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To: Mayor & Members of Council

From: Marianne Meed Ward, City/Regional Councillor, Ward 2

Date: July 18, 2016

Re: Funding request to rebroadcast the Tragically Hip concert, Aug. 20, Spencer Smith Park

Motion:

That City Council authorize matching funds up to \$12,500 from the Tax Rate Stabilization Fund to assist with funding the live CBC rebroadcast of the Tragically Hip concert, Aug. 20, in Spencer Smith Park.

Background:

The Burlington Downtown Business Association (BDDBA) and my office have recently been contacted by several businesses and residents to suggest a free, live rebroadcast of the Tragically Hip concert Aug. 20 in Spencer Smith Park. This will be an alcohol-free, family event.

A resident started a Facebook page and Twitter account to gain community support and bring people together to make the event a reality.

Facebook: The Hip on CBC at Spencer Smith Park

Twitter: @HipatSpencerSmith

Recently, the lead singer for the Hip was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. This summer tour will be the band's last tour, culminating in the Aug. 20 concert.

For many of us, the Hip has become the soundtrack of our lives, and more broadly the soundtrack of Canada. The loss of a member of this band to such a cruel disease is devastating and has touched people across the country.

The tour is selling out across the country. The CBC will be live streaming the final Aug. 20 concert which will take place in Kingston, Ontario, where the band is from, from 8-11:30pm. Cities across the country are rebroadcasting the feed. Among those participating:

- Hamilton (city contribution \$25,000)
- Kingston (where the band is from): ticketed concert for 6,000; free outside rebroadcast of the performance for 10,000 in nearby Market Square (city contribution \$150,000, plus free transit to and from the event)
- Halifax, NS holding a full day celebration of the Hip presented by Downtown Halifax Business Commission and supported by the Mayor's Office and Halifax Regional Municipality.
- Charlottetown, PEI (City contribution \$5000; province \$5000)
- New Westminster, BC (sponsored by Downtown New West BIA, city funding of \$16,500 cash, plus \$5000 services)

This live rebroadcast of the Hip concert will be the arts and cultural community's equivalent of Paul Henderson scoring the winning goal for Team Canada in the 1972 Summit series Hockey game against the Soviets. The Hip concert is a shared moment of a nation coming together. People will remember where they were during this concert.

As a result of the outpouring of interest in this concert from across Canada and around the world, the CBC will not charge any licensing fees to rebroadcast the event. The events must be free, and event organizers can not allow any sponsorship, advertising or promotion. This may limit the ability to secure donations of goods, services or cash without the ability to offer sponsorship recognition.

This event has come together very quickly, given the announcement this past Friday of the rebroadcast rules. After we were contacted by residents asking us to bring the event to Burlington, the BDBA and my office pulled together an ad hoc organizing committee, including PM Wyre, Curdz Poutinerie, Special Event staff, Sound of Music and others. We have had several meetings already.

A formal event application has been submitted by the BDBA to the city's Special Events Team (SET), which has approved the event in principle last week. SET is also working with us to get a noise exemption from the by-law, to allow the concert to run to 11:30pm (normal noise shut down in the park is 11pm).

The Burlington Downtown Business Association is prepared to lead the efforts to ensure a live broadcast in Spencer Smith Park, in cooperation with my office and PM Wyre, and others on our ad hoc committee. We are hoping the city will be a partner to assist with costs we may incur outside of the ability to seek sponsorships.

Based on our own rough cost estimates, and a review of other cities, the expected cost is between \$20,000-\$25,000. A breakdown of costs will be provided by the BDBA at council. The BDBA has committed \$12,500 from its membership funds and is seeking matching funding from the city, to an upset limit of \$12,500. I will be offering \$1000 from my councillor's budget. We are reaching out to the province and federal government for any potential sources of funding available. We are also reaching out to local businesses for donations of either goods or cash.

If we can secure funds from other businesses or donors, we would split the remaining cost 50-50 between the City and BDBA.

We canvassed several locations, including Central Arena, before settling on Spencer Smith Park. By holding this event in the park we can take advantage of cost savings by sharing the stage and the porta potties that will already be installed for the Children's Festival the following day. The arena would have required stand alone set up and tear down. The park also has the hard infrastructure required to support this rebroadcast (ie. electrical feed).

The BDBA and its ad hoc committee are committed to making this event a reality, and hope the city will partner with us to assist with costs we may incur outside of the ability to seek sponsorships. Please support this request for funding.

Sincerely,

Marianne Meed Ward
City & Regional Councillor, Ward 2