

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>TO:</b> Shane Bourke, City Manager                                   | <b>DATE:</b> April 29, 2025                                      |
| <b>FROM:</b> Dan Lemieux, Chief Public & Protective Services Officer    | <b>MEETING:</b> Public and Protective Services Committee Meeting |
| <b>REPORT WRITER:</b> Catherine Ridgeway, Director Events & Programming |  |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b> City Events Update                                      |  |

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Public and Protective Services Committee receive the report for information.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the 2025 Budget Deliberations, Council directed Administration to report back to the appropriate Standing Committee identifying potential new events that the City could host to fill gaps in the community and enhance citizen experience.

### BACKGROUND

The City of Grande Prairie offers a robust calendar of community events that are accessible to all residents and contribute meaningfully to quality of life. The City remains committed to continuous improvement, regularly adapting its event offerings to reflect evolving community needs and social trends.

### ANALYSIS

#### Identified Gaps in Community Events

A review of the City's existing event calendar, along with stakeholder feedback, has highlighted the following gaps in community programming:

- **Seasonal Imbalance:** a high concentration of events are held in the summer months, resulting in less event offerings in the spring.
- **Cultural Engagement:** there is an opportunity to better reflect and celebrate the City's cultural diversity through inclusive events.
- **Dedicated Children's Festival:** given the city's high population of young families, there is a demand for a dedicated children's festival.

## **Proposed New Event: Grande Prairie Children's Festival**

One of the most impactful ways to address the identified gaps is by introducing a Grande Prairie Children's Festival. This event will provide a safe, engaging, and educational environment for children and families. Featuring interactive arts, science, and cultural activities designed for youth engagement. Administration will foster partnerships with local stakeholders, schools, businesses, and artists to create an inclusive festival experience.

The event will coincide with the start of spring in April and offer a mix of free and ticketed experiences. The event will be open to all interested in participating. The Events & Programming department will develop a detailed festival outline with budget implications to present during the 2026 budget deliberations.

## **New Event in 2025: City of Grande Prairie Stompede Pancake Breakfast**

In partnership with Invest Grande Prairie, the Events team will host the inaugural Stompede Pancake Breakfast at Bonnetts Energy Centre's HA Rice Plaza on May 28. This event will celebrate our Western heritage and provide a welcoming opportunity for the community to gather and connect over a shared meal.

## **Focused Cultural Engagement: Heritage Day**

For the 2025 Heritage Day celebration, the Events & Programming with support from the Community Connections department, is working with community partners to enhance cultural representation. The Grande Prairie Museum will continue to offer heritage programming on Saturday, August 2. Additionally, partnerships with the Hindu Chariot Festival and the Grande Prairie International Association's "Around the World in Bites" will add vibrant cultural experiences throughout the weekend.

## **Partnerships**

The Events & Programming department remains committed to fostering strong community partnerships to grow and enhance City events. By collaborating with local businesses, cultural organizations, and community groups, the department aims to:

- Increase cultural inclusion and engagement
- Expand event offerings
- Strengthen community pride
- Support local economic and social development

The City will continue working with industry partners and promoters to attract non-traditional touring events to the region, further diversifying entertainment options for residents and visitors alike.

## **Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities**

### **Quality of Life**

City-led events enhance quality of life by creating inclusive spaces where residents of all ages and backgrounds can come together. Events contribute to community identity, promote well-being, and provide opportunities for recreation, learning, and celebration.

### **Innovative Efficiencies & Economic Readiness**

Events play a key role in attracting visitors, increasing local spending, and supporting small businesses. Whether through large-scale festivals, concerts, or community celebrations, events stimulate the local economy and enhance Grande Prairie's profile as a vibrant hub.

### **Inclusive & Caring Community**

The Events & Programming department actively engages with local organizations, cultural groups, nonprofits, and businesses to co-create meaningful event experiences. These partnerships allow for shared resources, community involvement, and broader reach.

### **Engaging Relationships**

Events are designed and delivered with careful consideration of budget and resource optimization. Phased planning, strategic use of city assets, and partnership development help ensure that events are both impactful and cost-effective.

### **Environmental Impact**

There are no identified environmental impacts regarding the actions recommended.

### **Economic Impact**

The full economic impact will be presented at 2026 budget deliberations.

### **Social Impact**

City-led events have a meaningful social impact by enhancing quality of life, fostering inclusivity, and supporting economic and community development. Events bring residents together across cultures and generations, create opportunities for local businesses, and reflect the unique identity of Grande Prairie. Through thoughtful planning, strategic partnerships, and a commitment to accessibility, events promote community pride, connection, and a vibrant, welcoming city for all.

### **Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents**

The City of Grande Prairie Recreation and Culture Strategy 2024

### **Risk**

There is no risk associated with this report.

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To inform the development of the proposed event initiatives, engagement has been conducted with a range of internal and external stakeholders to gather insights, identify opportunities, and ensure alignment with community needs and expectations.

Engagement to date includes:

- **Internal Stakeholders:** collaboration with relevant City departments to ensure alignment with strategic goals, operational capacity, and resource availability.
- **Other Municipal Event Specialists:** peer consultations with event professionals from other municipalities to identify best practices and innovative approaches.
- **Youth Council:** continued consultation with the Youth Council to ensure youth perspectives and interests are considered in programming and event design.
- **Grande Prairie International Association (GPIA):** engagement with GPIA to explore opportunities for cultural inclusion and diverse community representation.
- **Previous Children's Festival Organizers:** discussions held to capture lessons learned and understand historical successes and challenges of past events.

Future engagement efforts will continue throughout the planning process to validate direction, deepen partnerships, and ensure broad community representation in the final event design.

## BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications to the 2025 budget. Budgets for new and enhanced events will be presented at 2026 budget deliberations.

## SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

A review of the City's event calendar and community feedback identified key opportunities to improve cultural representation, balance seasonal programming, and introduce a dedicated Children's Festival. In response, Administration proposes the creation of a Grande Prairie Children's Festival in 2026, and the launch of a new Stompede Pancake Breakfast in 2025. Enhancements to Heritage Day will also expand cultural engagement through new partnerships.

## ATTACHMENTS

2025 Community Event Listing  
2025 Community Event Budget