

NO: **R143**

COUNCIL DATE: **June 25, 2012**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **June 18, 2012**

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

FILE: **8200-01**

SUBJECT: **Historical Re-enactment Program - 2012**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council receive as information this report regarding the City's Historical Re-enactment Program and the related summer performance schedule.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the launch of the City's Historical Re-enactment Program including program content, the performance schedule and plans for evaluation and assessment to determine its continuation in the future.

BACKGROUND

In 2011 Council requested that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Department develop a historical re-enactment program to celebrate the opening of the Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society's BC Electric Car Barn and the historic Cloverdale town centre, Surrey's first town centre. Following consultation on the performance concept and scope with Councillor Steele, Chair of the Heritage Commission, and a local re-enactment specialist, staff researched first person re-enactment programs offered at museums in BC. Corporate Report R148; 2011 (attached as Appendix 1) that was considered by Council in July 2011 outlined plans for a pilot historical re-enactment program proposed to be implemented for the 2012 summer tourist season. Council approved the recommendations in that report and as a result \$70,000 was included in the 2012 Budget to support delivery of a "pilot" historical re-enactment program in the summer of 2012.

Heritage Services staff undertook extensive archival research on significant historical persons associated with Cloverdale and the broader community. By the end of 2011, five now-deceased Surrey residents were selected as the subjects of the Program, each of whom related to specific topics for the production of theatrical re-enactment scripts. A writer with expertise in historical re-enactments was engaged and scripts were written for the characters. A Heritage Re-enactment Co-ordinator was hired in the spring of 2012 to finalize the scripts with interactive engagement elements, to confirm the performance schedule, to source props and costumes, to finalize an agreement with the Canadian Actors Equity Association, to hire suitably qualified professional actors and to plan the schedule for a program launch on July 1, 2012.

DISCUSSION

The 2012 Historical Re-enactment pilot program includes five characters as follows:

- Reeve T. J. Sullivan, Surrey Mayor responsible for the 1912 Municipal Hall and Cenotaph;
- Eric Anderson, early pioneer and builder of the 1872 Anderson Cabin;
- Mary Jane Shannon, student at Surrey's first school and later a Cloverdale teacher;
- Dr. Fred Sinclair, local physician, Surrey Medical Health Officer and advocate for Surrey's first hospital; and
- Stan McKinnon, writer and publisher of the Surrey Leader newspaper.

The Program, titled ***Frontier Tale Blazers***, will include the re-enactment of stories and events from Surrey's history during the period between 1872 and 1945. The characters will be authentic to the time period they represent. Each character will showcase three separate "vignettes" performed on a rotating basis.

The Historical Re-enactment Program will begin on July 1st at Surrey's *Canada Day* celebrations in Cloverdale. Additional performances will include the Stewart Farm *Pioneer Fair* on July 7th, *Fusion Festival* on July 21st and 22nd, the *Cloverdale Blueberry Festival* on August 4th, *Dancin' in the Barn* at the Stewart Farm on August 11th and a community presentation in Cloverdale on August 18th. Performances at special events will also feature "old-time" musical entertainment and audience-participation singing to engage audiences between the re-enactment vignettes.

Due to delays in the construction and completion of the Fraser Valley Heritage Railway's Cloverdale Car Barn, the public opening of the Car Barn has been rescheduled to May 2013. Although the Historical Re-enactment Program was developed to support the opening of this new Cloverdale venue; however, this will not be possible due to the delay in the project.

At the conclusion of the 2012 season for the Historical Re-enactment Program, the Program will be evaluated in relation to its benefits. A report on this evaluation will be forwarded to Council in advance of the preparation of the 2013 draft Budget with a view to establishing whether the Program will be continued in 2013 and, if so, what adjustments may be appropriate.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Cloverdale Historical Re-enactment program assists in achieving the following goals of the City's Sustainability Charter:

- Socio-Cultural Goal #SC 7: Provide a range of accessible and affordable recreation, cultural and library services that respond to the needs and interests of the City's diverse population, including children, youth, seniors, multi-cultural group(s) families and those with special needs.
- Socio-Cultural Goal # SC 4: Promote and support cultural activities and events that will increase understanding, tolerance and respect for the City's diverse population and promote community pride and social connections
- Socio-Cultural Goal #C 10: Preserve built, natural and cultural heritage to foster community identity and civic pride.

CONCLUSION

The Historical Re-enactment pilot program, titled *Frontier Tale Blazers*, will enhance the heritage character of Cloverdale, Surrey's first town centre, assist in promoting the Cloverdale Town Centre as a tourist and visitor destination, and support heritage facilities, historic buildings and heritage sites in the community.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager,
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix 1: Corporate Report No. 148; 2011, titled "Historical Re-enactment Program for Cloverdale in 2012"

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Appendix 1: Corporate Report No. 148: Historical Re-enactment for Cloverdale in 2012



CITY MANAGER'S
DEPARTMENT

CORPORATE REPORT

NO: R148

COUNCIL DATE: July 25, 2011

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: July 11, 2011
FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture FILE: 8200-01
SUBJECT: Historical Re-enactment Program for Cloverdale in 2012

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Approve a pilot Historical Re-enactment program for Cloverdale as generally described in this report for the spring and summer of 2012; and
2. Request that staff include in the 2012 Budget funding in support of the program.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to respond to the Council request for historical re-enactment programming in Cloverdale. Information will be provided on the plans and scope for a pilot season of programming to be launched for the opening of the Heritage Railway Car Barn in May 2012 and the summer tourist season in July and August 2012.

BACKGROUND

In 2008 as part of the Cultural Capitals of Canada, a "History Walks" historical re-enactment program was developed and featured at the inaugural *Fusion Festival*. Developed with research and resources provided by Heritage Services, the program was co-ordinated by Donnelly and Associates, a special events consultant. The *History Walks* program was presented by amateur actors from the Gilbert and Sullivan Society and was a very popular feature of the Fusion Festival. Actors delivered first person re-enacted scripts of Mr. Tom Sullivan, Reeve of Surrey from 1910 - 1920; Mr. Eric Anderson, a pioneer in Surrey in the 1850's; Mr. Albert Drinkwater, a pioneer settler and logger in Surrey in the 1880 - 1890's; Ms. Mary Ann Bothwell, a Tynehead pioneer; Mr. Thomas Fleetwood, a WWI Veteran from Surrey; and Mr. Stan McKinnon, a young Surrey Leader employee from the early days of the *Surrey Leader* newspaper. The public response and appreciation for the *History Walks* re-enactments at Fusion Festival was overwhelmingly positive.

The success of the *History Walks* program and a desire to celebrate the historic character of Cloverdale and Surrey's rich heritage provide the underpinnings for the development of a similar program for Cloverdale in 2012 to coincide with the opening of the Fraser Valley Heritage Railway Society's BC Electric Car Barn. Following initial discussions of the concept and potential for development and delivery, Heritage Services began researching successful first person re-enactment programs in the B.C. heritage field. Although many heritage sites provide guided,

costumed interpretation of heritage buildings, only two sites in the province offer dramatic first person re-enactments of actual historical characters, persons or events. The most notable is at *B.C.'s Gold Rush Town, Barkerville*, a provincial government heritage site operated by the Barkerville Heritage Trust. The second site is *Fort Steele*, another provincial heritage site.

DISCUSSION

Although historic Cloverdale is not a designated heritage conservation area or site, there exist a small cluster of significant heritage buildings in Cloverdale that provide opportunities to support re-enactment programs. The location of the Surrey Museum with the Anderson Cabin and adjacent 1912 Municipal Hall is a potential site for re-enactment performances. The relocation of the BC Electric heritage rail cars to Cloverdale in the planned Car Barn on 176 Street south of Highway 10 provides another venue for re-enactment programming. Further re-enactment potential exists at the Cloverdale Fire Hall where the original La France fire truck is stored, as well as the original Bank of Montreal building and Clova Theatre on Main street in Cloverdale.

Research is currently underway for the development of re-enactment scripts for six historic characters to perform and recreate Reeve Tom Brown at the 1912 Municipal Hall; Eric Anderson homesteading at the Anderson Cabin; members of the Cloverdale Volunteer Fire Brigade at the Cloverdale Fire Hall or Museum firefighters display; Mary Jane Shannon first Cloverdale teacher shopping on Main Street; Dr Sinclair and (Victoria Order of Nurses) nurse Nina Rife canvassing support for a hospital in Surrey at the Bank of Montreal site or Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce office; and BC Electric operator Frank Horne servicing the rail car at the Heritage Railway Car Barn. The Surrey Archives oral history collection of early settlers and long-time resident memories and the historic photograph collection provide material to support the development of many more historical characters for Cloverdale re-enactments.

It is planned that pilot re-enactments will begin in May 2012 with the official opening of the Heritage Railway Car Barn on the Victoria Day weekend. Further performances will be presented each Saturday during the months of July and August, the peak of the tourist season. To support summer special events, performances will also be scheduled for Canada Day, Fusion Festival, the Cloverdale Blueberry Festival and the Stewart Farm Pioneer Fair.

At the end of the 2012 season, the program will be evaluated for audience participation, visitor feedback, community and business response, and overall civic benefits. If the program is considered successful and continues to be supported by the local business community and heritage partners it could be expanded in 2013 to include additional characters and a musical entertainment component.

Budget Implications:

A budget has been prepared for the pilot Cloverdale Historical Re-enactment program in 2012. It has been estimated that the implementation of the program will require a budget commitment of \$70,000. This amount includes funding for:

- A part-time Program Co-ordinator;
- Fees for Amateur Actors;
- Costumes and Props;
- Backdrop/Set Graphics; and
- Marketing and Promotion.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed program will assist in achieving the following goals of the City's Sustainability Charter:

- Socio-Cultural Goal #SC 7: Provide a range of accessible and affordable recreation, cultural and library services that respond to the needs and interests of the City's diverse population, including children, youth, seniors, multi-cultural group(s) families and those with special needs.
- Socio-Cultural Goal # SC 4: Promote and support cultural activities and events that will increase understanding, tolerance and respect for the City's diverse population and promote community pride and social connections; and
- Socio-Cultural Goal #C 10: Preserve built, natural and cultural heritage to foster community identity and civic pride.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council:

- Approve a pilot Historical Re-enactment program for Cloverdale as generally described in this report for the spring and summer of 2012; and
- Request that staff include in the 2012 Budget funding in support of the program.



Laurie Cavan
General Manager,
Parks, Recreation and Culture