be collaborating with Tourism Kelowna, who has recently approved a new 'Major Event Strategy' which will assist with the identification and procurement of these events.

City staff are committed to continuing to build an eventful city that positively reflects Kelowna's community, diversity, and values; and will continue to work with stakeholders to enhance the experiences of residents and visitors alike.

Internal Circulation: Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture; Sport & Event Services Manager; Communications 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 – 2017 Event List

Appendix B – Special Event Volunteer Program

Outdoor Events Presentation - 2017

Cc: