

Open Streets Event

Recommendation

That the October 14, 2020, Citizen Services report CR_8039 be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the February 3, 2020, City Council meeting, the following motion was passed:
That Administration provide a report on last year's Open Streets event and information on the status of future events in the coming year.

Executive Summary

Open Streets are programs that temporarily close roadways to motor vehicles to reimagine how streets are used. In 2017, Paths for People began planning for an Open Streets event in Edmonton. On August 25, 2019, the first Open Street Edmonton event took place on Jasper Avenue. The final cost to the City for the event was \$47,000.

Paths for People began planning for a 2020 event that would have included events on Jasper Avenue similar to 2019 as well as an additional event in Old Strathcona. These events did not go forward in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. At this time, Administration is not aware if Paths for People are planning event(s) for 2021 and has not received a request for funding.

Report

Open Street events have gained popularity worldwide as they provide an opportunity for community interaction and to showcase unique forms of active transportation on roads traditionally meant for motor vehicles. The City Plan recognizes the importance of promoting community-based placemaking in Edmonton's spaces, including active transportation, as per policy 6.1.2.2 which encourages activation of public rights-of-way to allow formal and informal gathering spaces.

In 2017, Paths for People requested funding from the City to begin planning an Open Streets event in Edmonton. During the 2017 Spring Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment, City Council approved \$20,000, with a total of \$18,000 ultimately being dispersed. In 2019, City Council approved additional funds of up to \$58,000 in civic services costs for the delivery of the 2019 pilot event.

On August 25, 2019, Paths for People hosted the inaugural Open Streets Edmonton event. The event included a street party on Jasper Avenue from 103 Street to 109 Street, 104 Street from Jasper Avenue to 102 Avenue, and 108 Street from Jasper Avenue to 99 Avenue.

The free, family-friendly event hosted approximately 10,000 attendees and participants, as reported by Paths for People. Activities included a bike parade, climbing wall, games, fitness classes, food trucks, vendors, and live music. There were 38 volunteers and more than 500 participants including performers, artists, athletes, presenters, officials, and judges. Twenty-five community partners and sponsors supported the event with cash and value-in-kind. The five-hour event invited attendees to play in the street, visit downtown businesses, and meet their neighbours.

Paths for People’s total operating budget for the 2019 event was approximately \$68,000. The organization secured \$25,000 in funding from other sources. The City’s total contribution to the group is outlined below.

Year	Approved Funding	Funding Provided to Organizers	Purpose
2017 / 2018	Up to \$20,000	\$4,000	Event Planning
2019		\$14,000 (carry-over from 2017 allocation)	Event Delivery
	Up to \$58,000	\$29,000	Civic Services
Total City Funding	Up to \$78,000	\$47,000	

Of the \$78,000 in City Funding, up to \$55,000 was made available through Council Contingency with the remainder coming from internal sources.

Open Streets Edmonton 2020

Paths for People had planned to host two Open Streets Edmonton events in 2020, one on Jasper Avenue and one in the Old Strathcona area. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Paths for People did not host events in 2020.

To allow for physical distancing in high density areas and help slow the spread of COVID-19, Administration provided a number of lane closures and Shared Streets in high density areas to support pedestrian and cyclist movements. A number of lessons were learned through the Shared Streets and lane closures implemented in 2020 and will be explored further when looking at opportunities for 2021.

At this time, Administration is not aware if Paths for People are planning events for 2021 and has not received a request for funding.

Budget/Financial Implications

Paths for People applied to the Edmonton Art Council’s Arts and Festivals Seed Grant for the two 2020 events; however, funding was not approved and the group was encouraged to consider applying for a the Edmonton Arts Council’s Celebrations or Organizational Supports Grant in the future.

The Festival and Event Delivery Action Plan established the Civic Service Subsidy program. To qualify for subsidy, applicants are evaluated based on organizational capacity and experience, event revenue and expenditure, social benefits, image and reputation of the event and alignment with Council priorities. Events classified as foundational and signature are eligible for 50 percent off their civic services. The Open Streets event evaluation classified the events as a niche event due to the size, scope and scale of the event, the newness of the event, and the organization’s experience in event production. Based on this classification, the event does not meet the requirements for the Civic Services Subsidy program.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome: Edmontonians are connected to the city in which they live, work and play.			
Outcome	Measure	Result	Target
Edmonton’s public spaces, festivals and events increase its vibrancy	Attendance numbers for the event	2019: 10,000 (Estimated)	2020: 10,000 or more per event
	Number of partnerships established to support event programming	2019: 25	2020: 25 or more per event

Others Reviewing this Report

- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor