

Arts and Cultural Festivals
Research and Recommendations

**Research Findings and
Draft Recommendations**

for the review by the Calgary Art Community

**Calgary Arts Development
May 23, 2006**

Background:

- Calgary Arts Development initiated this research to assess the current state of arts and cultural festivals in the City, with a goal to determining if Calgary is taking full advantage of the potential that festivals can bring to our City.
- We will identify common areas of concern and opportunity and will ultimately make recommendations for action as necessary.
- Note that the focus of this work does not include special events that do not fit the City's definition of a "festival," which includes an arts or cultural component.

Summary of Findings

32 out of 52 arts-based festivals, that were approached, filled out a survey compiled and analyzed by Consultant, Judy Lawrence, from October 2005 to February 2006.

Our research concludes that:

- ◆ Substantive festival growth over the last three years (2003 – 2005) is evident in all indicators, whereas funding support, particularly from Calgary Region Arts Foundation (CRAF), has not increased, and is apportioned to newer festivals in much smaller funding amounts than for established festivals. Growth indicators include:
 - number of festivals increased by 43%
 - audiences increased by 89%
 - volunteer participation increased by 40%
 - volunteer hours increased by 72%
 - budget increases of 43%
- ◆ Festivals are an economic investment for the City of Calgary with substantial economic return, injecting \$14.4 million toward the GDP² and leveraging over \$21.50 for every City dollar invested.
- ◆ An additional 112,849 volunteer hours contribute \$1.1 million, based on a rate of pay of \$10/hr.
- ◆ The top three concerns/challenges identified by festivals are:
 1. the lack of substantial increase in CRAF budget since 1985 (beyond cost of living increases) or the development of any other stable, on-going, operational funding source(s);
 2. a lack of consistency in a supportive vision, policy, processes or action from the City (between and among departments, and direction from Council);
 3. the need for increased support and common policy to address costs from City Departments (such as police, etc).

Findings from focus groups

- ◆ Three separate focus group sessions were held with representatives from 17 different festival organizations. Input from these stakeholders corroborated our research findings, and strongly reiterated the top concerns of Festivals, as noted above.
- ◆ Additional themes include:
 - Opportunities for stronger, participatory, creative and engaged communities (volunteers, audience base, artists), exist for the City through support and encouragement of Festivals
 - Land planning: is the City thinking about physical space for venues in support of festivals?

- Opportunity to enhance Calgary's image as a city with a vibrant festival scene, including the opportunity for additional cultural tourism marketing opportunities

¹ information compiled from the 30 festivals who responded to the survey.

² an economic multiplier of 1.28 was used; this multiplier is the Demand Impact Economic Model used in the 2004 economic impact study commissioned by the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

Municipality	Per Capita	Approach to in-kind support	Approach to cash support
Edmonton	\$1.70	No in-kind services from City departments to arts groups. Police, traffic and all other affected city departments bill festivals on a cost recovery basis.	Arms length funding agency, The Edmonton Arts Council funds all festivals, parades and community celebrations. Festivals apply to a separate pool of money and answer to separate criteria than do Parades and Community Celebrations. New and emerging festivals apply to a separate pool of funding than do established festivals. (see Appendix I following).
Vancouver	\$1.49	Offers substantial support ('costs are waived') to those events deemed 'civic events' (including Celebration of Light, Grey Cup, Remembrance Day services, other). All other festivals may apply to have City costs offset to a maximum of \$1,000 (this figure has increased from the \$500 as the Vancouver study above lists). All costs above this maximum level of reimbursement are paid for by the festival organizers. City also offers in-kind support through its Office of Cultural Affairs, including a 'FEST' team to coordinate the needs of events.	City department Office of Cultural Affairs is the funding agency, and funds all arts and cultural festivals and celebrations. Festivals apply to a separate pool of money and answer to separate criteria than do Parades and Celebrations.
Toronto	\$1.07 \$1.63 with staff costs	\$3.4m net (includes \$1.4m for 30 staff); \$140,000 for Festival Grants to small festivals	Produce 30 events annually & raise sponsorship funds (\$800k in 2000). Charge for police & engineering services.
Montreal	\$4.46	Has a city-run Office of Cultural Affairs, which has a Festivals department. The department offers cash and in-kind support to festivals, from small and emerging to large and established. City in-kind support includes all Festivals department staff, all police and all fire costs. Other in-kind support is negotiated.	Has two separate sources for funding: 1. a City run Cultural Affairs department supports the growth and development of all City festivals – established as well as new and emerging. City support includes cash (case by case basis). 2. Additional special arts project funding may come from arm's length Arts Council.
Calgary	App. \$1.01 (includes staff costs and city in-kind services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Calgary Services: primarily Special Events team under Rec Dept plus some subsidized equipment • Special Events budget under Roads Department: Only one festival respondent provided records to show them having accessed this budget, although there were comments to indicate they knew the cost of road closures had been absorbed by the City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Strategic Initiatives Fund: a discretionary fund administered by Council to support community initiatives. Tends to be used as seed funding, one-time-only source. • Calgary Region Arts Foundation: provides annual cash operating grants to arts festivals using a rigorous, arm's-length, application review process

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Calgary Arts Development Authority Ltd. recommends that the City of Calgary:

- 1) Create a policy that:
 - a. Recognizes the social, economic and cultural value of festivals to “quality of life” in Calgary; and,
 - b. Declares the City of Calgary’s intent to create a supportive environment for festivals.
- 2) Align internal resources and services to support festivals efficiently and effectively such that decision-making around required services, costs and supports is centralized and expedited.
 - a. Consider moving to a cost-recovery system.
- 3) Recognize that The City’s public assets and services are fundamental to successful festivals, and therefore The City should have in place guidelines, regulations and procedures that mitigate risk and protect public interest and safety without putting onerous costs on festival producers.
- 4) Put in place a clear decision framework for the use of public assets and services that is fairly and consistently applied, and that rewards a track record of good practices.
- 5) Consider creating specialized services (for example, for traffic policing) tailored for the needs of festivals, as has been done in other cities (refer to benchmarking findings).
- 6) Allocate more resources to festivals (as part of an overall commitment to arts and culture funding; detailed recommendations forthcoming pending CADA’s review of arts granting programs in Calgary)
- 7) Implement a special provision, including dedicated resources, for festivals, community celebrations and/or parades produced by BRZ’s and community associations as part of neighborhood revitalization strategies.
- 8) Afford preferential support to festivals that have exhibited a strong track record and contribution to community to further enhance their capacity to focus on the quality of their festival and to enable additional strategic benefits to the city, such as enhancing cultural tourism marketing.
- 9) Work with Calgary Arts Development to create a program to assist emerging festivals.
- 10) Reconsider the key definitions related to City special events and festivals, including:
 - a. Consider differentiating festivals, community celebrations and parades; and,
 - b. Festival activity should be considered an “intended” use of public space *(from the City’s definition: Typically, an event that greatly intensifies the use of a park or athletic facility or is of a nature not in keeping with typical or intended use of the space will be classified as a special event and subject to the guidelines presented in this document).*

For more information or to provide written feedback, please contact Holly Simon, Knowledge Manager, at holly.simon@calgaryartsdevelopment.com.

We appreciate your support and consultation.