

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** February 7, 2022

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Eric Stepura, Director, Recreation and Culture

**SUBJECT:** 2022 Special Events

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council:

1. Approve the following new Special Events for 2022:
    - a) White Rock Blues & Jazz Festival, June 10 to June 12, 2022, to be organized by the White Rock BIA; and
    - b) White Rock Pride Day, July 23, 2022, to be organized by the White Rock Pride Society.
  2. Not approve the following events for 2022:
    - a) White Rock Lights display from November 18, 2022, to February 18, 2023, to be organized by the White Rock Lights Society;” and
    - b) White Rock Promenade Sculpture Competition, May 22, 2022, through April 2023, to be organized by the White Rock Events Society.
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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Special events in White Rock support and enhance community connection, cultural development and fosters civic pride. Events provide a wide variety of entertainment choices, and encourage community gathering opportunities for residents, while attracting out of town visitors which contributes to the City’s local economy. This report provides a review of the special events that occurred in 2021, a year that was once again greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and an update on the 2022 special event applications.

The report also provides information on four (4) new event requests for Council consideration for approval and category of City support designation as they relate to Special Event Policy #710 (Appendix A).

**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.”

Special Event Policy #710 states that the City’s role in the delivery of community special events falls into three (3) categories with varying levels of City support:

- **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 partner 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**

### **Review of 2021 Special Events**

In 2021, the City and community event organizers had planned to present a wide variety of annual festivals and events as was delivered in 2019. However, with the changing Provincial Health Order (PHO) restrictions on group gatherings due to the pandemic that began March 2020, only the following community events took place:

- The following 2021 Special Events were held in person with COVID-19 safety protocols in place:
  - Fire Fighters Tree Chip Fundraiser;
  - White Rock Farmer’s Market, Sundays from May through October;
  - Busking the City by the Sea;
  - Snowbirds Fly Past;
  - Pride Flag Raising event;
  - CARP Flag Raising event;
  - National Truth and Reconciliation Day Ceremony and Walk;
  - International Overdose Awareness Day;
  - Remembrance Day Ceremony;
  - Christmas on the Peninsula Festival;
  - Chanukah by the Sea; and
  - Bright Walk in White Rock Tree Lighting Launch Event and Light Display at Memorial Park.
- The following 2021 Special Events were held virtually:
  - Polar Bear Plunge;
  - Coldest Night of the Year;
  - National Indigenous Peoples Day;
  - Canada Day by the Bay;

- Search the Rock;
- Global Block Party;
- Canadian Walk for Veterans; and
- Parkinson’s Superwalk

### 2022 Special Events

Given the ongoing challenge of COVID -19 and variants, the Provincial Ministry of Health continues to place restrictions on event gatherings which are assessed and modified from time to time. While the distribution of the vaccine and booster shots currently underway brings hope for future in-person celebrations, City staff are assuming that limits on the size of group gatherings will continue throughout 2022.

Recreation and Culture staff will continue to adapt and innovate with existing community event partners, using online technology, to provide special events for the benefit of residents and visitors to the community.

Anticipating the continuation of limitations to social gatherings, applicants were asked if their 2022 events could be modified, if needed. The following table summarizes the 2022 status of previously approved annual events, followed by information about four new special events.

### Reoccurring Special Events in 2022

The reoccurring special events planned for 2022 and modification comments are as follows:

Name of Event	Proposed Date	Policy #710 - Category	How Would Your Event be Modified if PHO Restrictions Continue through 2022
Coldest Night of the Year	Feb 26, 2022	C	Organizers have already converted it to a modified/virtual version.
PAHF Gala	May 7, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event, if needed.
RCMP Open House	May 7, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event, if needed.
Walk with Your Doc	May 13, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone or present virtual version.
Buskers & Comedy Festival	May 27 – 29, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event, if needed.
RCMP Torch Run	June 7, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone their event, if needed.
National Indigenous Peoples Day	June 21, 2022	B	Staff to discuss modifying in collaboration with Semiahmoo First Nation.
Summer Concert Series	June 23, July 7, July 16, July 21, August 18, August 25, 2022	B	Organizers from the White Rock BIA and the City plan to postpone the series, if needed.

Canada Day By the Bay	July 1, 2022	A	Staff to discuss modifying the event if needed.
SFN Canada Day Rock 10k	July 1, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone, if needed.
Tour de White Rock	July 16 and 17, 2022	A	The organizing committee plans to postpone the event again if needed.
Pride Flag Raising	July 19, 2022	B	Organizers plan to modify, if needed.
Dancing at the Pier	July 9 and August 27, 2022	C	Organizers plan to postpone, if needed.
Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days	July 29 – 31, 2022	A	This annual Festival is organized in partnership with Semiahmoo First Nation. Staff to discuss modifying or postponing the event if needed with Semiahmoo First Nation.
Canadian Snowbirds – C.H.I.L.D. Foundation	Date to be confirmed	B	Organizers plan to host the air show if PHO allows it or cancel it if needed.
Picnic on the Pier	August 11, 2022	C	Organizers plan to host it if PHO allows it or postpone it if needed.
Global Block Party	August 13, 2022	B	Organizers plan to host it live if PHO allows it or postpone it if needed.
Parkinson's Superwalk	September 11, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again if needed.
Craft Beer Festival	September 24, 2022	C	Organizers plan to host it if PHO allows it or postpone it if needed.
Canadian Walk for Veterans	September 25, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again, if needed.
CARP Flag Raising	September 29, 2022	B	Organizers plan to modify again, if needed.
National Day of Truth and Reconciliation Ceremony and Walk	September 30, 2022	C	Staff to discuss modifications with Semiahmoo First Nation, if needed.
White Rock Arts Festival	October 21-23, 2022	A	Organizers plan to host it if PHO allows it.
Remembrance Day	November 11, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual or modify again, if needed.
Christmas on the Peninsula	November 26, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual or modify again, if needed.

Chanukah Menorah Lighting	December 18, 2022	C	Organizers plan to go virtual or modify again, if needed.
Polar Bear Plunge	January 1, 2023	C	Organizers plan to go virtual again, if needed.

**New Special Events Proposed for 2022**

Four (4) new special event applications were received, and the applications are attached as Appendices B through E.

The city is being asked to provide C Category event support for the following events:

Proposed Dates	Name and Description	Organizer	Policy #710 - Category
June 10 - 12	<u>White Rock Blues &amp; Jazz Festival</u> At various locations in the city. (see Appendix B).	White Rock BIA	C
July 23	<u>White Rock Pride Event</u> Daytime event with live entertainment, vendor booths at Five Corners with a road closure in place. (see Appendix C).	White Rock Pride Society	C

Staff have reviewed these two applications and the organizers capabilities and capacity to deliver these events with minimal financial support from the City. Staff recommend that Council approve these events as C Category events in 2022.

The city is being asked to participate as B Category- City as a Producing Partner event supporter for the following events:

Proposed Dates	Name and Description
November 19, 2022 to February 19, 2023	<p><u>White Rock Lights (formerly White Rock Festival of Lights)</u></p> <p>This event was held in 2019 and 2020 as a C category event with limited City in kind support of roughly \$9,000 each year. This year, the City has received an event application from the White Rock Lights Society for approval to organize and host a holiday light display at the waterfront from November 19, 2022 to February 18, 2023. Organizers are asking the City for increased support in both cash (\$50,000) and in-kind services, and to be considered a B Category special event, as a Producing Partner with the City.</p> <p>In 2021, due to financial capacity concerns and outstanding issues between the White Rock Lights Society and the City, Council directed the City to deliver the light display. At the November 8, 2021 Regular Council meeting, Council directed staff to produce a Category A - City Produced lighting display and tree lighting ceremony and festive light display called “Bright Walk in White Rock.”</p> <p>The Bright Walk in White Rock holiday season light display was installed and organized by City staff and held at West Beach in White Rock from December 10, 2021 to February 15, 2022. The Bright Walk in White Rock Tree Lighting</p>

	<p>Ceremony took place from 5:00 p.m. to 6:30pm on Friday December 10, 2021, to kick off the festive display. Waterfront visitors were treated to an evening of free family fun organized by City staff and several community volunteers and event sponsors.</p> <p>The bright and colorful light display attracted thousands of visitors to the waterfront, many of which frequented the local restaurants, businesses and participated in active living while walking the Promenade and Pier.</p> <p>City staff are looking forward to producing the “Bright Walk in White Rock” lighting display throughout the Holiday Season again in 2022/2023. Funding for this A Category City produced event has been identified in the City’s 2022 Parks Operating Budget. Staff will work with community partners including the White Rock BIA, the Rotary Club of White Rock and others to host another festive celebration and light display at the White Rock waterfront from December 9, 2022 to approximately February 10, 2023.</p> <p>Due to an increased interest in community organizations to partner with the City in delivering this display for 2022/2023 and the success of the “Bright Walk in White Rock” display, Staff recommend that Council not support the request from the White Rock Light Society to host its lighting display at the waterfront.</p>
May 2022 through April 2023	<p><u>White Rock Promenade Sculpture Competition</u></p> <p>The City has received an event application from the White Rock Events Society (WRES) requesting approval to organize and host a sculpture competition from May 2022 to April 2023 on the White Rock waterfront.</p> <p>On November 22, 2022, Council received a delegation from WRES asking Council’s support for a sculpture completion to be held along the waterfront Promenade west of the Museum. The proposal includes inviting sculpture artists to submit concept designs of sculptures to compete for cash prizes. The sculpture submissions would then be judged by both a panel of judges and members of the public, and the ten (10) finalists would have their completed art pieces put on display along the waterfront Promenade.</p> <p>All but the winning sculpture would be sold at the end of the competition, with the winning sculpture remaining at its waterfront location (subject to the approval of Council).</p> <p>The WRES is asking Council for cash and in-kind support of \$15,000 plus approval of a Cultural Grant-in Aid of \$5,000 for a total of \$20,000. Funding for this event is not included in the City’s 2022 operating budget, therefore, if Council were to approve this event, then either a tax increase would be required, or an allocation of funds from the City’s 2022 operating contingency.</p> <p>WRES has asked to install ten (10) concrete pads approximately 4’ x 4’ or larger in the grass and tree area located immediately north of the Promenade between the Museum and Bayview Park. Installing these concrete pads is not recommended as the excavation to install them would likely damage tree roots, take away existing grass areas and would require relocation of existing underground services such as power lines and irrigation pipes.</p>

	<p>City staff do not support hosting this event as the art selection process proposed by WRES is contrary to the City’s Public Art and Placemaking Policy #708 (Appendix F). Under Policy #708, public art pieces to be installed on City property must follow a very specific artist and art piece selection process to ensure that the “projects are selected through an informed, open and fair public art competition process,” and to avoid inappropriate or controversial pieces of art from being selected and installed along the waterfront. If Council were to allow WRES to oversee the selection process for the sculptures, the City could be put in a position whereby inappropriate art pieces are selected, then installed along the busy waterfront Promenade, resulting in considerable complaints and controversy.</p>
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### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The City’s 2022-2026 Financial Plan includes funding for the support and delivery of events previously held in 2021, and the two recommended new C category events.

The City has not included funding in the 2022 Financial Plan to support the WRLS’s White Rock Lights display event request for \$50,000, or the WRES’s request for \$20,000 for the White Rock Promenade Sculpture Competition.

### **COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Special events and celebrations encourage excitement and community engagement. Recreation and Culture staff work closely with event organizers, the City’s Communication Department and Tourism White Rock to maximize communication to residents and visitors about the events taking place in the community. Social and traditional media, signage and use of innovative technology, such as social media posts and story maps are some of the ways to keep residents connected.

### **INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS**

Recreation & Culture staff will work with other departments to host these events safely and economically. A systematic way of communicating event production requirements and impacts well in advance of the event date has been created. Other department teams impacted include Planning and Development Services (Economic Development Officer), Human Resources, Engineering & Municipal Operations, Parks, Library, Museum, Finance, Information Technology, Communications, By-Laws, RCMP, Fire Rescue, and Corporate Administration.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

The Recreation and Culture events team prioritizes green initiatives when staging and celebrating in-person events, including provision of water bottle filling stations, recycling bins, etc.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

Council’s Corporate Vision is to provide a high quality of life where arts and culture flourish and 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 greatly enrich the quality of life for residents and visitors by providing entertaining and festive arts and culture experiences.

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

1. THAT Council not approve the following new Special Events for 2022:
  - a) White Rock Blues & Jazz Festival, June 10 to June 12, 2022, to be organized by the White Rock BIA; and
  - b) White Rock Pride Day Event, July 23, 2022, to be organized by the White Rock Pride Society.
2. THAT Council approve the White Rock Lights Display from November 18, 2022, to February 18, 2023, organized by the White Rock Lights Society, and approve the \$50,000 funding support requested.
3. THAT Council approve the White Rock Promenade Sculpture Competition, May 22, 2022, through April 2023, organized by the White Rock Events Society, and approve the \$20,000 funding support requested.

### **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 to meet and establish relationships.

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 2022, staff will continue to adapt and innovate with existing community event organizing partners using online technology to provide community celebrations virtually, and when possible, in-person live events in 2022.

Staff recommend that Council direct staff to work with the White Rock BIA to deliver the White Rock Blues & Jazz Festival, and the White Rock Pride Society to deliver the White Rock Pride Day, as part of the City's 2022 special events line-up.

Respectfully submitted,



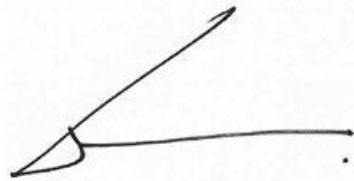
Eric Stepura  
Director of Recreation and Culture



**Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

Council should consider this report in tandem with the report provided to the Finance and Audit Committee in the same night as it contains suggestions on service reductions that should be considered in combination with this report.

I concur with staff's recommendation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, sweeping 'G' followed by a horizontal line that ends in a small dot.

Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer

- Appendix A: Special Event Policy #710
- Appendix B: White Rock Blues & Jazz Festival
- Appendix C: White Rock Pride Day Event
- Appendix D: White Rock Lights
- Appendix E: White Rock Promenade Sculpture Contest
- Appendix F: White Rock Public Art and Placemaking Policy #708