

Template for Each Taskforce Subcommittee Recommendation

The Edmonton Taskforce on Community Safety Recommends

The City provide the coordinating resources to proactively plan and manage the environments in which large numbers of people gather in public spaces at both spontaneous and planned events with/without alcohol.

The Issue

- What issue(s) does this recommendation address?

Event - a social occasion or an activity

- This recommendation will enact the systemic changes that will mitigate the impact of an event on a community(s) by proactively addressing factors which precipitate

- Nuisance crimes (noise, litter etc.)
- Public disorder (vandalism, public urination, etc.)
- Potential for violence, civil disobedience and criminal activity

- What context-setting background information is necessary to understand the issue and the recommendation?

There are several factors that have influenced size, time and place of crowds in the last decade. Some of these are:

- An increase in the population of the City of Edmonton from 648,284 (1999) people to 752,412 people (2008), a difference of 104,128 people. This does not include the regional expansion which adds a significant number of people.
- The coming of age of the largest demographic in the region – the Boom Echo (born 1980-1999) which is 33% of the current population in Edmonton.. The 20-29 age group accounts for 18% of the total population
- Several large post-secondary institutions that attract the 18-22 year old demographic.
Good Nightlife' Almost Twice as Influential as 'Student Funding Availability' in University Choice
<http://blog.personalisededucationnow.org.uk/>
- The economic boom that attracted young people from other areas of Canada. The change in labour force participation 2001 to 2006 in the City of Edmonton for 15 – 24 year olds was 20% for males and 19% for females. The connections to the community have been weakened.
- The demands that this group put on sociability.
 - An average of three nights per week spent socializing has driven the expansion of the pub and club scene.
 - The Boom Echo is a well connected cohort that travels in groups. Technology allows 24/7 connections that can identify places of interest and mass large crowds in a short time.
 - Hours of work late into the evening that did not exist for previous generations have moved the social gathering start time from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm.
 - Pedestrian counts on Friday and Saturday nights on Whyte Avenue are 2.5 – 3 times the daytime rush hour averages – total crossings between 103 St and 105 St., 22-25,000 in 4 hrs.

City services have not met the increased needs and changes in the times that the services are needed, an example being that garbage cans are nearly full before the evening crowds arrive in entertainment zones. The impact of a lack of parking and public transit from large events has a negative impact on neighbourhoods particularly in the aspect of nuisance crimes. Gaps in services are policing, bylaw, transportation, clean up and infrastructure repair. As well, models for controlling and structuring events exist but have not been expanded to identify and meet needs outside of festival-like events.

- What is the evidence for the need to address this issue?

The most news-worthy of events relative to large crowds combined with alcohol and undesirable outcomes

were the Canada Day 'riot' in 2001 and the boisterous 2006 Stanley Cup play-off celebrations.

Less noted are the chronic and long standing impacts of crowds regularly experienced in neighbourhoods surrounding event sites, such as Commonwealth, Hawrelak, Northlands and in entertainment zones , such as West Edmonton Mall, Whyte Avenue and recently West Jasper Avenue.

Community league halls, other community group facilities booked for celebrations and local licensed establishments have also been a source of diminished quality of life for local residents as the event spills out into the public spaces.

On rare occasions the outcome of an event has been tragic.

The documentation to support the need to address this issue has most graphically been captured in reams of news print, hours of television and radio coverage, clips on You-tube, and other mass media formats.

Complaints to the Citizen's Action Centre have been recorded and Council inquiries to address issues have been documented.

Over the years, public consultations and task forces have identified issues and recommendations have been put forth.. In some cases, these recommendations have been acted on completely, some are ongoing and for others, the actions have not been followed through.

As a result of the 2001 Canada Day incident and the chronic impact of the late night economy on Old Strathcona, a Task Force and the Old Strathcona Integrated Service Team (OSIST) were formed to collectively identify and find solutions, many of which have had positive results. Their work also resulted in the 2006 Responsible Hospitality Institute's Leadership Summit which involved the hospitality and entertainment industries, enforcement, service providers, post-secondary institutions and civic leaders, who established a framework for the planning, managing and policing of entertainment zones. Responsible Hospitality Edmonton is starting its third year of operation and the plan has been partially implemented (budget constraints) and has not extended into the public spaces realm beyond Whyte Avenue. For further information see www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca

There are vigorous local improvement initiatives in numerous areas in the City however, the legislation, procedures, programs or provision of service are not in place to support these initiatives in terms of event/alcohol. . An example of this is the proliferation of licensed premises on West Jasper Ave, 20 in 4 years, the concern may not be the number as much as the lack of assessment of the impact on the neighbourhoods and a determination of appropriate service provision.

At the neighbourhood level, many community leagues have closed their doors for all but membership or non-alcohol functions due to the increasing sense of vulnerability and legal liability, this results in a vital function of a community's gathering space being lost.

- **How does this recommendation align with organizations and programming already in place in the community?**

Currently many community organizations plan events or rent facilities for events which large numbers of people attend and/or alcohol is served and they are vigilant. However, they may have only a portion of the information, tools and resources required to maximize the safety of guests, security of their facilities and minimize the impact on surrounding community.

At this time, hospitality businesses are seeking information and forming into collectives to make changes within their industry and to lobby for the late night services their patrons require.

In neighbourhoods, such as those surrounding West Edmonton Mall, issues are being resolved through the collaborative efforts of the West Edmonton Mall Area Integrated Service Team (WEMASIST). West Jasper Place, Alberta Avenue, 97 St are in various stages of revitalization, however may lack expertise in the planning for a vibrant late night economy which will develop as the area becomes attractive.

Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC), Alberta Safer Bars Council and Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) are independently and collaboratively exploring actions to address alcohol related harm reduction.

Responsible Hospitality Edmonton (RHE) is currently working with AGLC toward the implementation of the Alberta version of the UK's highly successful Best Bar None program as a pilot project in Edmonton. RHE is supporting the University of Alberta to launch a campus and potentially a city-wide post-secondary institution research study on alcohol use by students, in addition to providing Code of Conduct information for student

orientations and student residence programs. RHE consulted on the AADAC study of young women and preventative safety practices relative to an evening out on Whyte Ave.

This recommendation requires that existing City of Edmonton resources find ways to build on successes to date to provide service to the community. The current City stakeholders are:

- Responsible Hospitality Edmonton (RHE) - Public Safety Compliance Team (PSCT) and Street as a Venue –Whyte Ave.
- Civic Events Implementation Team – inter-departmental
- Community and Emergency Services – Neighbourhood Services, Fire, EMS, Festivals and Events
- Planning and Development – Licensing and Bylaw
- Transportation – Transit, Streets
- Asset Management & Public works – Waste Management, Parks
- Edmonton Police Service

The Course of Action

- [What specific action\(s\) need to be taken?](#)

1. The City establish a new Coordinator position responsible for identifying the process and people required for changes to the policy and procedure, program and service delivery relative to public spaces in which large numbers of people gather, events with/without alcohol.

It is recommended this position be managed through the Deputy City Managers Office due to cross departmental and external stakeholder scope.

Policy & Procedure – these are examples of currently identified need

- Require an application for an event which involves large numbers of people and/or liquor to have a safety plan including the adjacent public space and an environmental* impact scan.
*Environmental impact scan – impact on surrounding residences, businesses etc.
- Require an application for a business license that includes liquor to have a safety plan which includes the public space outside and an environmental impact scan.
- Investigate the potential for liquor permits to be recorded on a single electronic system available to regulatory agencies in conjunction with AGLC
- Investigate the needs of regulatory agencies relative to private functions in semi-public buildings.
- Investigate the potential of a Nuisance Calls Fee for ongoing calls for EPS services to the same location.
- Research use of technology in preventative planning (eg GIS and Police data)
- Research liquor license saturation
- Research the economic impact of the late night economy

Program – examples of currently identified need

- Examine the Community Group Event Planning tool-kit relative to the content on safety, security and mitigation of neighbourhood impact when large crowds and/or alcohol are involved.
- Examine the City Major Event Planning tool-kit relative to the content on safety, security and mitigation of neighbourhood impact when large crowds and/or alcohol are involved, including the ripple effect.
- Develop plans to manage public gathering spaces with the same wholistic view as festivals are currently managed.
- Assess the scope and impact of current City social norms marketing campaigns to identify

gaps, overlap and create a common vision that will result in an increased culture of social responsibility.

- Encourage, support and nurture development of a Hospitality Industry Association to provide standards, training etc. which impacts both the private and public space.
- Establish a street entertainment program that draws a wide demographic into public gathering spaces.
- Develop a plan to educate residences and businesses surrounding gathering spaces about actions to discourage public disorder, such as property upkeep, security, reporting

Services – examples of currently identified need

- Conduct a gap analysis to identify events/activities not covered by Civic Events Implementation Team and Festivals and Events Coordinator.
- Examine the services/costs required to address the ripple effect of crowd dispersion.
- Implement Participatory Budgeting for city services at the community level in hospitality zones to more closely match the services with times of high activity.
- Research transportation service for large events and explore opportunities for improvements for timely dispersal of large gatherings.
- Research and explore options for Thursday, Friday and Saturday night late night transit or alternate transportation options.
- Examine service provision relative to time appropriate need.

1. Continue to support Responsible Hospitality Edmonton and provide adequate funding for its programs including expansion of the *Street as a Venue* program into areas of emerging need. This will address issues in entertainment zones and their interface with the surrounding neighbourhoods.

• Who needs to be involved?

➤ Who will be responsible for each action item?

Action 1 – The **Coordinator** will be responsible for change management. The list of currently identified needs is a starting point. As needs for policy & procedure, program or service changes are identified the **coordinator** will follow standard project management protocols in an inclusive and time sensitive manner to effect change.

For each topic a variety of stakeholders will be brought together. Some of the working groups, integrated service teams and alliances already exist, others will require input from additional known sources and some will require an environmental scan to determine stakeholders.

Many of the mechanisms and resources exist in whole and need to be understood and implemented fully. In other cases examination of effectiveness of current resources or the need for additional resources will be required and some will require a complete re-think. Research of best practices will be conducted and a portion of this work will be ground breaking.

Action 2 - Office of the Deputy City Manager and Responsible Hospitality Edmonton

Responsible Hospitality Edmonton will continue to develop relationships with the Hospitality Industry, and current partners as well as forge new relationships to address issues.

What partnerships will be necessary to succeed?

Firstly, the City will need to partner more effectively within its own structure.

External partners involved in change may include: Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, AADAC, community groups, community leagues, Business Revitalization Zones, the hospitality industry, distributors, post-secondary education institutions, local businesses, festivals, concert promoters, stadiums, sports teams, the media etc.

➤ **In what specific ways will businesses and communities be engaged?**

Each course of action will be vetted through the City of Edmonton's public process guidelines 'Involving Edmonton' to determine the appropriate level of community engagement.

In some areas it is anticipated that the community will spearhead action and the City will provide support, such as formation of a Hospitality Association.

Are there particular organizations, neighbourhoods, populations and/or geographic locations that are implicated?

Many of the policies, procedure and programs will be city-wide and generic.

Specific neighbourhoods implicated will have previously identified need related to specific events, specific gathering places or proximity to an entertainment zone, in terms of their unique program or service requirements.

For events that attract large numbers of people in public spaces there is a wide demographic, however a disproportionate number by virtue of Edmonton's demographics will be 18 – 30 years old and for specific events the crowd is primarily males in this age group. This information is an important consideration in social norms marketing.

In terms of the late night economy, the primary demographic is the 18-29 age group*. Thirteen hospitality zones (clusters of licensed establishments) have been identified in Edmonton , and at this time there are four with notable impact: Whyte Avenue, Jasper Avenue West, West Edmonton Mall and Downtown 95/97St.(*exception). Each of these areas has unique needs and will require local solutions.



• **What will be the specific outcomes, outputs and effects of this recommendation?**

- Prevention of public disorder and crime.
- Reduced impacts on immediate communities.
- Reduced calls for city and regulatory services.
- Increased quality of life for businesses and residents
- Improved image as a safe and vibrant city

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Rationale

• **Why should this recommended course of action be pursued?**

The action steps outlined are based on the principles of *Less Law, More Order - Irvin Waller* . These actions proactively and deliberately prepare people and public spaces to reduce the likelihood of disorder.

Where there are crowds there is competition. The better an event is planned; when the services meet the expectations and needs of the crowd, both competition and frustration are reduced.

The Folk Fest is a great example, people's energy is focused on music, and there is lots of food, drink and bathrooms on site, a pleasant evening for all. Now imagine, after walking up the hill that the buses are late.... People get cranky, a place to sit becomes important, people jostle for position, tension increases, competition rises and can lead to aggression and aggression to violence. Also, people are tired, need a bathroom and as peoples' needs become urgent, lack of services can create frustration which causes people to compromise their behaviour. Alcohol consumption can amplify the consequences of both competition and frustration.

Sociologist Dr. Irving Goldaber has pointed out that the way patrons perceive the environment and the various "sociological signals" they receive at an event whether consciously or unconsciously can escalate or de-escalate patron emotion and influence their behavior. [Task Force on Crowd Management - Cincinnati](#)

Whether it is everyone on Queen Elizabeth hill watching fireworks, Friday night on Whyte, a party at a

community hall or opening of a local pub, this recommendation will ensure that the good questions will have been asked about safety, security, access and egress, impact on neighbourhood and steps will have been taken to mitigate factors contributing to competition, frustration and negative impacts on community.

In very practical terms, this recommendation makes sure as much as possible that *we* are ready before *we* open the door.

This requires that *we* examine some of the processes, policies, procedures involved in the planning, managing and policing of public spaces. This requires that *we* work smarter together. This requires that *we* take care of the details. This requires *we* to be City, government agencies, businesses, hospitality industry, educational institutions and residents.

The impact of not pursuing this course of action is losing control of our public gathering spaces with high costs in terms of quality of life, enforcement response and the reputation of the City. Eight years after the 'riot' it is still conversation and results in extra-ordinary and expensive Canada Day policing on Whyte Ave.

What are the reasons and evidence for taking this approach or this specific course of action instead of another?

Reasons: Coordination is required when action steps involve numerous parties attending to details.

A single source coordination of efforts will address the current gaps no one is responsible for, give collective voice to advocate for change and give the authority and accountability that ensures action is taken.

Increasingly organizations are discovering that inclusive collaborative efforts are more effective and transformative than when work is done 'in silos'

Many of the resources are already in place. Edmonton is Festival City and the prototype for a thorough examination of appropriate policies, procedures and servicing for an event already exist in the requirements for festivals and civic events. These are known to be effective in positive site management.

Evidence: The Responsible Hospitality Institute has collected an expansive resource library to provide guidance on possible solutions that have been tried in other cities to manage event crowds particularly where alcohol is a factor. www.rhiweb.com

The International Institute of Crowd Management and Security Studies has developed numerous programs as models for crowd management and event planning strategies.

To date, the coordinated effort of *Street as a Venue – Whyte Avenue* (treating Whyte Avenue as a single venue) has had numerous successes which have resulted in a significant reduction in the complaints about Whyte Avenue and an increased quality of life for adjacent residents and businesses.

www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca

The coordinated efforts of the Public Safety Compliance Team have had significant impacts in licensed establishments through their education and enforcement efforts and this is most evident in the requests by operators of licensed premises for their assistance. Further documentation is available at

www.responsiblehospitalityedmonton.ca

How is the recommendation preventative? In what ways is it innovative?

This comprehensive approach is preventative in proactively engaging best practices in all aspects of an event's planning, program and servicing.

Event organizers, venue providers, the hospitality Industry, etc. are engaged in a proactive dialogue which brings awareness and the possibility of mitigating concerns inside and outside of the venue.

Through positive social norms marketing there will be an eventual transformation of the societal norm relative to acceptable behaviours in places where large groups of people meet and/or there is consumption of alcohol.

Provision of appropriate city services for the size of a crowd will be in place in advance.

This action plan has several innovative aspects; creative and directed use of positive social norms marketing, engagement with the hospitality industry and post secondary education institutions and working across departmental silos to holistically address an areas issues.

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Cost/Benefit

- **How much money will this recommendation cost, based on your estimates of what is required to succeed?**

Action 1. This action will require 1 FTE for the hiring of a Coordinator (\$100,000) with .2 FTE administrative support (\$10,000).

- The knowledge resources for a majority of the actions already exist in the City or the partners' organizations and a dedication of time is required, amount being project specific.
- The Hospitality Industry Association would self-fund their programs.
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Action 2. Responsible Hospitality Edmonton is funded for current level of programming until 2010.

- Expansion funding for additional *Street as a Venue* programs in emerging areas of need such as Jasper Avenue. (1 FTE -\$100,000, program - \$50,000) as required. (2010 budget request for Jasper Ave.)
- Expansion of current social norms marketing to city-wide. (\$50,000 – 2010 budget request)
- Funding for infrastructure servicing is in existing budgets and requires centralization to Street as a Venue for application specific to the area needs

***** Late Night Transit is identified as a major factors in this recommendation, however it will not be dealt with as a cost factor. Transportation/Transit improvements are also critical to several of the areas (individuals and families) being examined by the Task Force and as such requires a comprehensive examination and its own recommendation.**

Where will the initial funding come from?

Initial funding for the Coordinator position may result from tax levy or reallocation of existing City resources.

Any additional resources required to meet the needs of this leadership should come from redirected resources from within city departments involved in the effort.

Resources where appropriate may also come from partners within the community.

How will this action be sustained in the long-term?

The Coordinator position will be sustained with existing resources. The individual action steps involve short term redirection of City or partners' existing staff time to complete a project which once implemented will require no additional resources.

Action steps to align infrastructure servicing could result in efficiencies and cost savings. There is potential leveraging servicing funds in collaborative efforts with community funding.

Any steps which result in a reduced call for enforcement services may not result in savings but may result in redirection of enforcement efforts with far reaching positive benefits.

Program expansion funding requirements and possibilities will be identified through the collaborative efforts of the involved agencies and organizations.

What other resources (personnel, logistics, spaces, training etc.) will be required, and who will supply them?

The resources are available within existing structure.

- **What financial and non-financial benefits will be delivered?**

This is a reorganization of how work is done primarily within existing resources. The financial benefits will be noted by individual departments, businesses, residents, the hospitality industry, service providers and may not be as obvious as the subtle yet noticeable improvement in the quality of life.

Benefits to whom, and in what form? Will any of these benefits be recoverable in the future?

Benefit to community – The perception and reality of a cleaner, safer community plus an increased quality of life will be realized. Reduction in vandalism which impacts insurance costs.

Benefits to Hospitality Industry – well run businesses are more profitable, insurance costs decrease, safety of staff increases, decreased vandalism, greater attraction of patrons to the area, and overall promotion as a tourist destination which reaps economic benefits to the industry and City in general.

Benefits to citizens – increased services of transportation and public amenities, well serviced, clean public spaces, vibrant night life, enriched experiences.

Benefits to City – proactive planning will result in cost savings due to reduced calls for service to

EPS/EMS/Fire/Bylaw. Servicing efficiencies will result in cost savings while increasing level of public satisfaction. Centralized infrastructure servicing will result in savings and funds may be available for leveraging with and by partners.

Recognition as a vibrant 24-7 city which attracts the creative class of students, young professionals and tourists. Attraction of vendors of the goods and services that these people want.

Implementation

What are the timelines for implementation? How will the recommendation be implemented in the short, medium and/or long term

Current RHE (Action 2) ongoing activities will continue.

New initiatives (Action 1 and 2) would commence in 2010 with budget approvals/reallocation of resources, or sooner with Council directed funds/resources.

Hospitality Industry Association formation has started and will be ongoing.

Collaborative efforts underway will continue with new initiatives being launched as resources come available.

- **What other implementation issues and considerations will be critical to achieving success?**
- Media support for social responsibility campaign.

Accountability

How will the action and its outcomes be monitored and evaluated? Who will be responsible for these functions?

Action 1 - The evaluation process will be two stage, differentiating the short term completion of the policy, procedure or service changes and the much longer term evaluation of the outcome of the action taken. In many cases, the positive result will be the absence of the previous measurable. Each action will require an evaluation plan for both short and long term, with the responsibility for each of these aspects clearly defined at the onset.

Action 2 - Responsible Hospitality Edmonton has an evaluation plan for initiatives within its mandate; base line data where available is being collected. Community survey funding has not been received to date.

A Hospitality Association would determine an evaluation strategy at the time of establishing their mandate.

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Who is accountable for the success of this recommendation? How will they be held accountable?

The Office of the Deputy City Manager through the Coordinator would be accountable for the process and timeline for the action steps. The impact of these actions may take several years to be actualized or noticed at the community level.

Where appropriate, Civic Events Implementation Team and Responsible Hospitality Edmonton would be responsible within the scope of resources provided.

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