

STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG



Report to:	Mayor and Council Members	Priority:	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Low
Submitted by:	Teresa Behan, Deputy Director Community Services tbehan@cobourg.ca	Meeting Type: Open Session <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Closed Session <input type="checkbox"/>	
Meeting Date:	May 10, 2021		
Report No.:	Community Services-035-21		
Submit comments to Council			

Subject/Title: Summer 2021 Community Events Strategy

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council receive this report for information; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to approve community events permits for the summer of 2021 based on up-to-date provincial guidelines and the following strategy as presented.

1. STRATEGIC PLAN

Pillar: Prosperity, The Town Plans for, markets and develops assets for economic growth and financial security.

Action #4 Explore innovative solutions to improve connectivity between beach/waterfront and downtown Cobourg

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This Report is placed on the Committee of the Whole Agenda 10 days in advance of the meeting and will be considered by Council in open session.

When the COVID-19 Pandemic hit in 2020, the tourism and events industries were two of the most heavily impacted. Here in Cobourg, the Community Events department permits an average of 180 community events per year. A large majority of these events are led by local service clubs and the funds raised go to support their charitable initiatives. While some groups have managed to pivot to online events and fundraisers, the inability to host events in person has caused significant financial strain.

The Marketing and Events Department has been conducting ongoing

communication with our local community groups, keeping them informed of current provincial guidelines and how they may impact their event application. To date, the Marketing and Events Department has received 15 community event permits from local groups hoping to host an event in 2021 while others are waiting until after May 20th, or until the current provincial lock down restrictions have been lifted to submit their applications.

3. PURPOSE

To implement firmer approval processes for the summer 2021 community event season that will serve to protect the local community, while still allowing for small, local community events and fundraisers to take place that meet current restrictions.

4. ORIGIN AND LEGISLATION

The Marketing and Events Department has used the Province of Ontario's COVID-19 response framework: keeping Ontario safe and open as a basis for our recommended approval process for summer 2021 community events.

5. BACKGROUND

Keeping in line with the Province of Ontario's COVID-19 response framework, the Marketing and Events Department is proposing a staged approach to approving community event permits in 2021. This staged approach will prioritize community events submitted on behalf of local organizations that attract local Northumberland County residents. Following the provincial COVID-19 response framework as well as best practices shared amongst Ontario Municipalities, staff will continue to employ event practices that encourage safe public interaction for residents and participants. When these requirements can be met, we could continue to provide important opportunities for local community groups to raise much needed funds through community events.

We understand that tourism to the region will be essential in the rebuilding of our local economy. However, events that encourage out of area travel will be discouraged until a greater majority of the population has been vaccinated, we see the necessary reduction in COVID-19 case numbers and further direction from the provincial government and our local health unit is received.

6. ANALYSIS

The Marketing and Events Department recommends that community event applications be categorized into four tiers. With Tier 4 representing events that present the largest impact on the community and Tier 1 representing smaller community events that would have less of an impact and involve fewer people. In addition to the guidelines provided by the provincial government's COVID-19 response framework, the Town of Cobourg will require each event applicant to submit a COVID-19 risk assessment as well as all applications must meet the standards of the municipal Community Events Team.

Please note, the following guidelines apply to organized outdoor community events on Town of Cobourg property. These guidelines do not represent indoor events or events held at private residences.

Tier 1

- Northumberland County Applicant – With focus on attracting Northumberland County participants
- 25 people or less convening in one location
- Full COVID-19 risk plan needed
- Must follow provincial directives
- Example: Wedding ceremonies, Yoga on the beach/in the park, beach volleyball (local league not tournament), performance/presentations in the park (with registration and appropriate spacing required)

Tier 2

- Northumberland County Applicant – With focus on attracting Northumberland County participants
- 100 people or less convening in one location
- Full COVID-19 risk plan needed
- Must follow provincial directives
- Example: Charity walks, concert/performance/presentation in the park (with registration and appropriate spacing required)

Tier 3

- Northumberland County Application – With focus on attracting Northumberland County participants
- Events between 100 – 500 people convening in one location (Scope to be determined by the provincial government at a later date)
- Full COVID-19 risk plan needed
- Must follow provincial directives
- Example: Music or food festival with over 100 people

Tier 4:

- Out of Northumberland County applicant/and or focus on attracting out of area participants
- Events over 500 people convening in one location
- Full COVID-19 risk plan needed
- Must follow provincial directives
- Example: Sandcastle Festival and Canada Day

All applications will be reviewed by the Town of Cobourg Community Events Committee. Approval will depend on Cobourg's current Zone of Public Health Measures and corresponding directives as determined by the provincial government and local HKPR Health Unit.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/BUDGET IMPACTS

N/A

8. CONCLUSION

At this time, the Town of Cobourg Marketing and Event department is recommending that only Tier 1 and Tier 2 local community events be permitted for the summer of 2021.

If COVID-19 numbers begin to decline and the Provincial Government provides further directives on the maximum number of people per event, the Town of Cobourg can re-assess application approvals.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Summer 2021 Community Events Strategy - Community Services-035-21.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	April 28, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Teresa Behan, Deputy Director, Community Services – April 28, 2021 – 3:59 PM

Tracey Vaughan, Chief Administrative Officer – April 28, 2021 – 4:35 PM