



The Corporation of the Town of LaSalle

Date	May 21, 2019	Report No:	C & R 2019 -06
Directed To:	Council	Attachments:	Water level chart and budget
Department:	Culture and Recreation	Policy References:	
Prepared By:	Director of Culture and Recreation		
Subject:	Strawberry Festival relocation for 2019		

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report from the Director of Culture and Recreation dated May 21, 2019 (C&R 2019-06) regarding the recommendation to relocate the Strawberry Festival to the Vollmer Culture and Recreation Complex for 2019 BE APPROVED;

AND THAT staff finalize the details of the relocation and contingency planning required to safely deliver the Strawberry Festival at the Vollmer site as per the budget attached;

AND FURTHER THAT the necessary bylaw exemptions regarding road closures for Festival operations BE APPROVED.

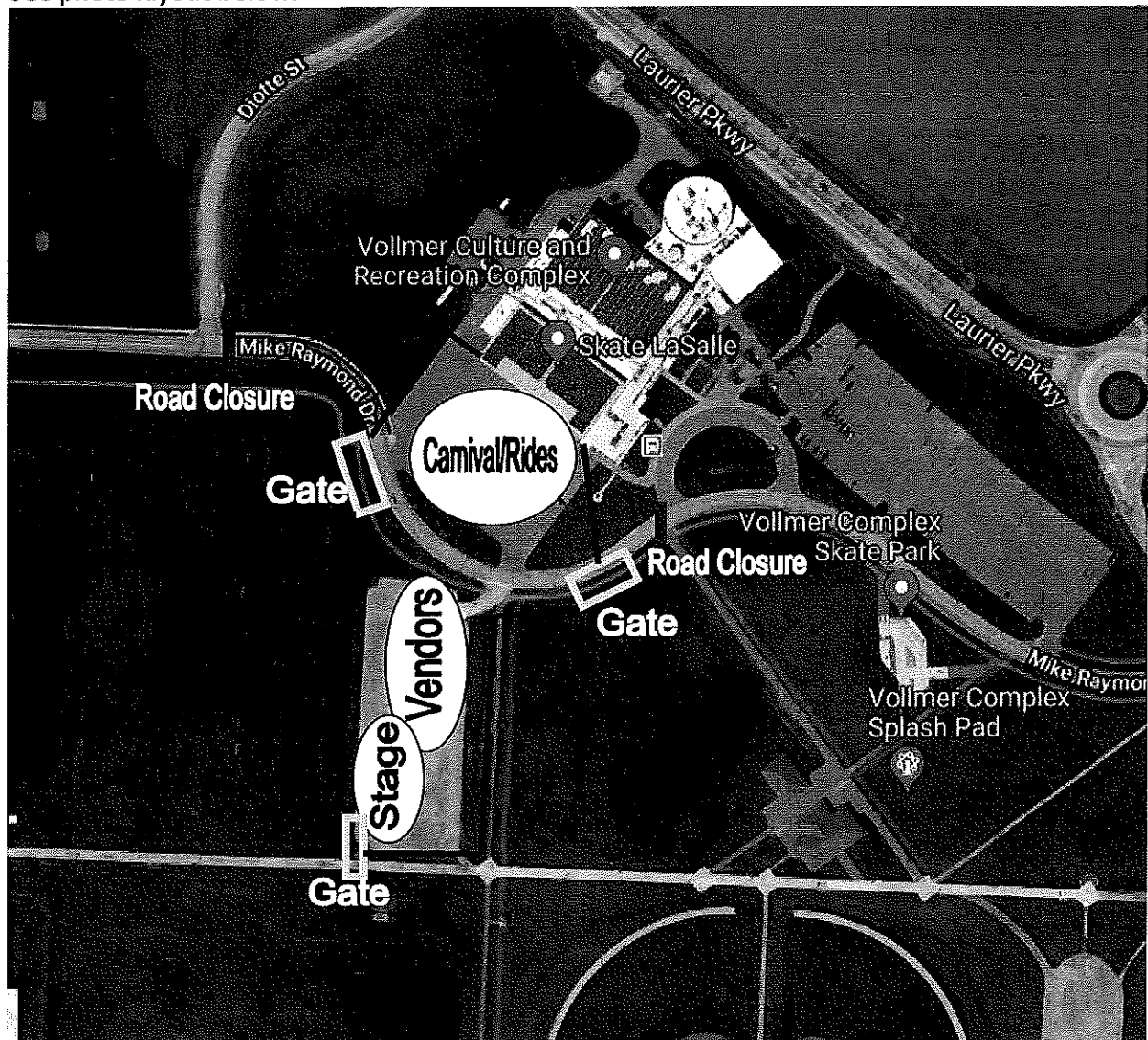
REPORT:

This year's LaSalle Strawberry Festival is scheduled June 6 – 9. The entertainment, vendors, parade, strawberry stand, carnival rides, volunteers, security, fencing, portable toilets, etc. have all been organized and confirmed as per previous years. The weather challenges during April and May have created record high water levels impacting the riverfront properties including the boat launch and Gil Maure Park. Water levels this spring are recorded as being 10 inches higher in May than in April and the highest they have been in the last 100 years. (Attachment A 2019 water levels). The prediction is that the water levels will rise another 10 inches in the upcoming month (Windsor Star, May 3) The current weather forecast is predicting 5 days of rain over the next 7 days, which can change and will continue to be monitored day to day by staff.

The high water level of the river and ground surface saturation has affected Gil Maure Park, flooding the boat launch, properties along Front Road, parking at the waterfront and portions at the end of Laurier Rd. The record high water level of the river in combination with north-east winds are causing catch basins to overflow and water pooling in the parking lots at Gil Maure

and Front Rd parks and the end of Laurier Rd. The puddling throughout the parkland and water soaked property also will negatively affect the set up and operations of the Strawberry Festival. The water levels and potential for flooding affects the festival operations plan and emergency management impacting vehicle and pedestrian traffic. With pooling and flooding, there will not be appropriate access or egress at the park with limited to no parking. Staff are continuing to monitor the updates via news releases, ERCA posts and Weather Canada alerts. The Culture & Recreation and Parks Department have met to evaluate the current conditions and created a contingency plan recommending to Council the relocation of the Strawberry Festival.

On Friday May 17th, staff from LaSalle Fire, Police, Public Works, Parks, Communications, Culture and Recreation met to review a revised plan for this year's festival and evaluate criteria for safety, logistics and services to ensure the proper coordination for a well-executed event. Staff discussed different options and concluded that the Vollmer Culture and Recreation Complex could safely offer the festival a temporary location meeting the needs of the event. The total footprint of the Strawberry Festival is approximately 8,000 square meters. This includes rides, vendors and stage/entertainment space. Staff reviewed the Vollmer property and created a site plan using two parking lots and a portion of the Vollmer Recreation Centre. See photo layout below.



Staff discussed access, egress, parking, road closures, emergency management procedures and services to the two locations. A plan for closing Mike Raymond Dr. from June 3 at 3pm to June 10 at 3pm with one closure at Diotte St. and the other at the turnaround at the front of Vollmer was discussed at the meeting. A route with closures was mapped out with staff and the LaSalle Police Service. Closures will require signage and barricades as well as a security guard at each of the two locations.

Final details are being explored for the following services to fulfill the contingency plan:

- electrical options using portable generators and new transformers
- water for vendors (possible water source company or OCWA partnership)
- fireworks staging location and viewing area
- portable toilet locations
- off-site parking and shuttle service routes including Windsor Transit
- fencing needs and perimeter distance
- possible use of Rink B (emergency shelter, programming space)
- 3 entry gates (volunteer confirmation to operate extra 2 locations)
- signage (promoting routes, entrances, parking options, etc.)
- operations and emergency plans

LaSalle Police and Fire Service are working on the emergency and ops plan for this new location. At the meeting, staff discussed benefits to the Vollmer location regarding emergency services including the Vollmer arena being accessible as an emergency shelter if necessary and patrolling for police.

For parking, staff recommend a couple of shuttle buses be used to pick up and drop off continuously during the hours of the festival throughout the weekend. Staff will work to create a shuttle route for parking to include the town hall parking lot, Sandwich Secondary School and the various parking lots at the Vollmer Complex. The shuttle service will provide alleviation to parking congestion and concerns. A partnership with Windsor Transit is an option to provide transportation during the days of the festival. Staff are exploring the option to have the Windsor Transit service for the hours of the festival and adding a shuttle service during Fireworks with a pick up and drop off at Front Road. Signage and marketing prior to the event will be important to point out parking availability and promote the shuttle service.

Programming space within the Vollmer could assist with various festival operations including the Dog Show, First Aid station and finance working area. The existing programming scheduled at the Vollmer during the festival dates would have to be adjusted with aquatics operations and fitness classes being cancelled during festival hours to reduce parking congestion. PA Day Camp on Friday June 7 would continue to be offered as many residents require this program for childcare. The drop off time would not conflict with festival hours however, the pick-up location would be adjusted to alleviate parking concerns and logistics.

Field rentals would continue throughout the festival with notification going out to the users about the festival relocation. Staff can assist in the promotion of parking concerns so that users will be able to prepare and share information with players.

The parade date and route would not be changed and remain on Front Rd for Saturday morning. Which will be included in the marketing campaign for the relocation if approved. As


well, a shuttle for pick up and drop off service from the Front Rd TD bank for Fireworks on Friday night is also being explored. All shuttle and busing will be coordinated through staff and promoted via website, social media and signage with the assistance of the Communications Officer. It will be important to share the information to residents so that they know what options are available and have it easily accessible prior to and updated during the festival.

Costing breakdown is attached (Attachment B) to this report showing the additional costs associated with the site prep and logistics proposed relocation of Strawberry Festival totaling approximately \$45,000. This is a high-level cost estimate that staff have put together based on some preliminary research quotes. The budget also includes some extra funds for contingency should an unexpected issue or need arise.

Staff are recommending approval to designate the Vollmer as the 2019 location for the Strawberry Festival and move forward with the necessary planning for operations and logistics.



Director of Culture and Recreation

Reviewed by:							
CAO 	Treasury	Clerks	Env. Services	Planning	Parks & Rec	Building	Fire