



**Subject: Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival – 2022 results and 2023 updates**

**To: Council**

**From: Corporate Services Department**

Report Number: 2023-70

Meeting Date: April 11, 2023

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### **Recommendation:**

That Corporate Services Department Report 2023-70 be received for information.

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this informational report is to provide Council with post-event results from the 2022 Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival (“Canal Days”) and provide an update regarding 2023 planning.

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### **Background:**

In 2022, the City celebrated the 44<sup>th</sup> Canal Days, offering activities and attractions for the whole family. Canal Days takes place every Civic Holiday weekend for a four-day celebration of the history and marine heritage along the Welland Canal.

Canal Days would not be possible without community volunteers, local businesses, partners, sponsors, and City of Port Colborne team members.

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### **Discussion:**

The 2022 Canal Days was a welcoming opportunity for residents of, and visitors to, the City of Port Colborne to celebrate the city’s marine heritage.

Some key attendance numbers with respect to Canal Days are:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Museum	5,000
Friday Concert	5,500
Saturday Concert	8,500
Sunday Concert	3,000
Monday Concert (Local Day)	2,500

In addition to attendance, social medial reach is also monitored. In the July to August period the City's page reach expanded 442% to 150,122 as a result of Canal Days.

Following Canal Days, continuous improvement feedback was requested from different departments within the City to consider for planning the 2023 event. Feedback obtained consisted of individual experiences and feedback received/communicated to City staff from residents and business.

Staff work with a Canal Days planning committee led by members of Council to review feedback and key learnings and plan future Canal Days.

2022 feedback and key learnings along with 2023 planning comments are outlined below:

<b>Item for Review</b>	<b>2022 Feedback and Key Learnings</b>	<b>2023 Planning based on Key Learnings</b>
<b>Feedback on new initiatives</b>	Touch a Truck was a positive addition.	Touch a Truck will be returning for 2023.
	Downtown BIA Artisan Market was very successful. Ensure tents are set up by the BIA prior to the required set up deadline.	Artisan Market is confirmed for 2023. BIA is considering hiring an outside vendor to set up the tents.  The Supervisor of Events and Sponsorship is attending Downtown BIA Events Committee meetings to ensure ongoing communication.
	Parking was communicated too late in the process. It was positive that it raised approximately \$15,000.	Parking is being reviewed with a significantly enhanced communication plan. Additional locations are being reviewed along with options for more permanent signage.
	Recreation Zone on West St was a positive addition.	The Recreation Zone on West St. will be returning in 2023 with a larger (less cramped) footprint.

<b>City of Port Colborne Representation</b>	Improve City of Port Colborne presence during the festival. This is an opportunity to promote the PORTicipate Pass, share employment opportunities, key projects, and communicate with local residents and visitors to the community.	Planning is underway to enhance communication at the City booth.
<b>Security</b>	The security vendor was challenging to work with in regard to attendance and customer service.	Kronos Security is confirmed as the <u>new</u> security vendor for Canal Days. They have over 10 years experience with professional staff that have a strong focus on customer service. Kronos Security has a positive working relationship with the two major headliners for the 2023 Canal Days concerts.
<b>Communication</b>	Add concert times to the website and social media.	Planning is underway for enhanced social media communication.
	Additional directional signage in concert area will be helpful.	In addition to signage at the concert series a review of concert entrances and exits is also underway.
<b>Set up and logistics</b>	Define the Police Headquarters as Lost and Found.	This is under review and if not possible an alternative venue will be announced.
	VIP area requires additional staff and/or volunteers to assist with welcoming and registering VIP attendees.	Planning is underway to rebrand this area and open it up for non-partners/sponsors to also access it.  Anyone that would like to get involved and help out at Canal Days can contact the City at <a href="http://www.portcolborne.ca/en/recreation-and-leisure/getting-involved.aspx">www.portcolborne.ca/en/recreation-and-leisure/getting-involved.aspx</a>
	Ensure all fencing is secured for wind.	A new plan for fencing installation is under development. Note that the city purchased some of the fencing so there will be no need to continue renting it each year.

	Line ups for beverages was a concern.	Changes are being reviewed to site planning to reduce line ups. Directional signage will also be increased.
	Move Downtown Cruise Night on the Thursday evening to a different location to help avoid issues with logistics while setting up for Canal Days.	Events team is planning to discuss with the Downtown BIA.
	Increase shuttle capacity at the end of the concerts to help reduce line ups.	Adjustment will be made based on concert timing.
	Pocomar 50/50: Provide additional education regarding the draw and increase announcements for exposure/to support water safety initiatives.	Opportunities are being reviewed, if any, due to applicable rules and regulations around lottery licenses.
<b>New ideas and initiatives</b>	Start sponsorship planning earlier.	Sponsorship planning started the day after the 2022 Canal Days. Special thank you to the Mayor and Economic Development for introducing City staff to some new opportunities. Hopefully some new sponsors to be announced shortly.
	The KidsZone was very well attended but expanding it a little would be welcomed.	Options to increase KidsZone play opportunities are being developed.
	Investigate with the Downtown BIA the possibility of making West Street fully accessible for alcohol during certain hours during Canal Days.	The opportunity is under discussion with the Downtown BIA.
	Utilize more of West Street.	With the construction towards the end of West Street Canal Days did have a different feel in 2022. It is the City's hope to have the end of West Street more open in 2023.
	Could the Local Day be moved to the afternoon of Sunday and reduce Canal Days to three days.	This option has the potential to reduce staffing costs but also missing an opportunity to provide long-weekend programming for residents and visitors on the

		Monday. Further input from Canal Days stakeholders will be sought.
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### Internal Consultations:

This report was developed through cross functional debrief sessions to receive feedback and future planning comments.

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### Financial Implications:

Attached as Appendix A is the 2022 Budget and Actuals. Actual costs were approximately \$34,600 higher than budget. This difference is largely explained by the one-time costs of fencing and tents purchased for the event which have a 3–4-year payback.

The 2023 budget was approved during the 2023 budget process as follows:

Revenue	\$ 775,800
Direct Expenses	875,800
Net Cost	100,000
Indirect Costs	120,061
Total Cost	\$ 220,061

As identified in the 2023 budget process, this budget outcome is highly dependent on weather.

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### Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar(s) of the strategic plan:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
  - Attracting Business Investment and Tourists to Port Colborne
  - Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
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### Conclusion:

The City of Port Colborne has an incredible story to tell, and the Canal Days Marine Heritage Festival is a key component of that story. The City of Port Colborne looks forward to continuing to build on the success of Canal Days.

**Appendices:**

- a. Canal Days – 2022 Budget and Actual

Respectfully submitted,

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**Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.