

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



Date: May 20, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services

Originator's files:

Meeting date:
May 27, 2020

Subject

Measures for permitted activities in City Facilities including Festivals, Events and Gatherings within City Facilities and Parks related to COVID-19

Recommendation

1. That the City cancel permits for festivals, events and other large gatherings in City facilities until September 7, 2020.
2. That as provincial orders are revised, City staff work in collaboration with community organizations to develop timelines and protocols for the safe re-opening of facilities and permitting of activities, on a case by case basis, when feasible and supported by the Province of Ontario, Peel Public Health, the City's COVID-19 Recovery Framework, and other regulations including those from provincial and national sport governing bodies as outlined in the report dated May 20, 2020 from the Commissioner of Community Services.

Background

Under provincial orders related to preventing the spread of COVID-19 city facilities are currently closed to the public and permitted activities including community programs, festivals, events and gatherings have been cancelled until July 3, 2020.

On May 4, 2020 the Province of Ontario started relaxing orders to allow for certain activities to resume under strict guidelines.

There is significant variation in the types of activities that are currently permitted in City Facilities. As outlined in the City's COVID-19 Recovery Framework, recovery will be implemented in incremental phases and will involve engagement of stakeholders to develop and implement plans for the reasonable and safe-opening of facilities and resuming activities when feasible and supported by health authorities at the Regional, Provincial and Federal level.

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Comments

As outlined in the City's COVID-19 Recovery Framework, community events will be restored under strictly controlled circumstances throughout Mississauga, with the input and guidance of Peel Public Health.

Based on current information and ongoing uncertainty regarding restrictions and impact related to COVID-19, it is recommended that the City cancel permits for festivals, events and other gatherings in City of Mississauga facilities until September 7, 2020.

Approximately 30 community organizations and event organizers in Mississauga have already made the decision to cancel their 2020 summer events. These include: Italfest, Rib Fest, Rotary Movies in the Park, Port Credit Busker Fest, Salmon Derby, Can Jam, Port Credit Art Fest and the Terry Fox Run. Other municipalities including the City of Toronto have formally cancelled city and third party events until August 31, 2020.

For the period of July 4 to September 7 (Labour Day), 2020 there are approximately 180 bookings for festivals, events and other large gatherings scheduled to take place in city facilities including: Mississauga Celebration Square, the Living Arts Centre, Paramount Fine Foods Centre, Meadowvale Theatre, the Small Arms Building, Bradley and Benares Museums and City Parks.

This estimate is based on data available through the City's booking system (CLASS) as well as information provided by internal City departments. These gatherings include approximately 65 city-run events, 115 events delivered by third party event organizers and community groups that are attended by a significant number of residents and visitors, and 314 third party bookings for private parties, picnics and community gatherings.

Examples of festivals, events and activities impacted by a decision to cancel gatherings on city property from July 4 to September 7, 2020 are summarized below:

- Approximately 65 City-run events and activities including: Fresh Air Fitness and Movie Nights at Mississauga Celebration Square, various cultural events including the Mississauga Concert Series, Afternoon Teas, Indigenous Walk, Blooms and Berries, Smooches and Smoores; and parks stewardship and beautification initiatives.
- Approximately 24 community/third party major events at Mississauga Celebration Square including: Food Truck Fridays, Japan Fest, Muslim Fest, Portuguese Festival, Philippine Fest, Mosaic, Latin Fest, and Bollywood Monstrosity.
- Approximately 70 community/third party major events in City Parks and Roads including: Can Sikh Cultural Festival, Lebanese Festival, Palestine House, Kids Triathlon, Motorway Midway Fair, Mississauga Music Awards.

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- Approximately 33 performances and events at locations including the Living Arts Centre, Meadowvale Theatre, and Paramount Fine Foods Centre including: Canadian Chess Championships, several dance academy productions including Sampradaya Dance.
- Animation activities at the Streetsville Village Square such as yoga, movies, salsa, and concerts on weekends throughout July and August.
- Approximately 314 park permits for activities including private parties, family and corporate picnics, wedding photography, and other types of activities.

Please note that for the purpose of this analysis, activities could be classified in more than one category and therefore the numbers are approximate and do not necessarily total the exact number of events.

There are currently 68 bookings in city facilities and parks for festivals, events and other gatherings currently scheduled after September 7 until the end of the calendar year. The outdoor special events season is weather dependent and typically ends by Thanksgiving with the exception of some seasonal activities in November and December.

A number of other activities are permitted in City facilities in addition to festivals, events and large gatherings. These include various sports activities and farmers markets. The Mayor has hosted a number of stakeholder meetings with community groups and staff have received additional input from groups about challenges, questions, and about how the City can assist them to resume activities in City facilities.

City staff will work in collaboration with community organizations to develop timelines and protocols for the safe re-opening of facilities and permitting of activities, on a case by case basis, when feasible and supported by the Province of Ontario, Peel Public Health, the City's Recovery Framework, and other regulations including those from provincial and national sport governing bodies.

Financial Impact

Any customers with rentals during the cancellation period will be provided with a credit on their account for the affected time missed to be applied to future booking. Refunds may also be requested. Staff will bring a report forward to Council summarizing the financial impact at a future date.

Community event organizers will also have financial impacts. For those that are receiving funding from the City, Council has previously approved that grant recipients will continue to receive 2020 approved funding amounts despite the need to alter, postpone or cancel their programs, services and/or festivals (Corporate Report, April 8, 2020). This approach will assist City-funded organizations with business continuity as well as the ability to move forward post COVID-19.

Conclusion

The cancellation of festivals, events and gatherings in city facilities and parks would align with the directives from public health and other levels of government as well as decisions already made by other jurisdictions. Staff are prepared to work with third party event organizers to mitigate the impact of this decision and investigate alternatives where possible.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Events Summary Chart



Shari Lichterman, CPA, Commissioner of Community Services

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