

Report to Council

From: Tannis Drysdale RRFDC, Economic Development Consultant

Date: March 12, 2018

Regarding: Rainy Lake Square Recommendations

1. Venue Reservations

Recommendation to Council

The Rainy Lake Square will be reserved through the Memorial Sports Centre facility reservation system. The BIA and Economic Development office will have access to the system. The economic development office will assist with bookings, encouraging utilization by the community.

2. Use of the Rainy Lake Square

Background

The Rainy Lake Square was built to increase economic development with the following goals:

1. Activation of downtown Fort Frances; increase foot traffic to surrounding businesses
2. Be a regional tourist attraction
3. Provide a venue for small business incubation

Ideal usage of the Rainy Lake Square should further one or all of these goals.

Use A) Casual use i.e. birthday parties and gatherings. Square remains open to the public during such use. No reservation required.

Use B) Fenced in, ticketed events. Reserved by community groups, charities.

Use C) Fenced in, private events, such as wedding receptions, socials. Reserved by private individuals. Neither open to the public nor ticketed. Invitation only. Fee to be charged.

Use D) Utilization of the square for for-profit purposes. I.e. trade shows, car shows.

Recommendation to Council

Council should allow all usage options for the first season of operation and revisit in early 2019 based on experience.

Recommendation to develop a fee for uses C and D based on fees for the Memorial Sports Centre Auditorium at \$427.20 + HST for residents of Fort Frances; \$534.00 + HST for non-residents.

3. Liquor Service

Background

The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO) will allow alcohol licensing of outdoor, public areas under Special Occasion Permits (SOP), or Catering Endorsements from a licensee (a licensed bar or restaurant extending their licence to another area).

Catering Endorsement from a Licensed Business

Licensed restaurant and bar businesses may use the Rainy Lake Square under a Catering Endorsement. A Catering Endorsement allows businesses to temporarily extend their licence to another location, including outdoor public spaces.

Under this endorsement, the business in question is responsible for the site as it falls under their license for the duration of the event being catered.

Private Event Special Occasion Permit (e.g. weddings)

A private event under AGCO guidelines cannot be a publically advertised event. There can be no intent to gain profit from sale of alcohol at the event.

For outdoor events at the Rainy Lake Square, the Private SOP holder must give Town of Fort Frances 30 days written notice.

Public Event Special Occasion Permit (e.g. charity/fundraising event)

Under this Special Occasion Permit, events must be open to the public.

This type of SOP can only be issued to: charitable organizations, not-for-profits to promote charitable, educational, religious or community objectives, for an event of national, provincial or international significance or “for an event designated by municipal council as an event of municipal significance.” Sale of alcohol can be advertised publically in these cases.

For outdoor events, SOP holder must provide clerk’s department, police, fire and health department written notice 30 days prior to event.

Outdoor Event Venue Capacity Guidelines for Alcohol Licensing

In all cases, fencing at least 3 feet tall must be used to enclose the temporarily licensed area.

“Maximum capacities for all outdoor areas (or indoor areas without a designated Building or Fire Department capacity) is determined by dividing actual size of the permit area (as determined in square metres or square feet) by 1.11 square metres or 12 square feet per person.

Recommendation to Council

Recommendation is to allow bar and restaurant businesses with Catering Endorsements to sell alcohol at events at the Rainy Lake Square.

1. The Rainy Lake Square will not be staffed in the evenings.
2. Allowing alcohol service from a Special Occasion Permit set-up will be competitive with businesses. The Rainy Lake Square is meant to encourage and grow local business. Allowing Catering Endorsement alcohol sales will support bar and restaurant businesses while allowing full service events.

4. Smoking on Premises

Recommendation to Council

Recommendation is that smoking be prohibited in the Rainy Lake Square facility.

Planned 2018 Programming

Grand Opening

The official opening of the Rainy Lake Square will take place May 17, 2018. Formal ribbon-cutting, speeches will occur.

Markets

Two farmers markets per week will be held between May and September on Thursdays and Saturdays. Markets will run 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. each market day.

Vendors will be encouraged to arrive for set-up at 8:30 a.m., with the exception of vendors that request earlier due to farming schedules.

Markets will be hosted by the BIA, vendors must apply therein. The economic development office will support market operations.

Events

An events program for the 2018 season was developed through consultations with the BIA and the Fort Frances Museum.

We will work with community groups to host programming at the Rainy Lake Square from May long weekend (May 18-21) to mid-September.

Events will be hosted each Thursday evening between 6-8 p.m. during this period.

Events may include concerts, kids programming, movie nights, dramatic productions, concerts.

A summer concert series is planned for one Thursday of each month. Concert dates:

Thursday, May 17: Grand Opening feat. Musical act TBA

Thursday, June 14

Thursday, July 18

Thursday, August 16

Thursday, September 13

The economic development office will work with community groups to offer programming to encourage utilization of the Square.

Food Service

The economic development office will inform all food vendors at the Rainy Lake Square to acquire permits as required by the Northwestern Health Unit.

Facility Resources

Ten 10x10 canopy tents were purchased bearing the "Rainy Lake Market" logo, and ten small folding tables for vendor use during markets.

Branding & Marketing

We will market the Rainy Lake Square and its programming for the first season of operation. Marketing activities will include a highway billboard in the U.S., social media, print and radio ads. Logos have been developed for both the Rainy Lake Square facility and the Rainy Lake Market. It is recommended that all future facility resources be branded cohesively with these logos.