

Community Services Report to
Community Development Committee
2024 May 22

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CD2024-0272

Festival and Event Policy Update

PURPOSE

This report updates the Festival and Event Policy (CSPS032) (the Policy) to reflect changes in governance due to corporate realignment, eliminate outdated process descriptions, and improve alignment with existing City strategies.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

The content of the Policy has remained mostly unchanged since first approved by Council on 2010 February 9 (CPS2010-07). The Policy was previously updated in 2016 with a minor administrative change to reflect the corporate structure at the time.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council approve the updated Festival and Event Policy (Attachment 2).

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

GM Katie Black concurs with the contents of this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Festivals and events showcase Calgary as a destination of choice and contribute to economic growth and diversity. The City's Arts & Culture service supports a program of nearly 300 festivals and events each year with \$3.3M annually enabling these festivals and events in our community.
- The updated Policy provides a stronger foundation for Administration's effective management of festivals and events in Calgary. It clarifies Administration's support for festival and event organizers by better defining the groups which qualify for subsidy funding and describing the grant program which sets the course for growth of more diverse festivals and events in Calgary.
- By ensuring equitable and consistent access to funding and services, the proposed Policy demonstrates continuous improvements in meeting the needs of organizers and supports a more vibrant festival and event community for Calgarians and visitors.

DISCUSSION

Festivals and events support Calgary being a vibrant place to live, work and play, and advance social equity, inclusion and belonging. Festivals and events animate and activate all corners of Calgary, and in particular support the revitalization of the downtown while promoting Calgary's global reputation.

The City's processes are key to supporting festival and event organizers, which is described in the Policy. Proposed updates to the Policy reflect process streamlining and improvements requested by festival and event organizers as part of Administration's ongoing research and engagement activities. Key Policy updates include:

- Aligned with the guiding principles of the *Eventful City Strategy*.

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- Expanded policy statement and descriptions of the value of festivals and events to Calgary.
- Clarified definitions of a festival or event, and how to obtain support.
- Updated definitions of the external advisory group and the internal City group providing oversight.
- Expanded description of the *Festivals and Events Subsidy Program*.

Next steps will include implementing the new *Festivals and Events Subsidy Program* direction described in the updated Policy, which enable The City to provide more equitable, transparent, and sustainable support to festival and event organizers. Administration will communicate these changes and will work with festival and event organizers as appropriate to implement them.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

External engagement and communication related to City support of the festival and event industry has been ongoing since 2020. This has included:

- 2023 - Festival and event organizers providing feedback on future priorities for festival and event administration during the Festivals and Events 101 networking event.
- 2023 - External consultant's report determining priorities of City support for festivals and events through interviews with service providers in comparable jurisdictions, local event organizations, and City service providers who contribute to festivals and events.
- 2021 - A survey of nearly 400 members of the public reviewing the *Festivals and Events Subsidy Program* conducted by an external consultant.
- 2021 - Two workshops with representatives from community-based organizations, including Civic Partners, completed to review and validate the *Eventful City Strategy's* vision, outcomes, goals and identify actions for implementation. The workshop participants later completed a validation survey to prioritize actions.
- 2020-2021 - Two citizen surveys providing insight on citizen behaviour, expectations and preferences related to winter activities and informing the *Winter City Strategy*. Close to 2,000 respondents participated.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

The proposed Policy enables a strategic, customer-focused approach to delivering festivals and events in Calgary. This reduces barriers for equity-deserving communities, and encourages gathering and connection, which supports the development of community and social cohesion. The proposed Policy aligns with the Social Wellbeing Policy (CP2019-01) principles.

Environmental

The proposed Policy supports critical environmental issues detailed in the *Eventful City Strategy*, such as encouraging the reduction of the environmental impact of festivals and events, including effective waste management. Festivals and events follow City best practices

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and comply with environmental standards and requirements. The proposed Policy aligns with The City of Calgary's Environmental Policy (UEP001).

Economic

The proposed Policy supports the continued investment in festivals and events, which diversifies the economy by strengthening cultural industries, supporting local businesses and artists, and driving economic investment into the downtown. Festivals and events are key to the growth of tourism and improving Calgary's global reputation.

Service and Financial Implications

No anticipated financial impact

N/A

RISK

No significant risks identified.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Background and Previous Council Direction
2. Proposed Festival and Event Policy
3. Summary of Festival and Event Policy Changes
4. Rationale for Festival and Event Policy Changes
5. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Katie Black	Community Services	Approve
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Consult
Jill Floen	Law, Legislative Services & Security	Consult

Author: Partnerships business unit