



Corporate Report

NO: R173

COUNCIL DATE: September 8, 2008

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: September 8, 2008

FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture FILE: 1850-20

General Manager, Finance and Technology

SUBJECT: UBCM Community Tourism Program Grant - Phase 2

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Finance & Technology Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as information and;
2. Authorize staff to forward an application to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for Surrey's entitlement of \$343,550.55 under Phase 2 of the Community Tourism Program, which funding will be used to assist in planning and implementing a 2010 Olympic Games Celebration Site in Surrey.

BACKGROUND

The Community Tourism Program was initiated by the Province when the funding of \$25 million was announced at the 2004 UBCM Convention. The primary goal of this program is to assist local governments in increasing tourism activity that will build stronger local economies in the Province.

Surrey's entitlement for Phase 1 of this program was \$343,550.55 and was directed towards the following projects approved by Council (Corporate Report R101 – May 29,2006):

- \$200,000 Tourism Surrey for the construction of a new Visitor's Centre near the Pacific Border Crossing;
- \$ 10,000 Fraser Valley Heritage Rail Society to support the acquisition of an additional Interurban Rail Car;
- \$108,550 Creation and installation of new gateway signs at key entrance points; and
- \$25,000 Production of a City promotional video.

In June 2007, Phase 2 funding for the Community Tourism Program was released with the recommendation by the Provincial Tourism Task Force (established in 2007 to review Phase 1 results and make recommendations on Phase 2) that the available funding be allocated based on the 2005 allocations which are derived from the UBCM dues schedule. This was based on feedback from local governments that generally supported an "entitlement based" distribution of funding as opposed to an "application based" program. Surrey's entitlement for Phase 2 is \$343,500.55. The deadline for application to this program is November 30, 2008. The application to the UBCM must include a Council resolution supporting the application.

DISCUSSION

Projects proposed under the Community Tourism Program must support the goal of increasing tourism activity. The Province has set a target of doubling tourism in the Province in the next ten years. The Province's Spirit of 2010 Tourism Strategy is one of the more significant initiatives related to achieving the above-stated goal.

It is proposed that the funding available to Surrey under Phase 2 of the Community Tourism Program be directed to assist in funding Surrey's 2010 Celebration Site related to the 2010 Olympic Games.

As an element of Surrey's designation as a Venue City for the 2010 Olympic & Paralympic Games, Surrey entered into an Agreement to partner with VANOC to support cultural, volunteer and other programming in Surrey before and during the Games. In support of this agreement, Surrey is planning to host an official Olympic Games Celebration Site. A "Celebration Site", or "Live Site" is a public gathering space that will host a range of daily and nightly activities during the full term of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The celebration site will be able to accommodate thousands of individuals and will include entertainment (live music, cultural and sport events), food services and a variety of activities for attendees to enjoy while watching official "direct feed" Olympic Games events and highlights on large video screens on the Site. It is expected that Canadian Olympic athletes will visit the Celebration Site on a regular basis over the course of the Games, which will clearly add to the quality of the experience for those attending the Site.

There will be five (5) official Olympic Games Celebration Sites; two will be in Vancouver, there will be one in each of Surrey, Whistler and Richmond.

The Surrey's 2010 Celebration Site is proposed to be located at Holland Park. The site will serve as a gathering hub where people will cheer on our Canadian athletes as they *Go for Gold*. Efforts are currently underway to secure financial contributions from other levels of government

and 2010 corporate sponsors to assist in the staging of this significant event/venue in Surrey. Staff, along with participation from the Mayor's Task Force on 2010/Surrey's Spirit of BC Committee, will be actively engaged in the planning the event and related venue. Surrey Tourism Association participates on this Committee and is very supportive of Surrey hosting such a large-scale event during the 2010 Olympics.

Surrey has developed a reputation for orchestrating high quality special events that draw thousands of residents and visitors to Surrey. Recent events include the 2008 Canada Day Celebration and Fusion Festival, it is anticipated that the Celebration Site festivities will build on the experiences and successes of these other events.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it is recommended that Council authorize staff to forward an application to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) for Surrey's entitlement of \$343,550.55 under Phase 2 of the Community Tourism Program, which funding will be used to assist in planning and implementing a 2010 Olympic Games Celebration Site in Surrey.

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