

# REQUEST FOR DECISION

## Subject: Proposed Special Events Policy C5001-1



Presented to: Council

Date: September 27, 2021

Submitted by: Jason Darrah, Communications

Item #:

### RECOMMENDATION

Council approve the proposed Policy C5001-1 Special Events Policy, as provided in Attachment 5.

### BACKGROUND

#### Reason for Report

The Festivals and Special Events Policy was last reviewed in early 2018. Amendments to the policy in 2020 were developed in response to challenges in 2019 with the multi-day Farmers Market.

On October 26, 2020, the Governance & Finance Committee directed the proposed amended policy be brought to a meeting of Council with additional amendments.

On November 9, 2020, in response to a request from the Bow Valley Naturalists, Council directed in Motion COU20-328:

- *That Council defer Item 8.5, Proposed Special Events Policy C5001, to Administration so that additional consultation with impacted stakeholders can occur, and that the proposed Policy return to Council no later than Q1 2021.*

Due to extensive changes following additional consultation, the report was brought to Governance & Finance Committee to provide more opportunity for discussion.

On September 13, 2021, the Governance & Finance Committee reviewed a report summarizing further consultation with affected event organizers and stakeholders and the revised proposed new policy. In Motion FIN21-228:

- *The Governance and Finance Committee recommend that Council approve the Policy C5001-1.*

### Summary of Issue

The early review of this Policy was triggered by a challenge experienced with a Farmers Market application in 2018-19. The current policy does not identify the need for organizers of annually recurring special events to notify the Town of their intent to hold the event in the subsequent year. However, the Special Events Standards procedure document – provided to event organizers and available online with the Special Event Application – identifies the requirement for organizers of *recurring* special events to provide the Town with notice of intention to renew nine months before the next season. The policy does indicate a “first-come, first-served” approach to applications for events. The new proposed policy includes the nine-month notice for recurring events, in order to secure the space, location and date for recurring special events.

With the opportunity to further improve the policy, additional amendments were proposed to reflect current practices and situations, and address frequent comments from events organizers. One such change includes renaming the policy to remove “Festivals and” from the title of the “Special Events

Policy.” The Governance & Finance Committee suggested additional definitions to be included in the policy.

Subsequent to the review of proposed amendments by Governance & Finance Committee in late 2020, the Bow Valley Naturalists indicated interest in providing further amendments for council consideration. Town administration consulted with Bow Valley Naturalists and Banff & Lake Louise Tourism (BLLT) over several meetings. A subsequent meeting was held to review proposed changes with a group of special events organizers and stakeholders on April 19. The meeting involved representatives from the Banff Marathon, the Banff Christmas Market, Banff Pride, Winterstart, Parks Canada, Bow Valley Naturalists, BLLT and the Town of Banff.

Attachment 1 is the report to Governance and Finance Committee on September 13, 2021, outlining concerns expressed by the Bow Valley Naturalists, input from Banff & Lake Louise Tourism and other event organizers, and recommended changes to the policy in response to the input. The report also includes highlights of changes suggested in previous Governance and Finance Committee meetings.

Attachment 2 provides written correspondence from the Bow Valley Naturalists that led to further consultation.

Attachment 3 provides written correspondence from Banff & Lake Louise Tourism to provide further information about special events hosted or sponsored by the organization, as part of their strategy to enhance visitor and resident experience and supplement marketing efforts.

The following are the most significant changes to the policy or other mechanisms recommended to address most issues that were identified:

- A Section on Purpose of the Policy is added to strengthen the vision for why the Town Banff holds or allows events, and to emphasize that events should be open to the public.
- Destination Events – the purpose of large destination events is clarified in a detailed definition, reflecting how they help achieve objectives of the Banff Community Plan and strategic priorities. Acknowledgement of the economic objectives should be provided along with the requirement for events to reflect the unique attributes of Banff and be authentic to this special place in Banff National Park. The purpose is reinforced in sections on Requirements and the Responsibilities of event organizers and Town administration.
- “Festivals” should be removed from the name of the policy as this term is not uniformly distinguished from “Special Events” and could lead to confusion.
- Items are added to definitions and scope of the policy, including Community Events (to provide a fair and consistent approach to approvals), Public Engagement, and Public Demonstrations (which are currently referenced in other bylaws but not referenced in relevant policy).
- A General Restriction is added clarifying that new event applications are rejected from an expanded period – May long weekend to September long weekend – to avoid contributing to traffic or parking congestion during peak visitation.
- Categories of events are restructured to mirror the Fees and Charges bylaw categories, licencing categories, and activity types for which the policy sets out specific requirements.
- Policy adds Council discretion to allow certain events restricted by the policy, in rare circumstances.

- Frequency – limits on the number of large-scale events are adjusted reflect current caps, and community events are removed from sporting category limits.
- Public events on private land – Policy changes provide greater clarity on which types of events on private land are regulated and why, and removes fees for special events on private land.
- Exclusive use of space for events – Policy adds a requirement for organizers to consider ways to provide access to public space for non-participants and/or action to mitigate impact of exclusive use of public space, where it does not impede the ability of the event organizer to control the space for liability purposes, management of the event participants, and fulfillment of approved event objectives.
- Add a requirement to consider ways for event organizers to reduce barriers to event participants caused by financial or physical limitations, where possible. Examples could include partnership with Town of Banff Access Program for individuals with low-income.
- Noise – The supporting procedural guide – Special Event Standards – which is used by all event organizers, will continue to be updated annually to strengthen current environmental, safety or social requirements, which change over time. The Special Events Standards would direct that specific noise limits and guidance on how amplified sound in certain locations be mitigated by direction or other controls. Including technical requirements in the procedural document rather than in the Council Policy provides potential for more frequent updates. Mitigation measures may change over time with new technology or approaches, and the Town’s strategic priorities change with four-year Strategic Plans and Community Plans. Administration does not recommend Council adding direct specific limitations on amplified sound to the General Restrictions section of the policy.
- Sense of Place – Town Administration should continue to work with Banff & Lake Louise Tourism to identify how any new events that help attract visitors in shoulder/low season are authentic to Banff, can celebrate unique attributes or historical activities of the town or Banff National Park, while providing fulfilling opportunities for our community.
- The “make it, bake it, grow it” definition is to be changed to “regional” rather than “local” in recognition of the wider region Banff Seasonal Markets and Farmers Markets must pull from for products in this mountain community. Administration recommends making this change. Regional will remain to be considered Alberta and British Columbia.
- The frequency limits to sporting events are to apply to large destination events and exclude community sports events such as softball tournaments and any rentals of Town facilities, such as hockey tournaments.
- Administration will review Parks Canada’s new Banff Management Plan once it is adopted to determine if further changes to the Town’s event policy are recommended or required

### Potential amendments highlighted

Attachment 4 to this report highlights proposed changes in the policy. Colour coding indicates:

- **Yellow highlight text boxes** – explanatory notes about proposed changes in first round of review.
- **Blue highlighted text boxes** – explanatory notes about changes recommended by Governance and Finance Committee.
- **Red text in the policy** – denotes all proposed changes in the policy, including moving text between sections in the policy.

- **Green highlighted text boxes** – explanatory notes about potential changes composed by Administration in response to recommendations from Bow Valley Naturalists or Banff & Lake Louise Tourism and stakeholder consultation.

## RESPONSE OPTIONS:

Council could:

1. Council approve proposed Policy C5001-1  
or
2. Provide additional direction on amendments to the Policy, and return to a future Council or back to Governance & Finance meeting for further review.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Budget

Each Special Event application is assessed in terms of impact on Town of Banff operating and capital expenditures. Changes to the Policy are not anticipated to have an impact on the expenditure for managing special event applications nor on revenue from applicants and approved special events.

### Relevant Strategic Direction

Banff Community Plan:

- Value – Community: As residents we share a common desire to live in a mountain community. We value our safe and caring town and want businesses and organizations to flourish while respecting our limits to growth.
- Local economy goals and objectives:
  - Create memorable national park experiences
  - Facilitate and manage special event programming that supports the Banff Vision
  - Encourage year-round tourism and related economic activities directed and supported by Banff’s Vision, Banff & Lake Louise Tourism, Parks Canada and the Banff Heritage Tourism Strategy
- Town revenue goal:
  - Diversify Town of Banff revenue streams, so the municipality is not solely reliant on property taxes.
  - Promote opportunities to diversify the tourism product, providing more balance and stability within the local economy.
- Facilities, programs and services goals and objectives:
  - Provide a vital and healthy community.
  - Offer a wide range of quality recreation and active living programs.
  - Support and facilitate cultural appreciation within the community.
  - Access to programs and services affordable for all segments of the community.

### Internal Resources

Town departments would continue to be involved in reviewing and approving special event applications, and provide support services, as required.

## **Communication**

An updated policy would be circulated to all staff who would be involved in special events, the special events organizers of recurring events, and information would be published on the banff.ca website.

## **Attachments**

Attachment 1 – September 13, 2021, Report to Governance & Finance Committee summarizing stakeholder input and changes in the proposed policy.

Attachment 2 – Special Event Policy Comments from Bow Valley Naturalists

Attachment 3 – Special Event Policy Comments from Banff & Lake Louise Tourism

Attachment 4 – Proposed amendments to policy (Red-lined)

Attachment 5 – Proposed Special Events Policy C5001-1

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