



Subject: 2020 Santa Claus Parade Alternative

Department: Community Services

Division: Recreation & Events

Report #: CMS-2020-004

Meeting Date: 2020-10-19

Recommendations

That report CMS-2020-004, 2020 Santa Claus Parade Alternative, be received;

And that Council approve one of the following options:

Option 1: Approve the “Holiday Lights Extravaganza” in lieu of a Santa Claus Parade and funding of \$20,000 from Parks & Recreation Reserves.

Option 2: The Town will not provide any funding to a “Holiday Lights Extravaganza” and will not provide a Santa Claus Parade but will support the efforts in principle of the Business Improvement Association (BIA) with their plans to provide holiday lighting in the downtown core.

Background and Analysis

The purpose of this report is to bring back to Council research completed by staff in the Recreation & Events Division of Community Services on offering a traditional Santa Claus Parade or a “drive-by” parade as requested by Council at the September 14, 2020 meeting of Council.

Traditionally, the Kin Club of Orangeville plan, organize and implement an annual Santa Claus Parade. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kin Club has had to cancel this year’s parade.

At Council’s request, staff have investigated the Town taking the lead on planning a traditional parade or a “drive-by” alternative, where floats would be stationary and spectators would drive-by.

The first step in researching the feasibility of offering either type of event was to reach out to staff from Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health (WDGPH).

WDGPH is discouraging any type of parade events as it may increase people gathering/clustering, and setting a limit on a outdoor event, like a parade, would be very challenging to control, from the perspective of both spectators and parade/float participants. While Ontario Regulation 364 (O. Reg 364) outlines information relating to drive-in/drive-through events, staff do not recommend that the Town undertake this type of event for 2020. In addition, the time frames to plan and organize such an event with approximately only 5 weeks before the traditional date for the parade from the date of this report being presented to Council, would not leave enough time to complete all the tasks associated with such an event.

However, staff agree that an alternative event would be very welcome by the community during these challenging times. Staff is recommending a parade alternative. The alternative would be to create an “Orangeville Holiday Lights Extravaganza” event.

Staff have consulted with the Orangeville Business Improvement Association (BIA), Optimist Club of Orangeville, and the Kin Club of Orangeville in creating the conceptual plans for the Holiday Lights Extravaganza. Staff in Recreation & Events, Facilities & Parks, Public Works, Communications, Orangeville Fire, Economic Development & Culture and Information Technology have met to discuss and coordinate various aspects of the lighting event.

The concept is to create holiday light displays in various parts of the Town and create a digital (GIS) map of all locations that residents and visitors can use from the comfort of their own vehicle and tour the town (drive-bys) and the light displays. In conjunction with the BIA the downtown core would see a variety of light displays at Town Hall, the Mill Street Branch of the Orangeville Public Library, the downtown centre medians, Alexandra Park, and lamp posts along Broadway. Additional locations throughout the town would include Alder Recreation Centre, Tony Rose Memorial Sports Centre with the possibility of Murray’s Mountain and the Tourism Centre.

The BIA Board of Directors has approved funding in the amount of \$20,000 to bring creative and enhanced holiday lights compared to past years. The BIA is also planning to source a large Christmas tree once again for the front of Town Hall. This year there will not be a Christmas tree lighting or Moonlight Magic event. Downtown businesses will be invited to participate in lighting and decorating their storefronts.

In addition, the Optimist Club is willing to contribute time, lights, displays and volunteers to assist in lighting up the town. For many, many years, the Optimist Club has organized the Christmas in the Park event, an extremely popular holiday event. The Optimist Club is committed to lighting the trees at Kaycee Gardens, but there will not be any public access to the park. The park will be lit up and will be included on the tour map. The Optimist Club is willing to assist with various lighting display locations throughout the town.

The Kin Club is willing to loan the Town the Santa Sleigh used in the parade if it can be used in another capacity. Unfortunately, the Kin Club will not be able to participate in

any type of event related to holiday festivities this year. They are looking at possible virtual alternatives.

Orangeville Hydro has also committed to assist with light installations at various locations as needed including the downtown core.

Santa will also visit the Town. Orangeville Fire and staff in the Recreation & Events Division will coordinate various dates leading up to Christmas and will tour Santa on a fire truck to various neighbourhoods. The route will not be disclosed to the public in advance but will be similar to an ice cream truck visiting a neighbourhood. When residents hear the sirens and music, they can come out and catch a glimpse of Santa as he drives by on a fire truck. Social media hashtags such as #findsanta will promote the Santa tour.

Community residents and businesses across the town will also be encouraged to get involved and light up their homes and business locations. Applications will be available on-line and residents and businesses can apply to be part of the digital map.

The target date is Sunday, November 22 for the light displays and Christmas tree at Town Hall to be lit up. The light displays will run through to January 8, 2021.

Strategic Alignment

Orangeville Forward – Strategic Plan

Engaged and involved

- Encourage and strengthen participation in the community by people of all ages.
- Facilitate and support a diverse range of community events and festivals that bring people together.

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Economic Development and Culture

- Connect tourists to the Town as an urban hub within the County.

Engagement and Inclusivity

- Build social networks that encourage well-being and celebrate the community.

Notice Provisions

N/A

Financial Impact

Staff are requesting Council approve \$20,000 in funding for the Holiday Lights Extravaganza.

Respectfully submitted

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