



Date: August 27, 2024
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Shelby Gualt
Report No.: Kingsville 2024 Parade Road Closures

RECOMMENDED ACTION

That Council **APPROVES** the following streets be closed to vehicle traffic on Saturday, October 19, 2024, for the Migration Festival Parade;

- a. Staging area at 8 am: Wigle Avenue from Main Street to Lakeview Avenue
- b. Parade route at 10:00 am heading north on Wigle Avenue, turning west onto Main Street East, turning south onto Division Road South.
- c. The parade will end at Mill St, and parade floats will disperse southwards.
- d. Destaging area for 30 minutes after the parade end: Division St. from Mill St. to Stewart St. and Stewart St. from Division St. to Queen St.

And that Council **APPROVES** the following streets be closed to vehicle traffic on Saturday, November 16, 2024, for the Fantasy of Lights Parade;

- a. Staging area at 2:00 pm: Wigle Avenue from Main Street to Lakeview Avenue
- b. Parade route at 5:00 pm: heading north on Wigle Avenue, turning west onto Main Street East, turning south onto Division Road South, turning east onto Park St.
- c. The parade will end at Park St.
- d. Destaging area for 30 minutes after the parade ends: Park St. from Division Rd. to 140 Park St.

BACKGROUND

Migration Festival

For the 55th year, the Migration Festival is supported by the Migration Festival Committee of Council (Committee) and the Recreation Programs and Special Events Manager and staff. The event will be held from Thursday, October 17, to Sunday, October 20, 2024.

The parade returned to the community in 2023 after a three-year hiatus due to COVID and limited volunteers. Community members, school or service groups and businesses are encouraged to enter the parade. Last year, there were 27 floats/parade participants.

Other activities that will be occurring include the following.

Thursday, October 17, 2024

- 'En Plein' Artists Around Town

Friday, October 18, 2024

- 'En Plein' Artists Around Town
- 6 pm to 9 pm – Great Migration Kick-off featuring a concert by Jody Raffoul and chili dinner by 2nd Kingsville Scouting at Grovedale Arts and Culture Centre

Saturday, October 19, 2024

- 'En Plein' Artists Around Town
- 10 am - Migration Festival Parade
- 10 am to 12 p.m. - Quick Paint Competition at Mettawas Park
- 11:30 am to 3 pm - Children's Activities, including pumpkin carving, Kingsville Express rides, Birds of Prey demonstration, and children's entertainers at Lion's Park
- 10 am to 4 pm - Migration Market at Grovedale Arts and Culture Centre
- 1 pm to 3 pm - Bike Tour by Bike Kingsville
- Events at Jack Miner Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Sunday, October 20, 2024

- 1 pm to 5 pm - Art Show & Sale at Grovedale Arts and Culture Centre, with an awards ceremony at 4 pm
- 1 pm to 3 pm - Bike Tour by Bike Kingsville
- Events at Jack Miner Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Registration for the parade, market and further details can be found at www.migrationfestival.ca

Fantasy of Lights

For 30 years, the Fantasy of Lights Christmas Festival has been a community event that has included celebrating the season and lighting up the Town. The Fantasy of Lights Committee of Council (Committee) supports this event while working with the Recreation Programs and Special Events manager and staff.

The Fantasy of Lights parade is one of the signature events for children and adults of all ages as they watch Santa arrive in Kingsville. The 2024 Fantasy of Lights Parade is scheduled for Saturday, November 16 starting at 5:00 pm.

Following the parade, everyone is invited to Lakeside Park to watch the Lighting of the Lights Ceremony, free hot chocolate and cookies, live music, and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Clause. The Fantasy of Lights season will continue with the following events.

November 22 – December 22 (Weekends)

- Fantasy Express Train Rides
- Hot Chocolate, Cookies

December 1 - 25

- Light Up the Town - Decorate your house or business

December 3

- Paws & Claus - Bring your four-legged friends for a picture with Santa

December 7 and 8

- Christmas Artisan Market
- Music & Bonfires

December 14

- Breakfast with Santa
- Crafts with Santa by the Optimist Club of Kingsville

December 21

- Free Christmas Concert at Lakeside Park Pavilion

December 31 (New Year's Eve at the Kingsville Arena)

- Free Skating
- Fireworks

We are pleased to announce that SK Cornerstone Group has returned as the Parade Signature Sponsor and will sponsor our New Year's Eve Celebration.

Registration for the parade, market and further details can be found at www.fantasyoflights.ca.

DISCUSSION

Route Changes – Migration Festival

This route is similar to what was used in 2023. While the department and Council recognizes that every closure of a main road will cause some disruption for businesses and residents, the route did work well for the 2024 parade events. We were fortunate that business owners on Wigle Ave. generously loaned the use of their parking lots for these events.

We recommend changing the parade route for Migration Festival for the following reasons.

1. **Reduce Trapped Traffic:** The 2023 parade route goes full circle from Wigle Ave, Main St., Division St., Park St., and the leaving parade traffic is encouraged to continue to Wigle Ave to exit. This was common feedback from the community: the feeling that traffic was trapped in the centre of town.

For the Migration Festival, we are proposing a shortened route. The children's activities of the Migration Festival are held at Lions Park, and ending the parade near the park allows parade-goers to be closer to the event. It also reduces the traffic around Grovedale Arts and Culture Centre and Mettawas Park, which will allow attendees of the Migration Marketplace and Quick Paint a more efficient means of arriving at those events.

2. **Lessen Demands on Volunteers:** Shortening the route for Migration Festival also comes with the benefit of fewer road closures.

The present route has 37 barricades, which need to be covered by at least one volunteer and seven vehicles (OPP or town employees with trucks). When we do not secure enough volunteers, we must rely on paid staff.

The Migration Festival had 22 volunteers. Some volunteer pairs were responsible for two barricades (i.e. Mill St W and Mill St. E), and the remaining unmanned barricades were covered by hired crossing guards, security, and Parks and Recreation and Events staff.

With a shortened route, we can operate with 24 volunteers (one per barricade) and six vehicles.

3. **More Accessible Route for Parade Participants:** We also heard from the walking participants of the parade that the length of the route was difficult for them to accomplish. The past length was 2.15 km, not including the destaging or staging distance. The current length of the parade for Migration Festival is 1.5 km, not including the destaging or staging distance.

4. **Destaging Efficiency:** Destaging is the process of offloading any float patrons and removing items that are not secure at average road speeds.

Previously, we assigned specific areas for them to destage and closed the related roads. However, despite our best intentions, the parade floats often destaged in the ways that best served them (i.e., meeting at alternative locations or having no need to destage formally).

We are proposing to provide Stewart St. as a destaging area for the few floats that need to destage (at the time of this report, that is just one float) and then allow the rest of the road-worthy parade participants to continue south and disperse.

By reducing the route and eliminating the formal destaging area, floats can disperse more efficiently, regular traffic and foot traffic can get through town with fewer stoppages, and our volunteer and staffing requirements will be lower.

Further, the parade route has been determined by how it best complements the ongoing events around the parade.

We proposed ending the Migration Festival Parade at Mill St. with a dedicated destaging area on Division St. from Mill St. to Stewart St. and Stewart St. from Division St. to Queen St. The parade route would be 1.5 km long.

Migration Festival activities are held at Lions Park, which is on Mill St. By ending the parade near to this street, it will naturally bring the crowds to the Lions Park, where the children's activities. Further, by bringing traffic away from Park St, it means the Migration Marketplace and Great Migration Paint Out Quick Paint Competition will face less challenges around traffic and parking.

Route Changes – Fantasy of Lights

This route is the same as what was used in 2023. We are proposing a change in when we close certain roads.

Previously, we closed the parade route 20 minutes before the parade began along the entirety of the route. This allowed for traffic currently on the parade route to exit and kept the parade route clear for attendees and floats. However, it resulted in the east-west traffic of south Kingsville (Park St. through to Herrington St.) to be blocked and Lansdowne St. to experience heightened traffic stress.

For 2024, we are proposing leaving Herrington St and Park St. to be open for as long as possible during the parade. This was a process suggested via a SERT meeting, as an alternative to closing the roads fully during the entire parade.

While all roads north of Erie St. will be closed off at the time of the parade beginning (primary barricades), we will not close Herrington Rd. or Park St. (secondary barricades) until a later time. There will be a barricade on Division St. south, preventing traffic from heading north onto the parade route, instead directed onto Herrington St or Park St.

Once the parade begins to approach that area (when the first car turns the corner onto Division St.), the barricades will then be pulled at Park St. and Herrington St. and pulled off Division St. to allow the parade floats to continue their southbound path.

By doing this, we will maintain the east-west traffic of the south for as long as possible, which has been encouraged by emergency services.

The Fantasy of Lights committee notes there is a heavy amount of foot traffic on Herrington St. and Park St. The committee wants to ensure non-parade traffic is stopped on Herrington St. and Park St. when the parade is near, as people crowd in this area due to its proximity to the Flip the Switch Opening Ceremonies held at Lakeside Park Pavilion.

At the time the parade must close off Park St./Herrington St., it is expected that the barricades blocking off Spruce St. will be cleared shortly thereafter, meaning Lansdowne Ave can be used to bypass the final leg of the parade route. The Fantasy of Lights committee has an agreement with a private business on Park St. to use their parking facilities for a destaging area.

The Santa Claus Parade will end at Park St. The parade route would be a total of 2.16 km not including the staging or destaging area.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations outside of the 2024 dollars allotted by Council.

The Migration Festival Event has a budget of \$20,350.

The Fantasy of Lights Event has a budget of \$37,200, which includes the parade and all events, including the New Year's fireworks.

New this year is costing for paid off-duty OPP officers due to a shortage of auxiliary officers. Approximately \$3,000 is required for each parade to pay for this service.

Both events also have significant human resources by the Programs and Community Events Team, as well as support from Parks, Recreation and Facilities, as well as Public Works.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

All events strive to abide by the single-use plastic policy implemented by the Town.

CONSULTATIONS

- SERT Committee – including OPP, EMS, Fire, Public Works, and internal departments
- Fantasy of Lights Committee
- Migration Festival Committee
- SMT

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