

NO: R168

COUNCIL DATE: **SEPTEMBER 9, 2013**

---

## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **September 3, 2013**

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

FILE: **8200-01**

SUBJECT: **Outcomes of the 2013 Doors Open Event**

---

## RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council receive this report as information.

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Doors Open Event that was hosted in Surrey on Saturday June 22, 2013.

## BACKGROUND

The Doors Open concept originates in France where the first Doors Open event (La Journee Portes Ouvertes) took place in 1984. Since then, communities around the globe, including BC have adopted the idea.

Surrey's 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Doors Open event took place on Saturday June 22, 2013 from 11am to 4pm and featured 28 sites including some in each of City Centre, the Bear Creek area and the Newton area. The event featured Surrey's rich culture, heritage, art, architecture and public buildings.

The goals of Doors Open Surrey are to:

- increase the public's awareness and enjoyment of civic, non-profit and private facilities, buildings, services and destinations; and
- showcase and offer visitors and residents the opportunity to explore Surrey's diversity and cultural richness.

A Doors Open Advisory Committee has been established to oversee preparations for the event. The Committee was chaired by Councillor Judy Villeneuve and includes representation from the Social Planning Advisory Committee, the Diversity Advisory Committee, Surrey604, Milieu Family Services, Simon Fraser University, Surrey Neighbouring Faiths Program and the Surrey Arts Council and staff from several City Departments.

The City's Volunteer Resources staff team recruited 60 Doors Open Volunteer Ambassadors to assist with the event. These volunteers greeted and welcomed attendees at event venues, helped attendees navigate between the various event sites and tracked event attendance.

To enhance mobility for event patrons, free hop-on/hop-off trolleys were rented from the Vancouver Trolley Company to circulate between the event sites during the event.

To provide engaging opportunities, increase excitement and maximize resources, the 18<sup>th</sup> Newton Community Festival was featured during Doors Open and an Artisan in the Park event was hosted by the Parks Division and the Surrey Arts Council.

The Marketing Section created a marketing campaign to build awareness and excitement in the lead up to the event. Branding was focused on newcomers and families.

The following table summarizes the 2013 Doors Open Marketing Plan:

<b>Marketing</b>	<b>Summary of details:</b>
<b>Webpage</b> <a href="http://www.surrey.ca/doorsopen">www.surrey.ca/doorsopen</a>	Interactive online map, Doors Open site guide, 2012 event video, free trolley schedule and contest information
<b>Social Media</b>	City of Surrey social media, sponsorship from Surrey604, sponsorship from Miss604, Photo contest #surreydoorsopen
<b>Print</b>	Save-the-Dates, posters, rack-cards, brochures
<b>Community Advertising</b>	Community event listings, newsletters and magazines, all Surrey facilities and partners, newcomer tours, SD 36, artist networks, local hotels, print materials at all City events and sponsorship from Tourism Surrey
<b>Local Newspapers</b>	The Now (\$30,000 in-kind sponsorship), Coffee News and City Page
<b>Signage</b>	Transit shelter ads, 100 lawn signs, 28 site signs, hop-on hop-off trolleys signs, digital boards
<b>TV</b>	Free feature on go! Vancouver, Shaw Multicultural Channel (\$9,000 sponsorship), media releases
<b>Radio</b>	QMFM Radio (\$6,000 sponsorship), Sher-E-Punjab Radio \$800.00 sponsorship)
<b>Other</b>	"Media Tour" on June 10 <sup>th</sup> where local media were invited to a "sneak peek" tour of Doors Open activities with Councillor Villeneuve

The Doors Open Advisory Committee assessed the 32 sites that participated in Doors Open 2012. Doors Open 2013 focused on Surrey's culture, art, heritage, architecture, public buildings and universities. The venues that were featured as part of the 2013 Doors Open event included the following:

***Places of worship:***

- Bear Creek Community Church
- Brookside Sikh Gurdwara
- Cwenengital Aboriginal Society
- Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association
- Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara
- Laxmi Narayan Temple
- Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Surrey
- St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
- Surrey Jamia Masjid

***Family Friendly:***

- Bear Creek Park Train
- Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre
- City Centre Library
- Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- Newton Library
- Newton Recreation Centre
- RCMP District 1 Office (City Centre/Whalley)
- RCMP District 3 Office (Newton)
- Surrey Fire Hall #10
- Surrey Nature Centre
- Newton Seniors Centre
- North Surrey Recreation Centre

***Art and Green Spaces***

- Artisans in the Park at Bear Creek Garden
- Holland Park
- Newton Cultural Centre

***Heritage***

- Round Up Café
- Whalley Royal Canadian Legion
- St. Helen's Anglican Church
- Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Mary

**DISCUSSION**

The 2012 Doors Open event featured 32 sites and resulted in a total of 2,908 recorded visits to these venues. The 2013 Doors Open event featured 28 sites and resulted in a total of 7251 recorded visits. Most sites had tripled the attendance they had in 2012. Over 600 attendees used the free hop-on/hop-off Trolleys throughout the day. The Doors Open Advisory Committee is confident that participation rates will increase as the event gains momentum. Richmond has been able to attract on average 19,000 people per year to their Doors Open event. The event also attracts non-residents to the City to explore the diverse venues.

**Survey feedback**

Feedback surveys were completed by 129 attendees at various sites during the day of the event and online after the event. Of these, 96.67% reported they would participate in the event again next year.

Feedback surveys were also completed by nine of the site organizers online after the event. Each of these site organizers reported they would participate again next year.

Feedback surveys were completed by 28 volunteers online after the event. Of these, 93% rated their experience during the event as 7 out of 10 or higher.

The following recurring themes were evident in the feedback surveys:

- The trolleys were well received, utilized and attendees found them to be helpful. However, there was a view that the trolley's should run more frequently, to more sites and have more signage;
- Marketing and Communication were clear and well received. Many suggested that there should be more use of street signage in advance of and during the event;
- The event was a fun way for families, newcomers and long-time residents to see new sites and experience Surrey;
- The hours of the event did not allow enough time for visitors to visit all of the event sites. Some of the favourite venues were, Newton Recreation Centre, Artisans in the Park and the Guru Nanak Temple;
- More food options should be added to the event; and
- Activities for youth and young adults should be added to the event.

#### Future Doors Open Events:

The Doors Open Advisory Committee has recently met to discuss the lessons learned from Doors Open 2013 and to make recommendations related to future events. The Committee agreed on the following:

- Plan a third Doors Open Event for June 2014;
- Continue to focus on City Centre, Bear Creek and Newton areas and/ or, add the Cloverdale area and profile Cloverdale heritage;
- Increase the number of trolleys for transportation between venues and have the trolley stop at more sites;
- Build upon the current marketing sponsors and continue to increase the profile of the event;
- Feature more food venues and encourage sites to have food options;
- Continue to encourage sites to include family activities at the site;
- Profile a site that offers something for youth/young adults;
- Solicit sponsorship for large Doors Open banners to be created for marketing the event;
- Have the Advisory Committee take on a working group structure and invite site contacts to join the working groups;
- Encourage others to plan City conferences or events that attract out-of-town visitors to Surrey during Doors Open weekend;
- Feature the new City Hall;
- Continue to partner with The Surrey Now Newspaper as an effective means to market the event; and
- Encourage venues to plan other events to coincide with Doors Open (e.g., the Intercultural fair at Chuck Bailey and the Newton Community Festival).

### Planning for a Future Doors Open Event

The Doors Open event in 2014 is being planned for Saturday June 21, 2014. Funding in support of the event will be forwarded to Council for consideration as part of the 2014 budget approval process.

### **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

*Doors Open Surrey* assists in achieving the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter; more particularly, Socio-Cultural action items SC4, SC5, SC12 and SC10, by encouraging cultural awareness in the community, by providing ethnic and culturally appropriate services, opportunities and programs, by facilitating volunteerism and by educating the public about the City's history and cultural diversity.

### **CONCLUSION**

With the City of Surrey being one of most diverse cities in Canada, opportunities to connect citizens with local businesses and community services are important; the 2013 Doors Open event offered such an opportunity. As the Surrey Doors Open event continues to grow it has the potential to be a significant attractor of tourists to Surrey. Based on the success of the 2013 Doors Open event, the planning process for a similar event in 2014 has commenced.

Laurie Cavan  
General Manager  
Parks, Recreation and Culture