



FILMING IN OKOTOKS – LESSONS LEARNED

Issue

A report identifying lessons learned arising from filming opportunities in Okotoks is provided to Council for information.

Motion Proposed by Administration

That the Filming in Okotoks – Lessons Learned report be received as information.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications

The purpose of this report is to identify lessons learned and action items for ongoing improvement. Acknowledging and acting upon opportunities for improvement in an ongoing and meaningful way will demonstrate Council's commitment to the Principles of Engagement and transparency as outlined in Public Participation Policy GP-D-2.1.

This "Lessons Learned" report will focus on Filming in Okotoks.

Okotoks has been host to film crews on average once a year since 2016, and is home to the Okotoks Film Festival and the new Telus Optik series "In the Jumpseat with Jacqueline." Recently, filming was undertaken in the Suntree neighbourhood over several days in February for a popular HBO series. This was the largest-scale filming event experienced in Okotoks to date, and lessons learned from the experience will help to inform the Town's future practices.

At their March 14, 2022 regular meeting, Okotoks Council approved an amendment to the Strong Local Economy Policy PS-A-2.3 by adding support of the film industry in Okotoks to the policy's service levels and moved that public participation at the inform level of the input zone be implemented regarding development and communication of film guidelines in Okotoks. Administration is presently working on Administrative Guidelines and web content to further clarify and streamline the Town's film approval processes and to share information and promote Okotoks as a film-friendly community. Film-friendly, in this context, refers to activities such as streamlining approvals, removing barriers, and providing clear information regarding processes, costs, sustainable filming practice expectations, and the benefits of filming in Okotoks.

Actions arising will include the development of Administrative Guidelines, associated fee structure, and web content to build on positive outcomes and address opportunities identified by this review within the scope of Council direction.

Lessons Learned

Positive Outcomes:

1. Positive media coverage & exposure

The filming event generated a lot of excitement and positive exposure for Okotoks through traditional, online and social media. Such positive coverage can be leveraged in the Town's promotions as a film-friendly community.

2. Support of local businesses

The crew, directors and producers indicated that they always do their best to "shop local" when shooting in a community. The representative of the recent filming event provided a list of 28 storefront businesses, including food, retail and service sector that were directly supported by the film company as part of their operations in Okotoks, with many seeing repeat business. Support of local businesses by individuals involved in filming, outside of the film company's operations, is not included in the list.

3. Revenue generation for the Town

Fees collected amounted to over \$18,000 not including cost-recovery for personnel and services, which amounted to over \$20,000.

4. Donations

A donation of \$7,500 was made by Bear & Pear Productions to the Okotoks Family Resource Centre in support of OFRC's services to residents. A second donation, in the amount of \$2,500, was made to Good Shepherd School.

Opportunities:

1. Process

Combine existing processes into a single process and fee structure for clarity, convenience and streamlining.

2. Fees

Review fee structure for alignment with surrounding municipalities and recommend changes as needed.

3. Promotion and Education

Create a page on the Town website for promotion and process regarding film.

4. Public Participation

- Review public participation roles, responsibilities and opportunities on the parts of both the Town and the film company.
- Develop a process for prior notification to affected parties.
- Investigate ways to improve communication and reduce inconvenience to businesses, residents and the public wherever possible.
- Develop a process for addressing resident or business feedback.
- Consider opportunities for consultation or collaboration with film industry partners where appropriate.

5. Best Practices

- Refer to best practices of other municipalities, organizations such as Keep Alberta Rolling and Calgary Economic Development, and government organizations
- Leverage the tools and opportunities available through such agencies.

6. Cost-Benefit Analysis

Identify resources and tools to analyze benefits of filming to the local economy.

7. Continuous Improvement

Reassess outcomes, opportunities and actions on an ongoing basis.

Strategic Plan Goals

<input type="checkbox"/>	Manage Community Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Strong Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Quality Community Infrastructure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Healthy and Safe Community
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enhance Organizational Excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Foster Economic Vitality
		<input type="checkbox"/>	Promote Environmental Excellence

Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements

Public Participation Policy GP-D-2.1

Strong Local Economy Policy PS-A-2.3

Public Participation Strategy

n/a

Alternatives for Consideration

n/a

CAO Comments

This report is provided to align with our culture of excellence which ensures we focus on continuous improvement and learning to enhance future experiences.

Transparency in sharing these learnings is essential for the learning to continue and create accountability with the users and governors of the process.

Attachment(s)

1. Policy GP-D-2.1

2. Policy PS-A-2.3

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April 14, 2022