

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: January 25, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Eric Stepura, Director, Recreation & Culture

SUBJECT: 2020 Special Events Review and Special Events for 2021

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council approved the following new Special Events for 2021:

1. Chalk Art Festival, May 29-30, 2021, organized by the White Rock BIA; and
 2. Summer Busker Series, June 5 to August 28, 2021 from 12:00 p.m. (noon) to 4:00 p.m. at various busker locations throughout the City, organized by the White Rock BIA.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Special events in White Rock support community connection and cultural development. They provide a wide variety of entertainment choices, and encourage community gathering opportunities for residents while attracting visitors and tourists, contributing to the City's local economy. This report provides a review of 2020 events, a year that was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and an update on 2021 new special events applications. The report also provides information on two new events for Council approval and category designation as laid out in Special Event Policy #710.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Application guidelines and selection criteria for special events held at White Rock owned or leased facilities or properties are governed by Special Event Policy #710. Community special events are defined for the purposes of this Policy as:

“assemblies or activities ranging in time from hours to days, produced by the City of White Rock, non-profit organizations, private businesses or a combination of partnerships, for community and/or visitor participation, or to attract a significant potential audience.”

According to Policy #710, (attached as Appendix C), the City's role in the delivery of community special events falls into three (3) categories:

- Category A - City Produced Event: events where all details are organized and/or coordinated by City staff, usually working with a community volunteer committee to ensure the highest level of community engagement.
- Category B – City as a Producing Partner: events where a high level of staff support is required to work with organizers ensuring that the event content optimizes civic

engagement, planning and productions details, as well as marketing needs are sufficient to achieve strategic objectives.

- Category C – City as a Supporter: events where the role of staff is to provide advice and assistance with basic operations and logistical planning such as public safety considerations, coordinating the use of City staff, facilities, property and/or equipment such as tents, stage, barricades, parking lots, community centres, road use, etc.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

2019

In 2019, the City hosted forty-six (46) community special events plus monthly opening receptions at the Landmark Pop-Uptown Gallery and a variety of special events at Kent Street Activity Centre.

2020

In 2020, the City and event organizers were on track to present over fifty-one (51) special events. However, the COVID-19 global pandemic and provincial orders prevented in-person gatherings. Despite this, the City found innovative ways to connect:

- A “what’s open” initiative reached out to local businesses across sectors so an interactive map could be built and shared online.
- A [Public Art Story Map](#) was built to encourage folks to get outside.
- Brightly painted banners were erected across the City featuring local artists.
- Beach Food Vendors, Art Walk at the Beach and the Landmark Pop-Uptown Gallery programs were adjusted to meet COVID-19 safety protocols in order to re-open successfully in the summer.
- Research on gamification such as a local online Bingo and Scavenger Hunts was completed to be ready for launch subject the 2021 Financial Plan.
- A new landing page: whiterockcity.ca/connect was built with a variety of online activities and resources for residents and visitors to stay connected to White Rock’s cultural life through community events that had gone online. Activities such as online concerts, heritage quizzes and online recreation classes kept our community engaged.
- In preparation for a return to in-person special events, a new wheelchair lift for the City’s SL50 stage was purchased.
- The following 2020 Special Events were held in person:
 - Jan 1, 2020 Polar Bear Plunge – 50th Anniversary;
 - Coldest Night of the Year;
 - Farmer’s Market, Sundays from May through October;
 - Modified Pride Flag Raising event;
 - Modified CARP Flag Raising event; and
 - Festival of Lights, Light Display at Memorial Park.
- Although it required converting to new virtual technology for most community event organizers, the City was able to support them to keep celebrating the following virtual events:
 - National Indigenous People’s Day (video);
 - Canada Day By the Bay Concert and Museum online market (using a Story Map);

- Remembrance Day (online);
- Christmas on the Peninsula (online);
- Menorah Lighting for Chanukah at White Rock Beach (online); and
- Jan 1, 2021 Plunge at Home – Virtual Polar Plunge.

Recommendations for 2021 Special Events

Given the ongoing challenge of COVID-19, the Provincial Ministry of Health continues to restrict large gatherings. While the distribution of the vaccine currently underway brings hope for future in-person celebrations, the City's financial planning process is assuming limits on gatherings will continue throughout 2021. During the interim, there are ways for the City to continue to facilitate connecting, celebrating and building our rich cultural heritage.

Anticipating the continuation of limitations to social gatherings, applicants were asked if their 2021 events could be modified, if needed. The following table summarizes the 2021 status of previously approved events, followed by information about two new special events.

Existing Special Events 2021

The events team will continue to adapt and innovate with our existing community event partners, using online technology, as follows:

Name of Event	Proposed Date	Policy #710 - Category	How would this Event be Modified if Restrictions Continue through 2021
Virtual Coldest Night of the Year	Feb 15 – 22, 2021	C	Organizers have already converted it to a virtual version.
PAHF Gala	May 1, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event.
RCMP Open House	May 1, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event.
Walk with Your Doc	May 7, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone or present virtual version.
Buskers & Comedy Festival	May 21 – 23, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event.
RCMP Torch Run	June 1, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event.
Summer Movie Nights	June 3, 10 and 17, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone the series.
Summer Concert Series	June 24, July 8, July 17, July 22, August 19, August 26, 2021	B	Organizers plan to postpone the series.
National Indigenous Peoples Day	June 21, 2021	B	This event can go virtual again and be enhanced in partnership with Semiahmoo First Nation

Canada Day By the Bay	July 1, 2021	A	Virtual Canada Day (building on 2020 success)
SFN Canada Day Rock 10k	July 1, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone.
Tour de White Rock	July 17 and 18, 2021	A	The organizing Committee plans to postpone, along with other Super Week cycle race hosts.
Canadian Snowbirds – C.H.I.L.D. Foundation	July 18, 2021	B	This event last took place successfully in White Rock in 2017 and was approved for 2020 but due to the tragic accident had to be carried-forward to 2021.
Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days	July 30-Aug 1	A	2021 Committee and staff to discuss adapting to a virtual and limited in- person experience (e.g. strolling buskers/actors themed to the event to help animate the city, themed installations throughout the city and potential other programming in collaboration with Semiahmoo First Nation).
Picnic on the Pier	August 5 or 12, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone.
Global Block Party	August 14, 2021	B	Organizers planning a virtual version for 2021.
Craft Beer Festival	September 11, 2021	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event.
Parkinson's Superwalk	September 12, 2021	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.
Canadian Walk for Veterans	September 25, 2021	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.
Remembrance Day	November 11, 2021	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.
Christmas on the Peninsula	November 27, 2021	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.
Chanukah Menorah Lighting Party & Display	November 28 – December 6, 2021	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.
Polar Bear Plunge	January 1, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again.

With the new expanded Miramar Plaza and a “through road” completed through the plaza between Thrift Avenue and Russell Avenue, a new Farmers Market site plan is required along with a discussion with the Miramar Plaza Committee regarding this year’s Market. Staff will work with the White Rock Farmer’s Market Society and the Miramar Plaza Committee and bring forward a separate corporate report with recommendations outlining new details for 2021.

White Rock Festival of Lights – October 30, 2021 – February 26, 2022

The White Rock Festival of Lights Society (WRFL) set up holiday light displays in 2019 and 2020. As a new event last year, it was supported by a Grant-in-Aid of \$5,000 in 2019. In-kind City services in the amount of roughly \$9,000 were provided in both years.

Organizers have submitted a new event application for 2021 and have applied to the City asking for an increase support in both cash and in-kind services and be considered a B Level special event, City as a Producing Partner. As the WRFL is considered a light display, rather than a special event, and most of the operational and logistical support for this display was provided by the Engineering and Municipal Operations Department not Recreation & Culture, a separate joint report dealing with the 2021 WRFL request and application will be brought forward for Council’s consideration.

New Special Events 2021

The following two new special event applications were received, and the applications are attached as Appendices. As C level events, the City is being asked only to participate as a supporter.

Proposed Dates	Name and Description	Organizer	Policy #710 - Category
May 29 – 30	Chalk Art Festival - Street Activation where chalk artists will design murals on sidewalks throughout the City (see Appendix A).	White Rock BIA	C
June 5 – August 28	Summer Busker Series - Street Activation from Noon – 4 on Saturdays at various locations: Five Corners, Memorial Park and Uptown (see Appendix B).	White Rock BIA	C

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The City’s 2021-2025 Financial Plan includes funding for the delivery of existing community events as modified.

The White Rock Festival of Lights financial request will be addressed and presented to Council in a separate corporate report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Seeking out opportunities to connect with other people is more important than ever during a time of social isolation and a continuing stream of “bad news” brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Special events and celebrations encourage excitement and cheers up the community.

Recreation and Culture staff work closely with event organizers and the City's Communication Department and IT Department to maximize communication about the benefits of events. Social and traditional media, signage and use of innovative technology, such as Story Maps are some of the ways to keep our residents connected.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

The Recreation & Culture Events Team has the privilege of working closely with most departments. A systematic way of communicating production impacts well in advance has been created. Other department teams impacted include Economic Development, Human Resources, Engineering & Municipal Operations, Parks, Library, Museum, Finance, Information Technology, Communications, By-Laws, RCMP, Fire Rescue, and Corporate Administration.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

The events team prioritizes green initiatives when celebrating in person, including filling stations for water, recycling bins at events, etc.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Council Corporate Vision is to provide a high quality of life where arts and culture flourish and our heritage is celebrated, where we can all live, work and play in an enjoyable atmosphere and where the community feels safe, secure and friendly. Special Events support the cultural development needed to build that kind of community.

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

There are risks to not doing anything to engage and encourage community residents to connect and celebrate, including social isolation, depression, anxiety and reduced community pride. By innovatively working with our community partners to offer virtual events, we can continue to celebrate community milestones and traditions until in-person special events return to White Rock.

CONCLUSION

Special events in White Rock support and build community connection, community pride and cultural development. They provide a wide variety of entertainment choices, and, in a typical year, encourage community gathering opportunities for residents and visitors.

Given the ongoing challenge of COVID -19, the Provincial Ministry of Health continues to restrict large gatherings. In anticipation that these restrictions on group gatherings will continue for some time in 2021, the staff will continue to adapt and innovate with our existing community event partners using online technology to provide several community celebrations in 2021.

Staff recommend that Council direct staff to work with the White Rock BIA to deliver two new special events, the Chalk Art Festival and Summer Busker Series, as part of the City's 2021 special events line-up.

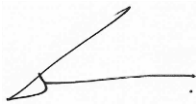
Respectfully submitted,



Eric Stepura
Director, Recreation & Culture

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix A: Chalk Art Festival Application
Appendix B: Summer Busker Series Application
Appendix C: Special Events Policy #710