

DECISION/DIRECTION NOTE

Title: Downtown Holiday Market Road Closure

Date Prepared: November 4, 2020

Report To: Regular Meeting of Council

Councillor and Role: Councillor Debbie Hanlon, Special Events Regulatory Committee

Ward: Ward 2

Decision/Direction Required: Council approval of one of three options outlined below for the Downtown Holiday Market.

Discussion – Background and Current Status: Following the success of the Downtown Pedestrian Mall and expressed interest by both the Downtown business community and the visiting public, a Downtown Holiday Market is being planned to occur over two weekends in December.

While feedback from the public engagement process on this summer's event is still being considered in terms of continuing with a pedestrian mall in future years, the City has an interest in piloting a holiday market for the 2020 season.

After consultation with Downtown St. John's, the proposed event dates are:

- December 5 and 6, and
- December 12 and 13

Programming will be limited due to COVID-19 restrictions and will include:

- Holiday music and pre-recorded messages playing through speakers on Water Street and Duckworth Street.
- Mummers roaming Water Street, Duckworth Street, and George Street.
- Programming will occur from 12:00pm – 6:00pm on Saturdays and 12:00pm – 5:00pm on Sundays.
- Business operating hours will vary for individual businesses downtown and are not in conjunction with the programming times.

The programming and subsequent road closures are weather dependent.

Downtown businesses will be encouraged to decorate their storefront and windows in holiday theme, Downtown St. John's will also be enhancing their regular holiday decorations. Businesses will be provided with an Inclusion Checklist and contact information for Inclusion NL to help guide and support them when planning their Holiday Market set ups.

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Unlike the summer Pedestrian Mall, there will be no extensions of premises for this event. Businesses may request permission to set up tables, chairs, or merchandise outside. However, there will be no food or alcohol service permitted on the street, and all furniture must be taken inside overnight.

As City staff are still in the planning stage for this event, final plans for the Downtown Holiday Market will be announced in the coming weeks via PSA and social media.

Promotions for this event will emphasize the Holiday Market as a full downtown event that includes Water Street, Duckworth Street, and George Street. It will emphasize social distancing, recommend wearing a mask, and inform about road closure times (as decided). Adequate signage throughout downtown will also reinforce these messages.

Through multiple conversations with various members of the Special Events Regulatory Committee, the following options for the Downtown Holiday Market road closures are provided for Council consideration:

1. Full Road Closure – Water Street (Adelaide Street to Prescott Street).
 - Road closure will occur 9:00pm on Friday night and will continue until 6:00pm on Sunday.
 - Signage will be used to indicate that cars not removed from Water Street by 10:00am Saturday morning will be towed at owners expense.
 - Deliveries and couriers are permitted to enter the street before 12:00pm on Saturday and Sunday.
 - Barricade security from 8:00am – 6:00pm Saturday and Sunday, roaming security after hours.
 - Estimated cost \$20,000.
2. Soft Road Closure (outside event hours) - Water Street (Adelaide Street to Prescott Street).
 - This option has the same logistics as the full road closure, however, taxis and other drop off/pick up vehicles will be permitted on the road as of 9:00pm Friday and Saturday until 12:00pm the next day.
 - Road closure will occur 9:00pm on Friday night and will continue until 6:00pm on Sunday.
 - Signage will be used to indicate that cars not removed from Water Street will be towed at owners expense.
 - Deliveries and couriers are permitted to enter the street before 12:00pm on Saturday and Sunday.
 - All barricades will require continuous security as only designated vehicles will be permitted.
 - There will be no parking permitted on the street throughout the weekend and there will be ample signage and communication to reflect this.

- This option is being suggested in light of concerns from our Downtown Pedestrian Mall stakeholder and public engagement, regarding safety and access to the road late at night.
 - Estimated cost \$22,000.
3. No Road Closure.
- With limited programming opportunities due to Public Health guidelines, and the COVID-19 pandemic, this option suggests we hold our Downtown Holiday Market with no road closures.
 - This option allows us to provide the same programming noted above, but restricted to the sidewalks.
 - Estimated cost \$16,000.

Key Considerations/Implications:

1. Budget/Financial Implications: Significant budget implications for contractual security, as well as event programming. Specific amounts for each option noted above.
2. Partners or Other Stakeholders: Downtown St. John's
3. Alignment with Strategic Directions/Adopted Plans: N/A
4. Legal or Policy Implications: Legal to be consulted regarding signage and communication of potential parking restrictions.
5. Privacy Implications: N/A
6. Engagement and Communications Considerations: Communications will need to be utilized for promotion of the event and potential road closures. A PSA will be released by Communications in the coming weeks to outline the finalized plan of the Downtown Holiday Market.
7. Human Resource Implications: N/A
8. Procurement Implications: N/A
9. Information Technology Implications: N/A
10. Other Implications: N/A

Recommendation:

That Council approve the Downtown Holiday Market event, and option two – Soft Road Closure (outside event hours) - Water Street (Adelaide Street to Prescott Street).

Prepared by: Christa Norman, Special Projects Coordinator

Approved by: Jennifer Langmead, Supervisor – Tourism and Events

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Downtown Holiday Market Road Closure.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Nov 5, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Jennifer Langmead - Nov 5, 2020 - 10:01 AM

Tanya Haywood - Nov 5, 2020 - 12:03 PM