

Report to Council

Report Title: Brockton Tent Rentals

Prepared By: Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer/Acting Director of Community Services and
Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator

Department: Economic Development/Community Services

Date: August 8, 2023

Report Number: ED2023-04 **File Number:** C11ED

Attachments: Tent Rental Agreement
Council Report REC2021-16

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton receives Report Number ED2023-04 – Brockton Tent Rentals, prepared by Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer/Acting Director of Community Services and Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator for information purposes and in doing so provides direction to staff regarding the tent rental fees based on Option _____ as outlined.

Report:

Background:

The Municipality of Brockton purchased 11 tents in 2021 for a total cost of \$12,216.43. Council has approved a rental charge in the Fees and Charge By-Law that was applied and recently raised concern from some users. The intent of this report is to provide Council background on the purchase of the Brockton branded tents and seek confirmation and clarity moving forward on the application of the associated set fee for various users moving forward.

In June of 2021, Brockton staff brought forward report REC2021-16, attached for reference, on the Pop-Up Tent Shelters purchase and establishment of a rental program for 2022. Brockton Council approved the purchase of ten 10x10 and one 10x12 high-quality pop-up tents branded with the municipal logo.

The new Brockton tents were used during the summer sidewalk sale in 2021 to aid in social distancing requirements (for our Walkerton “Re-opening” event) and again for the Hometown Christmas Market that December. During this time Council approved waiving any rental charge to support the business community during the COVID pandemic.

COVID-19 restrictions ended in April, 2022, as did the requirements to socially distance or for stores to limit customers. The tents are now used for shade and shelter of products, and to promote the municipality with their bright, cheerful branding.

The current tent rental fee is \$125 for a standard tent, and \$225 for a 10x20 foot tent. The fee was designed to offset the cost of eventually replacing the tents, plus staff time involved in setting them up and taking them down for events (approximately 15 minutes per tent, with four staff). In majority of instances tents are set up by our staff to ensure proper set up and limit the risk of damages.

Analysis:

Brockton Community Events

On July 21st, 2023, the Municipality of Brockton hosted its annual Walkerton Summer Streetfest event. The event took place in the downtown core, with many activities taking place in the new Market Garden. Staff were approached by seven businesses who requested to use our Brockton tents. Staff advised the businesses that there would be a charge of \$125 for tent rentals, in accordance with our fees and charges by-law. This is a municipally organized event and it was felt by some that the tents should be free for use. Some of the businesses that initially requested tents ended up using their own for the event. Eight of the ten tents were used by Brockton in the Market Garden for Streetfest and the remaining two were not used that day.

During last year's Christmas Market, a tent being used by a vendor caused property damage to a storefront sign when it became airborne during a gust of wind. Thankfully no one was personally injured. The Municipality was responsible for the repairs to the storefront which cost several hundred dollars, plus staff time. In November 2023 Brockton will be hosting the annual Christmas Market. This event attracts many local businesses outside of the downtown core area as well as promoting the businesses in the downtown. There will be a number of tents needed for our own use to house vendors in the market area and potential entertainment. However, the question has been asked if the tents will be available for business and vendor use and if there will be a charge.

Community Groups

There are many community groups within Brockton that have reached out to staff inquiring about the use of the pop-up tents. Many, if not all, of these user groups are non-profit, volunteer driven organizations that host events to raise money for the community. Each of the organizations were informed of the set charge, as per our fees and charges by-law. Only one of the organizations have used the tents for their event to date and an invoice was sent as per the Fees and Charges By-Law.

Cost Recovery – Future Replacement

In 2022, staff brought forward the proposed fee for the tent rents, as per report REC2021-16. As stewards of municipal assets charging for the use of the tents will help offset the cost of replacing them, and assist in covering for damages, by ensuring we have funds available. Based on recent use although minimal there are already three tents that are damaged with burn holes, although no municipal events have involved fire and the 10x20 tent is missing. The set fee was established to assist with the replacement cost of the tents, to

minimize the operating costs and tax impact on the community. At this time, we have only had one official rental which was a user group that has requested the fee be waived as well.

The Municipality is fortunate to have excellent quality, branded tents available for use and to support municipally held events such as the Volunteer Recognition Event, and to support the activity or vendor area at the Summer Streetfest or Christmas Market. In consultation with other communities this is not a usual amenity offered or administered by municipalities. Few, if any, surrounding municipalities have tents available. The tents have added promotional value to public events, and have been very much appreciated by downtown businesses and community groups, during COVID-19, and after.

We want to ensure the tent stock can be maintained and that the tents are being administered to the community based on the direction of Council. We seek Councils direction on how they would like to proceed with the request to waive the rental fee for the Brockton oriented events, Community groups and should Council wish to establish a dedicated reserve fund transfer each year to assist with the replacement of the pop-up tents.

The following options are summarized for ease of Council consideration:

- 1) Status Quo. Leave the \$125 Charge as per the Fees and Charges By-Law for all users and direct monies to a reserve for tent replacement as required
- 2) Leave the \$125 Charge as per the Fees and Charges By-Law for all users outside of Service Clubs, Community Organizations and Not-For-Profits and direct monies to a reserve for tent replacement as required.
- 3) Leave the \$125 Charge as per the Fees and Charges By-Law for all users outside of Service Clubs, Community Organizations, Brockton Not-For-Profits and Brockton business for the two Municipally held events (Summerfest and Christmas Market) as available and direct monies to a reserve for tent replacement as required.

Strategic Action Plan Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Strategic Action Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?		
• Recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Heritage, Culture, and Community		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Quality of Life		N/A
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Land Use Planning and the Natural Environment		N/A
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Development		Yes
• Recommendations contribute to achieving Municipal Governance		N/A

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

The marquee tents are expensive and will be costly to replace over time. However, they do support economic development initiatives that encourage people to visit from outside the area to shop and dine in our beautiful

downtown. Use by not-for-profit groups contributes to our positive community branding, and to fundraising efforts for community projects and causes.

Waiving user fees could put us in a position of not being able to cover the cost of replacing the tents, or covering damage to persons or property.

Respectfully Submitted by:

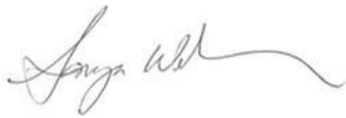
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish Serratore', with a stylized, flowing script.

Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer/Acting Director of Community Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paulette Peirol', with a clear, cursive script.

Paulette Peirol, Community Development Coordinator

Reviewed By:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sonya Watson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer