
Norfolk Community Day

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report to obtain Council approval on a new budget initiative for an event called “Norfolk Community Day” that would take place in June 2022. The global pandemic has greatly affected community events and there is a need to connect Norfolk County citizens with an event that will offer free programming and entertainment at our facilities. It will also allow for an opportunity to foster our partnerships with community groups across the County.

Discussion:

Imagine a day when we can all safely get together with our neighbours and fellow community members to enjoy our facilities and celebrate how wonderful living in Norfolk really is. In a typical year, many of our communities have different festivals and events that help bring people together and recognize various aspects of our culture and social activities. The intent behind Norfolk Community Day is to organize various activities throughout all of the County on a single day where people can reconnect and enjoy Norfolk facilities/programming. It would be a free event and fun for all.

By June 2022 (tentatively scheduled for June 18), it will be even more increasingly important to provide an opportunity to move forward with the new normal. It will be something to look forward to for our citizens and allow for an opportunity to recognize how Norfolk has been adapting over the past few years. We cannot underestimate the power of “community”. This is an underlying value within this area and it is important to have a vibrant network of connected communities. This assists with an increased sense of belonging, neighbourhood involvement, safety, security and even helps to strengthen local



Figure 1 - Many municipalities host a Neighbours Day (Kitchener)

economies. Greater awareness of community resources, building strong networks and reducing isolation are all key social ingredients of a healthy and resilient community.¹

Some of the potential locations and activities being considered may include:

- Opening of Delhi Kinsmen Pool with free swimming
- Splash Pads, although always free, would be available for activities
- Free skating at Waterford Tricenturena (presuming summer ice is in)
- Simcoe Recreation Centre – Annaleise Carr Aquatic Centre, Simcoe Seniors Centre and indoor multipurpose floor open for free programs and activities
- Open recreational programs and activities indoors and outdoors (E.g. ‘Learn how to Pickleball’)
- Various activities at Community Centres / Halls
 - Vittoria, Port Rowan, Port Dover, etc.
- Museums open with Norfolk historical programming and activities
- Pancake breakfast, BBQs, popcorn, etc.
- Water activities (weather permitting)
- Emergency vehicles for interaction (e.g., fire vehicles and ambulances)
- Activities for children – games, face painting, etc.
- Live entertainment, including music
- Markets and local vendor showcases
- Cross – county “rivalry” charity games (e.g., slow pitch, soccer, etc.)
- Cross – county scavenger hunt
- Fun-run/bike
- Outdoor theatre and cultural activities
- Potential afternoon-evening festivities with local food, drink and music
- Movie-in-the-park
- Virtual events and activities about Norfolk
- Social media activities (e.g., display your route map within the County, #NorfolkCommunity, best Community Day Instagram photos, etc.)
- Other potential neighbourhood or community-based activities

Any activities, such as those outlined above, would be tempered with the status of the pandemic at that time period. Although the hope (and goal) is that in the near future we will be in an improved, healthy status; some items may have to be scheduled, replaced or moved to virtual. All public health safety measures and protocols in place at the time would be followed. Staff would ensure that some activities would be scheduled as virtual events for the purpose of inclusivity, as well as for those that cannot attend in person. The intent is that a large range of activities would be provided so that members of the community would be welcome to participate and celebrate all things great in Norfolk.

¹ Some elements of the above are from information provided by the Tamarack Institute on Neighbourhoods and Vibrant Communities.

What it will take

The Community Development Division, with assistance of the Recreation Department, would take the lead on organizing. This will involve “working together with our community” as several service groups help operate activities in our community, may have an event or interest in aligning with this day, and/or could be valued volunteers for this community event to help prepare and conduct activities.

Not all events and activities would occur at the same time. There would be staggering or rotations throughout the day – which would be easier for some staff and volunteers along with also allowing participants to reach more than one location should they desire during the day. For example, the schedule may include activities and programs in Langton from 10:00am-noon, arts and culture market in Delhi from noon-2pm, recreational activities at Simcoe Rec Centre from 1:30-3:30 free skate in Waterford from 3-4:30pm and concert in a Port Dover park at 6-8:30pm.

Some Norfolk Departments may volunteer to provide activities, information, or assistance for the day. This could include fire safety information, drinking water displays, deck/shed building guide, etc. It may even be another opportunity to inform and engage with members of the community on a project, master plan or community-based initiative.

This initial event would be scaled to what is reasonable for staff (and volunteers) given existing resources and a number of other initiatives that would be underway at the time. Staff would have an internal group to prepare and look to any special events assistance.

Potential Budget

Potential costs include: offset for free programs, materials for activities (would utilize as much of existing supplies as possible), staff time (with reliance on volunteer staff, service groups and other volunteers), potentially food and drink (if not covered by service groups and sponsors), Norfolk Community Day t-shirts and/or other branded items (buttons, temp tattoos, posters, banners, etc.), any operational/logistics such as garbage/recycling/compost/water refill, promotions/advertising, etc.

The current estimate is to reserve \$25,000 towards Norfolk Community Day. Although there are some aspects of existing budgeted accounts from various departments that could be utilized (e.g. material and supplies), the direction is to identify this as a ‘new service’ which may have some cost and thus a new budget initiative. With the direction to move forward with Norfolk Community Day, staff would pursue sponsorships for the event to supplement and reduce the budgeted amount.

Financial Implications:

This initiative is estimated to result in total expenditures of \$25,000. Staff anticipate that sponsorship revenue could be secured in order to offset these costs and result in no impact on the tax levy for this initiative. While staff are comfortable with the \$25,000

estimate for sponsorship revenue, it should be noted that there is risk that this amount is not achieved, especially in the first year of a new event.

If Council should wish to move forward with this initiative, any unfavorable variance, either due to greater costs or lack of sponsorship revenue, would have a negative impact on overall surplus/deficit for Tax Supported operations in 2022.

Interdepartmental Implications:

Community Development – The Recreation Department is in full support of this initiative and if approved, will ensure that it is factored into the 2022 staff work plans.

Operations – Initial discussions have indicated that undertaking activities at multiple sites as part of a Norfolk-wide event will require some operational and cleaning logistics which is factored into the requested budget. If approved, the operations group will be included in the planning of the event to minimize requirements.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

This report aligns with the 2019-2022 Council Strategic Priority "Foster Vibrant, Creative Communities".

Explanation:

Hosting a County-wide celebration can help with generating active lifestyles, inclusivity, community pride, and support a vibrant, creative community.

Conclusion:

A County-wide Norfolk Community Day (tentatively scheduled for June 18, 2022) can help provide a "re-connection" for our community after the past 2 years of the pandemic, celebrate all the Norfolk has to offer.