

NO: R143

COUNCIL DATE: July 25, 2011

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **July 13, 2011**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture**
General Manager, Finance and Technology

FILE: **8200-01**

SUBJECT: **Doors Open Surrey Event in 2012**

RECOMMENDATION

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

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Approve as a pilot, a “Doors Open” event in Surrey in 2012 and instruct staff to include \$50,000 in the 2012 Budget to support this pilot.

BACKGROUND

Doors Open had its origins in France where the first Doors Open event, *La Journée Portes Ouvertes*, took place in 1984. The idea soon spread to neighbouring countries and has since expanded around the globe. Toronto was the first North American city to follow the European lead and launch a high profile event showcasing built heritage, architecture and design as a millennium project in 2000. The City of Richmond has hosted a Doors Open event in each of the last 4 years and has expanded the event to include over 40 sites throughout the community.

The goal of *Doors Open Surrey* is to increase people’s understanding and enjoyment of public, non-profit and private facilities, buildings, services and destinations and to showcase Surrey’s diversity and cultural richness. ***Doors Open Surrey*** will involve a set of “Open City” branded advertisements that will alert interested citizens to opportunities by date and time for free access to visit, tour and use city as well as private and non-profit facilities and amenities. The program is intended to build awareness in the community about the range of facilities (private, non-profit and public) that are available for use and enjoyment.

DISCUSSION

A Community Steering Committee of volunteers from other City committees including the Social Planning Committee, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Heritage Advisory

Commission will plan and co-ordinate the first *Doors Open Surrey* event. The Steering Committee will be chaired by Councillors Villeneuve and Rasode and will engage business, tourism, cultural and hospitality sector partners in opening doors and sharing the City's unique facilities, buildings, services and destinations with residents and visitors. The inaugural *Doors Open Surrey* event in 2012 will showcase a range of community venues and places of social, heritage, business and leisure interest as a means to encourage residents and welcome visitors to learn about and enjoy Surrey. The 2012 event will offer free access to over 20 sites highlighting the Newton and North Surrey town centres and the King George Boulevard Corridor. The date of the event is yet to be determined but consideration will be given to a time that does not conflict with other major City events.

Doors Open Surrey sites will include:

- designated heritage buildings, such as homes, farms, or businesses;
- churches and schools of community significance or architectural interest;
- unique places of industry;
- municipal buildings and cultural facilities;
- significant sites in the history of Surrey; and
- other natural heritage sites.

The City of Surrey's Volunteer Resources Program will support *Doors Open Surrey* by providing volunteers. New challenging volunteer positions will support personal development by allowing volunteers to increase their skills that will be transferable to employment opportunities.

An extensive marketing program will be developed to create awareness and excitement around this event. The Community Steering Committee will present sponsorship opportunities to local business, community associations and the Surrey Board of Trade.

Surrey is one of the most diverse cities in Canada. By encouraging groups to "open their doors" to share, educate and welcome everyone will add to the rich quality of life that the City of Surrey offers to its residents and visitors. *Doors Open Surrey* has the potential to become a significant regional tourist attraction, as well as a "Community Welcoming" initiative that builds bridges and promotes cultural exchange. By showcasing Surrey's diversity and cultural richness, *Doors Open Surrey* will enhance the City's profile as a welcoming and inclusive place to live, work, invest and play.

Budget Implications

Based on similar events held in other cities, it is estimated that it will cost the City \$50,000 to plan and implement a pilot "Doors Open" event in Surrey in 2012. This includes funding for a part-time coordinator to work on the project so that it reaches its full potential and funds for developing an appropriate advertising and marketing strategy for the program, among other things.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Doors Open Surrey aligns with the goals of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly, Socio-Cultural Action items SC4, SC5, SC12 and C10, by encouraging cultural awareness in the community, providing ethnic and culturally appropriate services, opportunities and programs, facilitating volunteerism and educating the public about the City's history, respectively.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council approve as a pilot, a "Doors Open" event in Surrey in 2012 and instruct staff to include \$50,000 in the 2012 Budget to support this pilot.

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