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Date: May 13, 2021
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Karen Loney, Manager of Recreation Programs and Special Events
RE: Open Streets 2021 Update
Report No.: PR_SP – 2021 – 4

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- A) That Council receives the Minutes of the Open Streets Advisory Committee meetings dated March 18, 2021; April 20, 2021; April 28, 2021; and May 12, 2021.
- B) That the Mayor be asked to issue a letter thanking the members of the Open Streets Advisory Committee in recognition of their service and further that the Committee be brought to a conclusion.

BACKGROUND

On February 22, 2021, Council approved, in principle, a "2021 Open Streets" summer event in downtown Kingsville. Open Streets is a Tourism and Economic Development initiative to support businesses, the arts sector, and an opportunity for people to explore the downtown in a COVID-friendly manner. This event supports Council's priority of economic development: strengthen tourism/hospitality.

Council further agreed that Open Streets would be a Town event managed through Administration.

An Open Streets Advisory Committee of Council was approved to obtain resident and business input and foster volunteer participation. Councillor Laura Lucier and Councillor Tony Gaffan were appointed Co-Chairs of the Open Streets Advisory Committee (Committee). Five meetings occurred to seek community input into planning the event.

The Committee provided community insights into what streets should be closed to traffic, when the event should begin and end, who to engage, ideas for marketing, entertainment activities including music and engaging artists, plus budgetary limits.

On April 12, 2021, Administration provided an update on Open Street; it was moved:

"That Council receives the Report and supports the Open Streets 2021 event at this stage, recognizing that Council will receive an update Report with further recommendations for Council consideration from Administration with input from the Open Streets Advisory Committee; and Further That Council approves the time frame of the event (every Saturday from June 19 to September 11 from 4:00 P.M. to 10:30 P.M.)".

DISCUSSION

COVID Restrictions

Developing a plan for Open Streets in the uncertainty of COVID requires flexibility and ability to adapt quickly to adhere to Ministry Guidelines.

As the Open Streets event is able to proceed, the following precautions will be put in place to support safe outdoor spaces. This supports Council's priority of a healthy community.

- Signage installed for walking directions to reduce interactions.
- Sanitizer stations near the entrance of the main road barricades.
- Volunteers trained as Kingsville Ambassadors will greet people, provide hand sanitization, and encourage safe distancing.
- Vendors will be spaced out, and sign marking enforced to distance people waiting in lines.
- Activities will be developed to consider eliminating high-contact interaction areas, and a hazard risk assessment will be completed.
- One person will be assigned to monitor compliance with COVID protocols.

The Committee has done some work and made recommendations about what aspects of Open Streets, including activities and entertainment, might be able to go ahead if the current Provincial-wide Lockdown is ended and Essex County returns to the previously utilized colour coded system of restrictions and permissions.

At the time of writing this report, it is unknown whether the Lockdown will be ended and what aspects of Open Streets can go ahead.

When the current Stay-at-Home order concludes the Ministry COVID Framework will be assessed to determine if amendments will need to occur.

Street Closures

The following streets will be closed to vehicle traffic and open to pedestrians during the event: Main St. (from Spruce St. to Queen St) and Division St. (from King St. to Pearl St.).

Music

The Committee desires to have music as part of the Open Streets event. Should music be allowed based on COVID, Administration will work with the Sun Parlor Folk Music Society (Society), an active not-for-profit organization in Kingsville. They will provide music for Open Streets at no additional cost to the Town beyond the existing grant provided by the Town for Folk Fest. The Society will provide quality music performances hiring both local residents and musicians from within Ontario. The Committee endorsed working with the Society.

The Society is required to complete a special events application that will be reviewed by the Special Events Review Team, which includes Administration, EMS, Police and AGCO.

Vendors

Any business or non-profit organization from anywhere in Kingsville is encouraged to be a vendor during the 2021 Open Streets. To inform the community that vendors are welcome, marketing through social media will occur. Vendors who do wish to participate in Open Streets must complete an online application via www.kingsville.ca/openstreets.

Internal Staff Resources

There are multiple internal human resources that will support the Open Streets events.

This includes event oversight by the Manager of Recreation Programming and Special Events with support from the Senior Management Team. An Open Streets Coordinator position has been advertised. This person will be the COVID monitor ensuring compliance with protocols that create safe spaces and prepare for each event.

Infrastructure and Engineering staff who are appropriately trained will close the street to vehicle traffic. This requires two trained staff that will be a two-hour minimum shift. These costs will come from the departmental budget. Should staff be called in for unscheduled shifts, a four-hour premium must be paid. Staff from this department also supports the logistics of re-routing traffic, identifying safe spaces for vendors to set up, and emptying the garbage pails on the roads.

Recreation and Tourism staff will host an information booth that will be the central location for questions, lost items, volunteer check-in and out. Volunteers are welcome to help at the booth.

Facility and Parks staff will prepare the location for the event and check the washroom throughout the events.

The Communication coordinator is supporting the marketing and developing the web pages.

As required, the Fire Department will inspect tents and any vendor that has a portable cooking area, plus provide guidance to street closures.

Volunteers

People are encouraged to be a Kingsville Volunteer Ambassador to welcome people to the event, encourage safe distancing and monitor barricades. All volunteers will complete training to know safety requirements, items to observe and ways to support. Volunteers can choose to come from 3:45 P.M. – 7:45 P.M., and 7:30 P.M. – 10:45 P.M.; anyone interested in volunteering can register at www.kingsville.ca/openstreets.

In the event people do not volunteer, Administration will schedule staff in the most cost-efficient manner, such as using students.

Security

The Committee recommended that a security firm be hired from 7 P.M. to 11 P.M. Security can support monitoring the barricades and encouraging people to move off the road at the end of the evening. Administration welcomes this based on the learning from the 2020 event.

Committee

The input from the Committee has been beneficial to ensure that Administration is aware of the needs and desires of the community. The Committee has set the framework for the event and been champions to support businesses during difficult times.

The Co-Chairs and Administration recommend the Committee is concluded as the Committee has completed the task of providing input. The minutes from the meetings are included in this report to be received by Council.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Promote the betterment, self-image and attitude of the community.

To promote a safe community.

Support growth of the business community.

Effectively manage corporate resources and maximize performance in day-to-day operations.

Link to Council 2021-2022 Priorities

- ☒ COVID-19 and the health and safety of the community
- ☐ Customer Service: Training, Technology, Staff, Review Standards/Level of service

- ☐ Housing: Affordability (lot sizes, developer incentives, second dwellings, density, etc.)
- ☐ Greenhouse: lights & dark sky, odours (site plan compliance, bylaws, other tools)
- ☒ Programming Increase: Youth and seniors
- ☐ A development plan for Downtown Kingsville / Main Street
- ☐ Financial savings: Schools closings, Migration Hall
- ☒ Economic Development: strengthen tourism/hospitality
- ☐ COVID - economic recovery
- ☐ Communications: Strategy – Policy (social media), Website refresh and other tools, Public engagement
- ☐ Housing: Migrant Worker Housing – Inspections (Building/Fire), regulate, reduce, or increase
- ☐ Committees / Boards: Review and Report
- ☐ Policy Update: Procedural Bylaw
- ☐ Economic Development: diversify the economy, create local jobs, industrial, Cottam
- ☐ Infrastructure (non-Municipal): Union Water expansion & governance
- ☐ Infrastructure (Municipal): Asset Management Plan update, the infrastructure funding deficit
- ☐ No direct link to Council priorities

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Council approved \$25,000 toward the 2021 Open Street event.

The Committee recommended the following items in the budget:

- Coordinator \$6,000
- Marketing \$5,000
- Security \$3,232

The Committee expressed the importance of having bathrooms open for residents. Staff will review what Municipal facilities can be available and if port-a-potties are needed, at a cost of \$2,056.60 for thirteen weeks.

In addition, Administration anticipate the following expenses,

- Students \$1,030 (contract extended into September)
- Two-way radios \$500
- Signs \$500
- Material \$2,000 (to be determine based on activities and resources for volunteers)

CONSULTATIONS

Open Streets Advisory Committee

CAO

Director of Financial & IT Services

Director of Legislative Services, Town Solicitor, Clerk

Director of Infrastructure and Engineering

Fire Chief CEMC

Manager of Municipal Facilities and Properties

Manager of Public Works & Environmental Services

Tourism Coordinator

Karen Loney, MA

Manager of Recreation Programs and Special Events