

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: December 11, 2023
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: John Woolgar, Director, Recreation and Culture
SUBJECT: Special Events 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT Council:

1. Approve the following new events for 2024:
 - a) Yoga for All;
 - b) Oxford Hill Climb;
 - c) Night Market by the Pier;
 - d) South Rock Comedy Festival;
 - e) Anniversary Celebration of The Grey Whale Family; and
 - f) White Rock Farmer's Market Christmas Edition.
 2. Direct Staff to work with organizers to obtain more information to bring back to Council related to the two following proposed events:
 - a) South Asian Festival; and
 - a) Uptown Music Festival.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Special events in White Rock support and enhance community connection, cultural development and foster civic pride. Events provide a wide variety of experiences, and encourage community gathering opportunities for residents, while attracting visitors that contribute to the local economy.

In 2023 the City of White Rock hosted over 55 events attended by over 270,000 people.

This report provides a review of special events that occurred in 2023, a list of returning community A, B and C category events and a list of new events proposed for 2024, for Council's consideration, with staff seeking to obtain more information from the organizers related to two additional proposed events.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

Special Events Policy #710:

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

The Cultural Strategic Plan, “Our Creative City by the Sea,” adopted by Council in 2021, identified the goal to “Sustain Diverse Arts Program and Festivals.”

Events enrich the lives of residents, providing opportunity for the community to connect, learn and celebrate together. Events contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of the community, provide valuable volunteer opportunities, and build a sense of place and community.

In 2023, the city was able to deliver and/or support over 55 events that were attended by over 270,000 people. The events successfully built on the Cultural Strategic Plan’s objectives to maintain and grow diverse special events, mobilize event partners and volunteers, and support a thriving uptown arts district, “Beyond the Beach.” A complete list of events can be found in Appendix A.

Overview of 2023 A Category City Produced Events

Volunteer Fair

Twenty-two (22) local not for profit groups and service clubs were invited to White Rock’s first annual Volunteer Fair. The Fair attracted 500 attendees who learned about meaningful volunteer opportunities in White Rock. This event contributed to Council’s strategic priority, “Community-Formalize a City volunteer program”. The City utilized 210 event volunteers in 2023 who contributed over 800 hours of their time to ensure a successful event.

Canada Day By the Bay

Canada Day by the Bay is a popular event in which the community comes together to celebrate what it means to be Canadian. This included music, food, vendor row, fireworks and a kids zone full of hands on and interactive activities. In 2023 the City adopted a new approach to Canada Day by embracing diversity through music and dance. Performers represented many different nations, countries and communities including, South Asia, the Philippines, Metis, Scotland, and China. An estimated 40,000 visitors attended, and 37 volunteers contributed 150 hours of their time. The City secured \$42,850 in sponsorship and grants to support this event.

Sea Festival and Semiahmoo Days

Sea Festival is a historic event that has been operating for over 70 years. This year over 90,000 people came to the beach to enjoy the celebration. In partnership with Semiahmoo First Nation's Semiahmoo Days, many new activities were featured this year with an emphasis on environmental and cultural sustainability. New activities included an environmental zone, a beach kids activity book featuring original art and a language page of Sencoten (Semiahmoo), an archival photo exhibition of past Sea Festivals, an indigenous market, roving performers, music through the eras, and an enlarged children's zone. The city secured \$36,600 in sponsorship and grants to support this event and 106 volunteer contributed 424 hours of their time.

Poetry in Motion Opening

In collaboration with Fraser Health and funded by the BC Health Community Grant, the City launched Poetry in Motion. This program encourages residents to plan a walk and explore White Rock parks whilst discovering poetry along the way. The event included poetry reading, an opportunity to create original poetry and an interpretive walk led by one of the City's instructors. This event attracted 50 attendees.

White Rock Arts Festival – Culture Crawl

The 2nd annual White Rock Arts Festival – Culture Crawl grew exponentially in 2023 with 5000 attendees and 22 partner sites for a total of 35 activities. Celebrating the arts, culture, and heritage of the community, this event offered a variety of experiences for participants, encouraging them to get out and explore the Peninsula. Activities included online Cultural Connectors Legacy videos, art exhibitions and markets, a public art bus tour, a vintage fashion show, theatre performances, live music, and literary talks. The City secured \$4100 in program admissions and grants to support this event and 47 volunteers put in 188 hours of their time which included the Festival Advisory Committee. The event attracted 5000 people.

Pride Flag Raising

The Pride Flag was raised at City and in collaboration with the Pride Society to create a celebration that raised awareness and support for the LGBTQ+ community. This year 100 attended the flag raising. Following the flag raising the City joined the Pride Ride for the first time.

Bright Walk in White Rock

The most recent event celebrated the season through Bright Walk in White Rock. Visitors enjoyed the lights, music, and entertainment and children got the chance to visit Santa, Elsa and Olaf and create their own tree decoration. This year an estimated 7,000 people attended the festival with the City securing \$4500 in sponsorship to support the event. The lights on the promenade will stay on until January 7, 2024.

2023 Events and 2024 Returning Events

Please see Appendix A and B for a list of 2023 Events and 2024 Returning Events.

2024 New Proposed Events

Please see Appendix C for a list of 2024 New Event Applicants for Council's consideration and direction to staff.

The following new proposed events for 2024 are recommended by Staff:

a) Yoga for All, organized by West Coast Hot Yoga

West Coast Hot Yoga, a local business, proposes to offer a free event at Miramar Plaza to bring connection and unity to the entire community by making yoga accessible to everyone.

b) Oxford Hill Climb, organized by the United Velo Cycling Club

Organized by the United Velo Cycling Club, the event would be a timed hill climb for cyclists up Oxford Street. The goal of the event is to promote physical fitness, a healthy lifestyle and create a lasting fun and safe event for riders and attendees.

c) Night Market by the Pier organized by the Greater Vancouver Food Truck Festival

The organizer proposes a weekly night market on Friday nights from May 1 to September 20 featuring food trucks, local artisan vendors, musicians, and entertainers. They would work closely with and collaborate with local businesses and incorporate existing city programs into the market days including busking, art walk and food carts. This family friendly event will be a community focused celebration on the waterfront.

d) South Rock Comedy Festival, organized by the South Rock Comedy Festival

The South Rock Comedy Festival aims to expand tourism opportunities, boost the local economy while bringing the power of comedy to unite, foster inclusivity, transcend boundaries and create meaningful connections among people. The organizers plan to utilize private spaces for the festival which will take place across the Peninsula and may feature a free show in Miramar Plaza.

e) Anniversary Celebration of “The Grey Whale Family,” organized by the City White Rock.

On September 29, 2024, “The Grey Whale Family” by artist Robert Weyland turns 40. Supported by the Public Art and Culture Committee, an event to recognize this iconic mural and its impact on White Rock is proposed. This free event would include an invitation to the artist to attend, whale themed art activities, music and educational activities featuring information about ocean conservation. One time funding of \$10,000 is noted as an over target request in the 2024 proposed budget.

f) White Rock Farmer’s Market Christmas Edition, organized by the White Rock Farmer’s Market Society

The White Rock Farmers Market is planning a three-day Christmas event with many of the vendors from the summer market to bring the community together and celebrate the holiday season with a fun and festive event.

Staff are seeking support from Council to work with event organizers for the two following proposed events for 2024 in order to provide necessary details for Council’s consideration:

a) Uptown Music Festival, organized by the White Rock BIA

The Uptown Music Festival mission would be to attract people to Uptown White Rock where they would enjoy music and food in Miramar Plaza and the private lot behind the Beer Shack and Wooden Spoon. The festival currently requires the final approval of the White Rock BIA Board of Directors

b) South Asian Festival, organized by the Sanskriti Cultural Awareness Society of BC.

The Society is a non-profit organization involved in the promotion of South Asian Culture. They propose a two-day event that creates culture awareness to the city by featuring food, Bollywood dances, music, yoga, costumes of south Asia, arts, and crafts in Memorial Plaza. The Society holds a similar event in Holland Park in Surrey.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Support of events has been included as part of the 2024 Financial Plan. Funding for the Anniversary of “The Grey Whale Family,” event has been requested through an over target request.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The city requires all “C” category events to follow strict protocols that cover insurance requirements including appropriate first aid, food safe, traffic management, fire, and other safety requirements.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Event organizers can take advantage of the city’s events calendar and events are promoted on the city’s social media platforms. Staff request approved event organizers complete a marketing intake form to optimize promotions.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL INVOLVEMENT/IMPLICATIONS

Recreation and Culture staff use a production plan circulated to all impacted departments to host these events safely and economically. Staff work collaboratively with other departments to ensure the success of events and mitigate any adverse impacts. Other departments that may be impacted include Planning and Development Services (By-Laws, Parking), 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 Cultural department prioritize green initiatives when planning and celebrating events. Staff will continue to work closely with other departments to identify and execute environmentally sustainable practices and communicate those practices to community special events organizers.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Events support the corporate vision 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 where the community feels safe and secure.

Events support Council Strategic Goals:

Community

2. Encourage positive community gathering by designing and implementing inviting public spaces and beautification projects.

Organization and Governance

4. Sustain and nurture the established partnership between the City of White Rock and Semiahmoo First Nation.

Local Economy

2. Increase patronship of our commercial districts.

The White Rock Cultural Strategic Plan, My Creative City by the Sea, (adopted 2021), emphasizes as goal three (3) that the City will sustain diverse arts programs and festivals.

3.1 Objective: Maintain and grow diverse special events

3.2 Objective: Mobilize event partners and volunteers

3.3 Objective: Support a thriving Uptown arts district "Beyond the Beach"

OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES

The following options are available for Council's consideration:

1. To not support all new and returning events or choose to only support some events.
2. To not support specific new or returning events or choose to only support some events.
3. To not recommend staff seek additional information about the South Asian Festival and Uptown Music Festival.

Not approving these events and programs could limit the community's access to events and programs that support community health, wellbeing and connectiveness and compromise opportunities for growing community partnerships.

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 encourage gathering opportunities for residents and visitors to meet and become better connected to their community. Events build the city's image and brand. The city makes the best use of volunteers when planning and hosting events. Through effective engagement, staff will continue to invest collaborating with event organizers to ensure the production of Category B and C level events are of the highest quality.

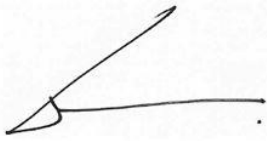
Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca Forrest
Manger, Cultural Development

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

I concur with the recommendations of this corporate report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'G' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot at the end.

Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer

- Appendix A: List of 2023 Events
- Appendix B: Returning Community Events – 2024
- Appendix C: New Event Applicants - 2024