



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 20, 2018
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Special Events Advisory Team (SEAT) Customer Service Improvement Review Update (PED17112(a)) (City Wide) (Outstanding Business List Item)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Carrie Brooks-Joiner (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4132 Pam Mulholland (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4514
SUBMITTED BY:	Anna M. Bradford Director, Tourism and Culture Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

At its meeting July 14, 2017, City Council approved General Issues Committee Report 17-015 included a staff direction to assess the feasibility of a Special Events Advisory Team “SEAT Light Model” in order to improve the customer service experience for festival and event organizers (“event organizers”) seeking approval to host an event on outdoor City property.

Information:

This report provides updates concerning:

- SEAT application and processes;
- customer service improvements implemented to date; and
- next steps for stakeholder consultations and improvements to SEAT operations.

As a reminder SEAT is an acronym for the Special Events Advisory Team; a team of City staff representing municipal departments/divisions and officers of the Hamilton Police Service. For information on SEAT criteria and purpose of the application process, refer to Appendix A.

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

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With the Council direction of July 14, 2017, staff undertook a continuous improvement approach to SEAT to improve the customer service experience for external applicants and streamline internal processes.

Customer Service Improvement Review

The following customer service improvements are complete:

Review Objective	Staff Actions and Results Achieved (Q4 2017 to Q2 2018)
Improve online user experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web pages re-designed to improve navigation and information access (www.hamilton.ca/seat).
Improve application process for event organizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEAT website content and guidelines were rewritten in plain language. Questions revised to clarify the information required. • Guidelines reduced by five pages (30 pages to 25). • Language in the application guide content aligned with the application form. • Customized approval letters implemented. Removed information not applicable to the event.
Provide new online tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site plan maps created for 6 high use event parks and the City Hall Forecourt illustrating bookable spaces and available features and services (e.g., number of parking spaces, location electrical outlets, and potable drinking water, etc.). • The maps also help clarify the link between bookable spaces and related rental fees.
Improve program administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-developed the SEAT application in AMANDA software. • Aligns with broader corporate use of the software and will allow for improved data analysis and reporting. • The 2019 SEAT application will be available online in December 2018.
SEAT Light Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are evaluating the feasibility of approving low risk events in parks through a simplified process; and/or • removing low risk events in parks from the SEAT process entirely. Through a review of SEAT mandatory criteria and its connection to City policies and by-laws, staff are investigating

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	<p>by-law/ policy changes or exemptions for low risk events, for Council's review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• With the 2019 SEAT application, event organizer/organization contact information will carry forward year to year. Staff explored having complete application information for annual events that go unchanged transfer to next year's application, but this is not feasible due to AMANDA software limitations.• The AMANDA Team and SEAT staff will continue to work together to implement technical and process improvements.
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Next Steps

The continuous improvement approach to SEAT operations is ongoing. For example:

- Staff are consulting with SEAT applicants (e.g., organizers of neighbourhood association events and multi-day large scale events) to assess the efficiency of the 2019 SEAT Guidelines; and,
- Staff will continue to identify and implement customer service and program administration improvements.

Staff will provide a final report to the General Issues Committee concerning the SEAT Customer Service Improvement Review by Q2 of 2019.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix 'A' to Report PED17112(a) – SEAT Application Process and Criteria

CBJ:ro