




CITY OF HAMILTON
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Tourism and Culture Division

TO:	Mayor and Members General Issues Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	October 21, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Waiver of Park Rental Permit Fees for Winterfest Events on City Owned Property (PED20178) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Pam Mulholland (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4514
SUBMITTED BY:	Carrie Brooks-Joiner Director, Tourism and Culture Planning and Economic Development Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That annual rental permit fees associated with non-profit organizations executing community Winterfest events and activities in City of Hamilton parks, consistent to the parameters of the Recreation Fee Waiver/Reduction Policy, be waived permanently.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hamilton Winterfest is an annual multi-week winter celebration featuring affordable (i.e. free or minimal cost to attend) culture and recreation events and activities for participants of all ages across the city. Winterfest is currently a co-production between the City of Hamilton, a contracted third-party program coordinator and community organizations.

Winterfest branded events take place February 1 through Family Day at indoor and outdoor venues, including City parks throughout the city. These events have broad local participation and are run predominantly by volunteer-based community groups with minimal budgets. In recognition of the minimal resources, individual Councillors have initiated successful motions each year since 2013 to waive Winterfest park rental permit fees.

In 2014, Council approved the Fee Waiver Policy Update (Report CES14001) which included a revision to the Recreation Fee Waiver/Reduction Policy process. Provided that they are organized by non-profit organizations, Winterfest events can qualify for 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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fee waiver under the policy. In order to avoid the application submission step for community groups, as well as the necessity for an annual motion to Council, the above recommendation permanently removes park rental permit fees charged by the City for Winterfest events and activities organized by non-profit organizations.

Insurance fees cannot be waived, which is consistent with the Recreation Fee Waiver/Reduction Policy and remain the responsibility of the community organizations.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The value of the waived park rental fees for the 2020 Winterfest events was \$960.

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since 1978, the City has worked with community event organizers to provide the annual winter-themed celebration entitled Hamilton Winterfest. The City provides funding, a coordination role and promotion of the event. The multi-week celebration features a variety of culture and recreation events and activities, a source of pride for programming partners and is enjoyed by members of the public who attend.

Attendance at Winterfest was up 19% in 2020 with just over 32 K participants and audience members. Using a combination of website analytics and data from Winterfest events with paid ticket purchases, Winterfest attendees represented the following geographic split: Hamilton 71%; GTA 19%; Brantford and Brant County 5% and Kitchener-Waterloo 5%.

A total of 87 Winterfest events took place in February 2020, with City facilities and parks playing a critical role in anchoring programming in neighbourhoods and across the city. The following nine events took place in City parks:

2020 Winterfest Event Name	Park Location
Friends of Gage Park Winterfest	Gage Park
Gourley Park Winterfest	James McDonald Park
Delight: Last Days of Ice and Snow	Pipeline Trail
Beasley Winterfest	Beasley Park
Winter Bike Day	Gore Park

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Carter Park Hot Chocolate Canteen	Carter Park
Winterfest Wednesdays (2 times)	John Rebecca Park
Dundas Rotary Winter Carnival	Dundas Driving Park

Council has historically approved an annual Motion to waive park rental permit fees for Winterfest community organizers.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The Recreation Fee Waiver/Reduction Policy is in effect. There are no recommended changes to the existing policy.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Chair, Special Events Advisory Team, Recreation Division, Healthy and Safe Communities Department

Manager, Business Support, Recreation Division, Healthy and Safe Communities Department

Manager, Sport Services, Recreation Division, Healthy and Safe Communities Department

Manager, Parks and Cemeteries, Environmental Services Division, Public Works Department

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

All past Winterfest events approved annually through a Council resolution would have qualified to receive a park rental fee waiver if applications were submitted and assessed through the Recreation Fee Waiver/Reduction Policy. Approval of this reports recommendation expedites this process and removes financial and administrative obstacles for community event organizers.

The City seeks to encourage broad and inclusive participation in Winterfest events and activities throughout the city. Waiving park rental permit fees allows community organizers to access park space at no or minimal costs (Parks' staff time, if required, is billed to the event organizer) thereby removing barriers to participation.

Waiving park rental fees for Winterfest events formalizes a process that has been approved since 2013 via an annual Council motion, thereby removing the need for a motion and providing consistency on the type of fees that are waived from year to year.

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Fee waiver follows a precedent; Council approved the recommendations of Holiday Egg Hunts in Parks (Report CES17034) submitted by the Recreation Division waiving park permit fees for community led Easter egg hunts.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

N/A

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Engagement and Participation

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Culture and Diversity

Hamilton is a thriving, vibrant place for arts, culture, and heritage where diversity and inclusivity are embraced and celebrated.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

N/A

PM:ac