

THAT Council direct staff to present a multi-year financial plan in conjunction with Phase 3 – Implementation Plan, in order to support the Final Festivals & Events Strategy (Phases 1 and 2), and subject to consideration by Council during future budget deliberations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

N/A

2.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) outline the scope, goals and process that was undertaken to develop the *Draft* Phase 1 Strategy for the Downtown Waterfront;
- (ii) identify the *Draft* Strategy recommendations;
- (iii) highlight the next steps in the process, including timelines and phases 2 and 3

3.0 BACKGROUND AND RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

3.1 Pertinent Council Resolutions:

CC-11-05 2004 Special Events and Festivals Annual Report
Approved by Council January 31, 2005

CC-42-05-01 Proposed 2005 Events and Festivals Program
Approved by Council February 21, 2005

3.2 Relationship to City Strategic Plan and Other Plans and Documents:

City of Burlington Strategic Plan – Future Focus VI – Pillars for Success:

Future Focus VI - Pillars for Success includes the following long-term and short-term goal statements and strategies relating to special events and festivals under the Pillar - Vibrant Community:

Long Term Goal – Vibrant #3:

Burlington will enhance its arts and cultural opportunities and experiences.

Three Year Goal:

The City will enhance year round events and festivals in Burlington.

Strategy:

- a) Develop an events and festivals strategy that investigates ways of sustaining existing and introducing new events and festivals through community-based and private-sector delivery models.

Other Plans and Documents:

The following plans and documents support enhancements to existing events and festivals along with pursuing opportunities for new events and festivals that would compliment the City's existing program throughout the year:

1. Downtown Waterfront Implementation Plan (July, 2003)
2. Draft Downtown Core Commitment (August, 2003)
3. City of Burlington Tourism Vision Report (February, 2003)
4. Proposed Downtown Waterfront Strategic Management Plan (February, 2005)
5. City of Burlington Cultural Strategy (in progress)
6. Parks and Recreation Rates and Fees Study – Pilot (in progress)

4.0 DISCUSSION:

4.1 Context:

In Fall 2004, the City retained the consulting services of Cameron Hawkins & Associates Inc. and the Tourism Company to undertake a 5 Year Festivals and Events Strategy for the City. This direction came from the City's Strategic Plan, Future Focus VI – Pillars for Success. Due to the timing of the new waterfront construction and program development, this phase of the overall Strategy focuses on the downtown waterfront.

The goals and objectives of the Downtown Waterfront Implementation Plan (August, 2003) and the proposed Tourism Vision (February, 2003) established the parameters and determined specific deliverables for this work.

4.2 Scope:

The City-wide Festivals and Events Strategy has been divided into the following phases:

- Phase 1: Downtown Waterfront Strategy
- Phase 2: City-wide Strategy
- Phase 3: 5 Year Implementation Plan

Phase 1 is the subject of this report. Phases 2 and 3 will be completed by the Fall of 2005.

Phase 1 included the following tasks:

- Background Research/Best Practices
- Market Overview
- Review of existing policies, procedures and other related documents/reports
- Stakeholder consultation – focus group sessions
- Development of Strategic Options

- Staffing and Budget Implications
- Strategy Recommendations

4.3 Phase 1 Goals:

The Phase 1 *Draft* Strategy is based on the following goals contained in the Council-approved Downtown Waterfront Implementation Plan:

- Create an urban waterfront experience unique to Burlington
- Create a year-round regional destination known for quality and excellence
- Increase the participation, attendance and length of stay of waterfront users
- Increase diversity of waterfront festivals, events, and performances
- Create a unified downtown waterfront that is linked to its surrounding area

These goals set the strategic direction for the Phase 1 *Draft* Strategy.

4.4 Process:

The table below outlines the process that staff and the consultants undertook in developing this *Draft* Strategy:

Activities	Timelines
Retained Consultants	Fall, 2004
Established Staff Project Team	Fall, 2004
Developed Work Plan and Timelines	Fall, 2004
Background Research/Best Practises	Fall, 2004
Project Staff Team Working Sessions	Fall, 2004; Winter, 2005
Stakeholder Focus Groups Sessions	Fall, 2004; Winter, 2005
Downtown Waterfront Advisory Com.	Fall, 2004; Winter, 2005
Development of Phase 1 Draft Strategy	Fall, 2004; Winter, 2005
Staff Report – Phase 1 Draft Strategy	Spring, 2005 (March)
Staff Report – Phase 1 Final Strategy	Spring, 2005 (June)

4.5 Deliverables:

- Produce a 5 year strategy for downtown waterfront festivals and events
- Confirm the roles and responsibility of the City
- Identify the synergies and linkages between the *Draft* Strategy and other related initiatives
- Develop a framework for determining rates and fees
- Develop a 5 Year Implementation Plan Framework

4.6 Draft Recommendations:

An Executive Summary is contained in Appendix A of this report. It lists the *Draft* Strategy recommendations for Phase 1. The recommendations support the economic strategy of increasing overall attendance of downtown waterfront festivals and events from 350,000 to 525,000 by 2010. This will have a positive economic spin-off for the city and create possible opportunities to generate additional revenues for festival and event organizers.

The following 3 strategic priorities have been identified.

- (i) **Attract new festivals and events**
 - Build capacity and competency
 - Build an Arts and Culture sub-brand for the downtown waterfront festivals and events
 - Provide resources selectively
 - Screen prospects strategically
 - Proactively seek new events
 - Introduce 3-5 new mid-size events within the next 5 years with at least one of these events attracting 20,000 – 30,000 participants

- (ii) **Enhance emerging festivals and events**
 - Develop cooperative marketing programs
 - Develop sponsorship packaging opportunities
 - Increase attendance (by 60,000) at emerging festivals and events. Extending the duration of one-day festivals and events to a weekend event is recommended as one way to achieve this target

- (iii) **Enhance signature festivals and events**
 - Shift demand patterns (e.g. Sound of Music; Ribfest)
 - Integrate festivals and events into the downtown core
 - Package and promote festivals and events
 - Increase attendance of Sound of Music and Ribfest by a total of 60,000 – 70,000

4.7 Next Steps and Timelines:

Although the process has included stakeholder consultation, the *Draft* Strategy has not had broader community input. Accordingly, it is recommended that Council direct staff to host a public Open House to inform the community of the recommendations contained in the *Draft* Strategy and to invite comments prior to finalizing this document. The consultation will take place in Spring 2005. Based on the input, the consultant will finalize the Strategy and staff will bring a report to Council in June, 2005 with final recommendations. The City-wide Strategy and the 5 Year Implementation Plan will be completed in the Fall of this year.

5.0 FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The *Draft* Strategy contains recommendations on staff resources and a proposed budget to implement the Downtown Waterfront festivals and events program over the next 5 years. These were based on an analysis of the roles and responsibilities of City staff involved in current festivals and events, their respective budgets, other related initiatives, including the Downtown Waterfront Implementation Plan and the Downtown Waterfront Strategic Management Plan as well as Best Practices research.

While the consultant has identified the financial implications of Phase 1 of the *Draft* Strategy, Staff are not presenting any definitive financial plans at this time. Staff need to further analyze various aspects such as timing of implementation, overall budget impacts and affordability as well as funding sources. Further, the finalization of Phase 1 as a result of public input and the development of Phase 2 (City-wide) of this Strategy must also factor in the overall financial plan. As well, it is recognized that there are key linkages and possible synergies with other ongoing initiatives such as the Parks & Recreation Department's Rates and Fees Study and Strategic Plan which need to be examined.

Accordingly, a multi-year financial plan will be presented in conjunction with the Implementation Plan (Phase 3) in Fall 2005. It will also include potential opportunities for revenue generation and in its entirety, would be subject to Council's consideration during future budget deliberations. The development of an Implementation Plan, including a multi-year financial plan, means that the recommendations and direction of the Festivals and Events Strategy can be adequately supported and put into action.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS:

N/A

7.0 COMMUNICATION MATTERS:

Copies of the *Draft* Strategy will be made available to festival and event organizers that participated in the focus groups sessions facilitated by the consultants and to the public, upon request, following Council's consideration of this report. A copy will also be posted on the City's website.

City staff will host a public Open House in the spring to inform the community of the draft recommendations contained in the consultants *Draft* Strategy and to elicit comments. The consultant(s) will also attend this session to provide an overview and to answer any questions. An advertisement will be placed in the Update Section of the Burlington Post.

Copies of the Executive Summary will be made available to members of Council who wish to share this information at upcoming Ward meetings and to other special interest groups, upon request.

8.0 CONCLUSION:

Festival and Events that offer a range of experiences and that appeal to a variety of target markets is important to their overall economic success and benefit to the community. The *Draft* Strategy outlined in this report provides the necessary direction and a framework for attaining this goal over the next 5 years by building on current strengths within the community and providing opportunities to enhance, expand and incorporate new festivals and events into the downtown waterfront program. It supports the creation of a regional waterfront destination by incrementally increasing and diversifying waterfront festivals, events and performances.

Although the *Draft* Strategy, for the most part, focuses on optimizing opportunities during the peak Spring/Summer seasons, it does not exclude enhancing and/or introducing new Fall or Winter festivals and events through a pro-active marketing strategy.

As noted earlier in the report, the financial resources recommended to support this *Draft* Strategy will be reviewed within the broader context of the Phase 2 City-wide Strategy. Critical to the Phase 3 Implementation Plan are the linkages with other initiatives such as the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan Update, currently underway. The Implementation Plan will include a multi-year financial plan in order to support Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Final Festivals and Events Strategy and to inform future budget submissions for Council's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine Talbot
Manager of Policy and Community Development

Appendices:	Appendix A: Executive Summary – City of Burlington <i>Draft</i> Downtown Festivals and Events Strategy	
Staff / Others Consulted:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jody Wellings – Downtown Coordinator - Pam Belgrade – Revenue & Marketing Planner - Julia Rodgerson – Recreation Co-ordinator Revenue Generation - Suzanne Gillies – Recreation Programmer - Jennifer Kaye – Community Development Planner - Mike Mueller – Coordinator of Special Events - Tracey McQueen – Recreation Co-ordinator & Special Events - Marg MacVinnie – Downtown Waterfront Project Manager <p>Stakeholder Focus Group Sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of the Mayor - Senior Staff - SET Team - Outdoor Festivals and Events Organizers - TEAM Burlington 	<p>Ext. 7259</p> <p>Ext. 7241</p> <p>Ext. 7734</p> <p>Ext. 7201</p> <p>Ext. 7815</p> <p>Ext. 7704</p> <p>(905) 332-1996 Ext. 225</p> <p>Ext. 7419</p>
Notifications:	Ian Ross – Burlington Art Centre	(905) 632-7796
	Barb Teatero – Burlington Museums Downtown Citizens Advisory Committee	(905) 332-9888
Special Instructions:	<p>Copies of the <i>Draft</i> City of Burlington Downtown Festivals and Events Strategy will be made available to the SET members and all the Stakeholders that were invited to participate in the Focus Groups sessions facilitated by the consultants.</p> <p>A copy of the <i>Draft</i> Strategy will be posted on the City’s Website.</p>	

