



## **NEWS RELEASE**

For immediate release

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

### **Proposed policy set to strengthen support for Calgary's festivals and events**

(Calgary, AB) – Calgary Arts Development, The City of Calgary and key stakeholders in Calgary's festival and events community have engaged in research and planning to improve City support for festivals and events over the past 18 months. The result of this work is a proposed Festival & Events Policy that will be heard by a committee of City Council on Wednesday, February 3, 2010. The new Policy recognizes the social, economic and cultural value that events and festivals bring to the city and declares the City of Calgary's commitment to creating a supportive environment for festivals and events.

Key areas of support outlined in the proposed Festival & Event Policy include:

#### **Recognition of the value of festivals and events as a vital ingredient in Calgary's ongoing development as an active and creative city.**

- The policy recognizes that festivals and events enhance quality of life in Calgary and are an essential element in creating complete communities.
- Community consultations show that festival and event experiences are recognized to have significant value among both citizens and visitors.
- Because of the value festivals and events bring to Calgary, The City considers its support to these events part of its core business.

#### **Open and transparent processes to guide City support for festivals and events.**

- The Festival & Event Policy was developed in collaboration with key stakeholders in the festival and event community, and close to 300 individuals representing citizens, festival and event producers, audience members, volunteers, sponsors and tourism industry representatives participated in the research and consultation process for the Policy.
- Internal experts from within City business units as well as an external Event Advisory Committee made up of festival and event stakeholders and citizens at large will oversee an open and transparent process to evaluate, assess and measure festival and event applications and recommend eligible festivals and events for subsidized City services and support programs.

#### **A new model for assessing the impact of various festivals and events has been developed and will be used to determine eligibility for support from the City of Calgary if the new Policy is approved.**

- Merit and technical reviews will occur for all festivals and events requesting City support. Examples of merit review criteria include elements such as: positive impact on the community, social, cultural or economic benefits. Technical reviews cover event elements such as site plans, staging requirements, etc.
- Festivals and events that meet merit and technical review criteria will be provided with subsidized services and will be eligible to apply for additional resources under the new support program.
- Those events that do not meet the merit review or are commercially operated festivals and events would be required to pay for all services and support provided by the City. The exception would be organizations that are responsible for the execution of an event plan or bid that The City has supported or sponsored (e.g. Grey Cup Festival, JUNO Awards, WorldSkills Competition).



**Significant enhancements to support for festivals and events, including subsidized City services and resources to support new and existing festivals and events.**

- Many of the fees and costs associated with accessing City services for a festival or event would be absorbed by City business units. These include things like fees for park permits, road closures and policing costs. The result will be lower costs to produce festivals and events in Calgary, allowing festivals and events to channel more resources into other areas such as programming, accessibility and outreach.
- A new support program for festivals and events is proposed to launch in 2010 to provide resources for the growth of new and existing festivals and events. This support would be delivered through funds already allocated in the City of Calgary's 2009-11 budget.

Stakeholders and interested members of the public are encouraged to attend this week's Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services meeting on Wednesday, February 3, 2010. Pending the recommendation of the Committee, the strategy will be received by City Council on Monday, February 8, 2010. A workshop about the new policy will be held on March 1, 2010, 5 to 9pm at Fort Calgary. All festival and event organizers are encouraged to attend.

**SUPPORTING MATERIALS & COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

Calgary's support for festivals and events is an important community issue. Stakeholders and interested citizens are encouraged to learn more about the research and participate in the following ways:

- Read the Festival and Events Policy to learn more about the proposed support for Festivals and Events in Calgary available [here](#).
- A workshop about the Festival & Events Policy will be held on March 1, 2010 from 5 to 9pm at Fort Calgary. All festival and event organizers are encouraged to attend.
- Attend the meeting of the Standing Policy Committee on Community & Protective Services on Wednesday, February 3, 2010 at 9:30am in the Engineering Traditions Committee Room, Historic City Hall (lower level), 700 Macleod Trail S.E.
- Interested stakeholders and citizens are invited to contact their ward alderman around the topic of support for festivals and events in Calgary. Information on how to contact members of City Council is also available online at [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca) or by phoning 3-1-1.

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