



City of Delta
COUNCIL REPORT
Regular Meeting

F.16

To: **Mayor and Council**

File No.: **8100-20/TDD**

From: **Parks, Recreation & Culture
Department**

Date: **February 23, 2022**

2022 Tour de Delta

The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager.

▪ **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- A. THAT the 2022 Tour de Delta be cancelled.
- B. THAT options for the long-term future of the Tour de Delta as a community-wide celebration be brought forward through the 2023 Financial Plan process.

▪ **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to bring forward a recommendation to Council to cancel the 2022 Tour de Delta and seek support to review the long-term feasibility of the Tour de Delta.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

At the December 13, 2021 Regular Meeting, Council directed staff to review options for the 2022 Tour de Delta (Tour) and report back to Council regarding these options for further discussions.

As the Tour is part of a regional series of cycling events known as BC Superweek, staff indicated in the previous report that they planned to continue discussions with organizers regarding plans and the potential viability of the 2022 event.

The onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of BC Superweek and the Tour in 2020 and 2021 due to local limitations prohibiting large gatherings and the restrictions around travel that impacted athletes in the cycling community. Public health restrictions around gatherings and events have continually changed over this time and international travel is still significantly impacted by the pandemic. While public health restrictions for events and gatherings were lifted on February 17, 2022, a variety of logistical challenges and risks still exist regarding reinstating a typical Tour. Furthermore, given the overall cost and demand on resources for the event, staff have undertaken discussions on the feasibility and risk associated with the Tour for 2022 based on the considerations outlined below.

At its February 17, 2022 Executive Meeting, the Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission received a memorandum on this topic.

▪ **DISCUSSION:**

BC Superweek Partners

Staff have undertaken further dialogue with the BC Superweek (Superweek) organizers over the past several months. While no organizer has officially declared their intention to provide a race in 2022, Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Port Coquitlam and White Rock are actively engaged in their decision-making processes, including approvals, regarding options for their cycling events.

On February 7, 2022, Superweek participants met virtually to review the feasibility of delivering Superweek in 2022, based on the now-limited planning timeframe in concert with the uncertainty still associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants agreed that final decisions by Superweek participants should be made by mid-March in order to retain enough planning time to deliver successful races in July 2022, should events move forward.

International Travel

The sport of cycling has been impacted significantly by COVID-19 on a national and international scale. As a Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) sanctioned event, the Tour road race attracts international cycling teams since riders are able to use their results from this race to qualify for larger-scale international events, such as the Olympic Games.

Restrictions and regulations for international travel have resulted in significantly higher costs for participation due to quarantine rules in place not only in Canada but in a number of countries from which riders may originate. With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to impact international travel for the foreseeable future, there is a high degree of uncertainty as to how many international athletes would register for the Tour in 2022 and beyond.

Cycling Sponsorship

Part of the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic has included the reduction in sponsorship funding available, which has impacted the cycling community. Many elite cyclists are a part of a team sponsored by a commercial interest. This sponsorship funding is a major source of revenue for the cycling team, supporting training, equipment, attire and travel. Both the national and international cycling community has been impacted by the reduction in available sponsorship, resulting in cycling teams having less available funding for competition and associated travel.

Event Options and Other Considerations

Understanding the significant and unique costs associated with the road race and the uncertainty of the number of registrants forecast for this portion of the Tour, staff completed a review to determine anticipated costs based on one or two criterium race events. While a similar amount of administrative, staffing, volunteer recognition and marketing costs would be incurred regardless if one or two criterium races were run, a second race would result in additional costs associated with the race awards and services, community festivals and equipment; however, these additional costs would normally be offset by additional revenues from sponsorship and registration associated with two criterium races.

Another circumstance impacting the business community is staff availability. According to some event organizers, this has impacted services received by the business community for their events. A number of vendors who have traditionally provided services for the Tour were contacted early in 2022, to determine their ability to provide similar services this year. Nearly all respondents expressed their interest in having the City re-engage their services for 2022, but many noted the potential increase in costs associated with their services for a variety of reasons, including staffing, supply chain considerations and additional COVID-19 related protocols.

Finally, the participation of cyclists in the Tour and in BC Superweek overall is heavily dependent on host housing. Local families welcoming both Canadian and international riders into their homes, thereby alleviating the costs that the cyclists would incur for hotels or other paid accommodations. This is a major component of attracting cyclists to participate in the Tour. A great deal of uncertainty exists as to how comfortable residents would be in hosting cyclists during BC Superweek given the nature of their travel associated with BC Superweek and close-contact interactions with their fellow athletes.

Next Steps

Given the staffing and financial investment required, staff believe committing to some form of the Tour in 2022 is a significant risk. Planning for this scale of event requires significant time and resources and the remaining time horizon may not result in a quality event.

The Tour has provided 19 years of competitive cycling events and community celebration opportunities in Delta. However, the costs for this event are significant and funding received for the UCI sanctioned event is uncertain. As the community continues to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, Parks, Recreation & Culture is seeking to understand the long-term impacts of the pandemic and how programs, services and events should be modified to meet evolving community needs. Understanding the costs and staff effort associated with this event, staff recommend that future options for the event be explored as part of the 2023 planning process.

Implications:

COVID-19 Implications – Though some COVID-19 restrictions have recently been lifted in British Columbia, a number of the concerns and considerations identified in this report are either a result of the impact from the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years, or are decisions that go well beyond local authority, such as international travel. In addition, over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have been re-instated at various times with minimal notice in response to COVID-19 variants.

Foundation for the Future Implications – Given the financial implications associated with the delivery of the Tour, the recommendation to cancel the 2022 Tour aligns with the Community Economic Sustainability pillar. The financial risks of delivering a 2022 Tour increase significantly for Delta should past sponsorship funding levels, host housing uptake or supplier costs not be in alignment with previous iterations of the Tour.

Financial Implications - In 2019, the net actual cost for the Tour was \$300,000, with approximately \$450,000 of expenses and \$150,000 of revenue, which included a grant from the Federal Government to support the UCI sanctioned event. While prestigious, the Tour's road race requires significant additional costs for the event to meet international standards, such as uniformed police on motorcycles forming part of the mobile support for competitors. There is also a significant amount of staff time that goes into the planning, coordination and delivery of the annual event.

The Tour is the City's most costly annual event and staff believe there is merit in exploring whether this event should remain a priority for funding over other community priorities within Parks, Recreation and Culture.

▪ CONCLUSION:

While the City of Delta is optimistically looking forward to resuming community-wide special events, the variables associated with international travel, athlete participation, cycling sponsorship, service providers and volunteers, combined with the required planning timeline and the required financial commitment, provides a level of risk too high for staff to be able to recommend that the 2022 Tour de Delta move forward. As such, staff are recommending that the 2022 Tour be cancelled and that, given the high costs and effort associated with the event, the long-term future of the event be examined.



Carmen Gonzalez
Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture

This report has been prepared in consultation with the following listed department.

Concurring Department		
Department	Name	Signature
Finance	Melanie Kerr	MK