



**SUBJECT: Expedited Community Events**  
**TO: Committee of the Whole**  
**FROM: Parks & Recreation Department**

Report Number: PR-01-19

Wards Affected: all

File Numbers: 965-01

Date to Committee: June 10, 2019

Date to Council: June 17, 2019

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### **Recommendation:**

Approve the process outlined in parks and recreation department report PR-01-19 to approve community events that require an expedited process due to unanticipated circumstances.

### **Purpose:**

To establish an event approval process for events that happen outside of a Council approval cycle that requires the event to be expedited.

An Engaging City

- Community Building through Arts and Culture via Community Activities
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### **Background and Discussion:**

In the past six months the City has been involved in two unanticipated events, one of which required an expedited approval process to proceed in the required timeline:

- Rogers Hometown Hockey (unanticipated) and
- Mike, "The Beard Guy," Taylor Memorial Tribute (unanticipated and expedited)

Both events have been very successful with great community participation and both profiled the City to the rest of Canada.

Below is a table that shows the comparisons for the two events:

	<b>Rogers Hometown Hockey</b>	<b>Mike, “The Beard Guy,” Taylor Tribute (Tribute)</b>
<b>Lead Event Organizer</b>	SDI Marketing for Rogers and Sportsnet	Sound of Music Inc.
<b>Approved by Council</b>	Yes	No
<b>Service Agreement</b>	Yes	No
<b>City Investment (estimate, does not include full time staff)</b>	\$ 44,000	\$ 12,000
<b>Community Involvement in delivering the event</b>	All hockey organizations – minor, adult, not-for-profit and profit  Burlington Downtown Business Association  Burlington Teen Tour Boosters	Sound of Music
<b>Estimated Attendance</b>	20,000	5,000
<b>Length of Event</b>	17 hours over two days	2 hours
<b>Weather</b>	Rain and cold	Cold
<b>National Broadcaster</b>	Sportsnet	CBC Radio and Gem app

The City has a comprehensive process in place to review, approve and manage community events. Due process includes all logistics being reviewed and approved by the Special Events Team (SET). Event organizers are responsible for all costs to deliver their event.

The Supervisor of Festival and Events has delegated authority to approve all events on municipal property if the event organizers comply with the requirements set out by the Special Event Team.

However, because of the contractual agreements with hosting Rogers Hometown Hockey the Supervisor was not able to approve the event because there was a City investment required to bring the event to fruition. Staff received Council’s approval to invest tax dollars into the event.

In the case of the Tribute, which took place over the holiday season, staff were instructed by senior staff and the Mayor to support the delivery of the event and to provide some financial assistance. Due to the short turnaround required there was limited transparency or understanding on how the event was approved and resources allocated to support the Tribute.

To remain nimble to community interest and transparent with City resource allocation, this report will focus on events that evolve outside of a Council reporting cycle, events that need to be expedited through the event approval process and where applicable the process to provide resources and staff support for hosting of the expedited event. Basically, to fast-track an event through the existing process.

### **Strategy/process**

After the Tribute a staff team was established to develop an Expedited Event Approval process comprising of staff from Parks and Recreation, Burlington Downtown Business Association and Tourism Burlington.

The team met on several occasions:

- first to research how municipalities manage similar last-minute events and
- second to develop a list of stakeholders and concerns and map out the consultation process.

Based on staff research there are no municipalities that have a formal expedited event approval process. In places like Toronto and Ottawa, municipal staff teams have established pre-authorized routes and foot prints for such things like celebratory situations such as the Toronto Maple Leafs winning the Stanley Cup, but no formal expedited event approval process is in place.

In most cases the approval and funding for these unanticipated events are directed to staff through senior management of the corporation and staff are told to, “make it happen”.

The review team concluded there was a need to develop a process to approve such events. Staff consulted with the Mayor, the Burlington Leadership Team (BLT) and the Special Events Team (SET). All agreed that a nimble process needs to be put into place so that senior management can mobilize staff for quick execution of the event. In the case of the Tribute, because we had recently hosted Rogers Hometown Hockey at Civic Square and Brant Street, staff were familiar with this site including the set up and had experience with the permits that would be needed to host the event. That helped to speed up the entire process. To remain nimble to such requests in the future staff recommend that Civic Square be the preferred site for expedited events in the future.

To manage unanticipated events that require an expedited process in order to proceed, staff are recommending the following process:

- Special council meeting is held as the regular committee and council meeting cycle will not accommodate the event timing
- A community organization must lead the event delivery
- Event is open to the public at no cost

- All permit and due diligence will be fast tracked and fully completed as required
- Community organization pays for all permits, etc. as per regular process
- Council can choose to waive some fees or provide additional financial support as they deem appropriate.

By calling a special meeting of council there is transparency to the decision-making process as all elected officials have a vote and allows the City Manager to align the administration to support the event accordingly.

### **Options considered**

That no process is put into place and that the City take a “make it happen” approach.

BLT approves such events, without elected officials being able to contribute to the decision.

Assign delegated authority to the Mayor and the City Manager to jointly approve the expedited event and funding.

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### **Financial Matters:**

The Tribute was an excellent opportunity for the community to come together but there was a financial cost to hosting. While the event lead was a not-for-profit organization, Sound of Music (SOM) and the City were required to make an investment which was not budgeted for.

### **Total Financial Impact**

The total cost for the City of Burlington and Sound of Music to host the Tribute event is summarized below:

	<b>Approximately</b>
<b>Expenses Paid</b>	
SOM	\$18,000
City	\$12,000
<b>Donations</b>	\$25,500
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$55,500

The City’s investment was approximately \$12,000, excluding the time for full-time City staff to support the event. The City’s fee covered items such as the stage, license and

permit fees, equipment and part time staff fees. In addition, it is important to note that artist fees were also donated as part of the event and not captured in the donations.

Regarding community donations, the SOM was able to leverage their connections in the community to secure several people and businesses to donate some or all of their services to support the event.

### **Source of Funding**

Moving forward, should Council choose to financially support an event, the Community Investment Program Reserve Fund could be used to fund unanticipated and expedited events. If there is a not-for-profit local group leading the event, then the reserve can be accessed. See Appendix A.

### **Other Resource Impacts**

Several full-time staff adjusted their work plan to work exclusively on the Tribute.

The Sound of Music invested a significant amount of time into pulling this event off. Without their skills, expertise and connections this event would not have been possible.

Halton Regional Police Service made a significant contribution to the event from re-deploying three on duty staff to the event, donating the services of seven staff to the event and securing four members of the Auxiliary in addition to the paid duty that were paid for by the City. Police also had one Command post and eight Police Vehicles on site during the Tribute.

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### **Connections:**

Tourism Burlington Strategy, Arts and Culture Service Plan and depending on the location of the event an applicable Business Improvement Area business plans.

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### **Public Engagement Matters:**

Collaborate – The key to the success of the event was the leadership taken by Sound of Music, without their involvement, the event would not have been possible. Their expertise and knowledge of hosting music events like this, was essential for hosting this event.

Inform - Given the limited lead time for the event, resident and business notifications were hand delivered to inform the community about the road closure. No advance road closure signage was possible. Most promotion of the event was done through social media.

**Conclusion:**

The City would like to be nimble to respond to unanticipated events that require an expedited process to support hosting these events. Having a defined approval process and access to a funding source will increase the timeliness to mobilize resources to make the event happen. This report outlines a decision-making process and a funding source should a not-for-profit choose to lead an expedited and unanticipated event in the future.

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Respectfully submitted,

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**Appendices:**

- A. Community Investment Reserve Fund By-law

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.