

INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	May 18, 2016
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Events Strategy Progress Update (PED13038(b)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Following the approval of the Events Strategy Framework for the City of Hamilton (PED13038(a)) staff were directed to consult with City staff responsible for outdoor events on City property that impact City services and consult with Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) and Neighbourhood Associations to create a City-wide Events Strategy that clarifies what roles the City can play.

Information:

The purpose of this Report is to provide Council with an update on the Events Strategy's (The Strategy's) progress in the following areas:

1. identification of current gaps and next steps;
2. consultation with internal and external stakeholders;
3. revisions to the City's roles in events;
4. development of draft goals and key actions for the Events Strategy; and,
5. trends/statistics for Special Events Advisory Team (SEAT) in 2013-2015.

What Is the Events Strategy?

The Events Strategy is a Corporate approach to events that require multi-layered collaboration in order to increase the operational connection with The Strategy and its goals and functional roles. The operational structure of the City leads staff to focus on processes and independent services, resulting in a current response to events that is primarily reactive, ad-hoc, and works in silos. The Strategy is intended to go beyond the City's processes and policies guided by SEAT. An Events Strategy is more than how

staff process event applications; similar to how the Economic Development Strategy is more than how staff process building or business licence permits.

Work Completed Following the Approved Framework:

In the development of an Events Strategy staff have:

- completed a review of products, services, and operations of the Events Office;
- conducted better practice research of municipal Event Strategies, SEAT's structure, tools, and gaps;
- consulted event organizers (BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations, and medium and large event organizers) – accessing feedback on the SEAT process and necessary operational and strategic support in making Hamilton a more event-friendly City;
- looked at operational mandates, future planning, and resourcing of key City services such as Parks, Recreation, City-owned facilities, and HSR;
- investigated potential focus areas or clusters of (a) Neighbourhood Revitalization (b) Music and Performance, and Culture, Arts and Heritage; and,
- revised City roles and their definitions based on feedback provided by event organizers and SEAT staff; and the size, formats, locations, and types of SEAT events.

1. Issues and Gaps

In following Council's direction, staff identified a number of gaps and issues that need to be resolved throughout the City's Corporate operations before staff are able to move forward with a strong and effective strategy. These issues and gaps include:

- a) Development and Implementation of a More Customer-focused Event Process
 - An external review of SEAT and recommendations for a new customer-focused special events application process, structure, and policy framework is in progress.
- b) In-depth Operational Review of the Events Office
 - An operational review of the Events Office is necessary to achieve a better balance in the roles of Producer, Regulator, and Customer Service. The Events Office's current primary roles are Producer and Regulator and, although the Events Office is providing customer service to its clients, it is currently not set up to provide the services event organizers identified in the consultation process such as step-by-step assistance navigating City processes, event guidance before organizers submit their application, and development of resources to help leverage and promote the positive social, economic and tourism impacts of events in Hamilton.

- c) Determining Corporate Readiness and Impacts of the Service Provider Role
 - The role of Service Provider is more than individual tools such as tents and PA systems. It is about creating event-friendly spaces and having the amenities and services within parks, recreational and City-owned facilities, and capital and staff costs for HSR shuttles and road closures. More work needs to be done to determine if the operational policies and budgets for these services can be aligned more directly with The Strategy.
- d) Lack of Corporate-wide Leadership for Implementation
 - The revised role of Strategic Leadership has been identified to assist with the oversight for The Strategy – its goals and action plan. The oversight of The Strategy and action plan cannot be effectively achieved if it is led by an operational team such as the Events Office. Staff need to determine the best fit, structure, and minimal impacts to Corporate resources.

2. Internal and External Stakeholder Consultation

From May to November 2015, staff consulted with key stakeholders including City of Hamilton Divisions responsible for event servicing, BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations, and medium and large event organizers:

- May 2015 provided an update to the BIA Sub-Committee, the City's Neighbourhood Office, and SEAT on the Events Strategy and approved Framework.
- June to October 2015 conducted various types of consultation (online surveys, group facilitated discussions and one-on-one meetings) with City staff, BIAs, Neighbourhood Associations, and medium and large event organizers.
- November 2015 shared draft Events Strategy Goals and revised roles and their proposed scope with the BIA Sub-Committee and SEAT.

3. Revised City Roles

As a result of internal and external consultation staff have revised the Framework Roles to the following:

- Strategic Leadership
- Customer Service
- Regulator
- Service Provider
- Funder
- Producer

A detailed description and divisional resources for each role is attached as Appendix "A" to Report PED13038(b).

4. Draft Goals and Key Actions

Following the consultation process and in recognition of current resources, Corporate priorities, Cultural Pillars, and operational mandates, staff developed the following draft Event Strategy goals and key actions:

Goal	Key Actions taken from the Draft Action Plan (Note: completion for some actions are 2017/2018)
1. Enhanced Customer Service to assist event organizers in navigating City processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch an online parks and City facilities listing and booking system (next steps for the CLASS project)• Realignment of staff resources in the Events Office to customer service (guiding event organizers step-by-step through the process and their events)• Game Day / Event Insurance Review
2. Ensure Corporate ownership, collaboration, and communication for events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate and establish a governance Structure for Corporate Events Team• Implementation of Corporate-wide review and approval management system for SEAT (AMANDA or other common technology/database)
3. Balance public safety and Corporate resources with strategically supporting and growing the events sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational Review of SEAT• Events Office operational review• Better understand HSR and Road's capital and staff costs and where to drive these budgets from operationally or via The Strategy
4. Develop and enhance events-friendly public spaces (assist in creating a safe and vibrant city)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with Parks and Recreation to ensure existing amenities in these spaces support events and that any new spaces or facilities that are developed account for event needs
5. Produce, manage, deliver and / or contract out and measure high quality civic events that are safe and accessible, inclusive and welcoming, and creative and supportive of our key event sector clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore contracting out additional annual events and reducing the scope of other internally produced events to free up resources to provide additional customer service assistance• Gather audience feedback for Events Office produced events
6. Promote, measure, and celebrate the positive social, tourism, and economic impacts that events have on the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop an economic impact survey template to be shared with event organizers• Investigate ways to recognize and celebrate achievements of events and their volunteers and organizers• Online Community Events Calendar on hamilton.ca

5. Trends for SEAT Events in 2013 - 2015:

The number of SEAT applications has increased by approximately 7% every year from 2013 - 2015. In 2015 there were 400+ SEAT applications with approximately 300+ of these applications approved.

- Over 50% of SEAT events are small (< 500 people in attendance), an average of 10% of SEAT events are large (> 5,000 people in attendance), and on average 35% of SEAT events have between 501 – 5,000 people in attendance.

Events provide Hamilton with the opportunity to positively influence our City's image by directly connecting residents and tourists with Hamilton's assets – our people, arts, culture and heritage, rural and urban spaces, waterfront, and downtown. Staff will continue to work to resolve and align operations and identified gaps in the completion of a strong and effective Events Strategy for Q4 2016.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

Appendix "A" – Revised City Roles

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