



## CREATIVE ECONOMY DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: A. DONNELLY, COMMUNITY EVENTS COORDINATOR, EXT 4694**

**NOTED: K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE ECONOMY DEPARTMENT**  
**Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE**  
**M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

**RE: 2019 BARRIE WINTERFEST – ALL WARDS**

**DATE: APRIL 29, 2019**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with an update regarding the 2019 Barrie Winterfest and to share the attached Impact Report. Barrie Winterfest was held February 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019 with outdoor programming in Heritage Park and Meridian Place and partner programming in venues throughout the community.

This year, a special partnership was formed with the Barrie Native Friendship Centre (BNFC) in celebration of their 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary and to honour local Indigenous culture. The theme for this year's ice and snow sculptures featured wildlife representing the Clans of the local Indigenous community, as well as a unique display of artwork created by friends of the BNFC in a special workshop and suspended in ice. Cultural programming provided the opportunity for the public to engage with the Barrie Native Friendship Centre and learn about Indigenous culture, therefore increasing the opportunity for awareness, understanding, and discussion. Programming included learning about the history of Indigenous maple syrup harvesting, tasting bannock, trying hoop dance, learning traditional stories and songs from an Elder, and more.

In March, Winterfest was named as one of the Top 100 Events in Ontario by industry association Festivals & Events Ontario. The event attracts attendees from all over the province and is promoted as a tourism destination through a campaign with Tourism Barrie, as well as through ads in publications such as the Epoch Times. As such, Winterfest experiences visitation from outside of our region and attracts a diverse audience seeking an introduction to the winter experience. Many Barrie residents have made it a winter tradition.

Partnerships are a key success factor for Winterfest, from local media and sponsors to the many organizations that host events and activities as part of the Winterfest programming.

Highlights from Barrie Winterfest 2019:

- Recently named one of Ontario's Top 100 Festivals & Events – Winterfest has received this honour for more than 11 years
- Over 23,000 attended the event from across the province, including a group of >50 friends and family that chartered a bus from the Oshawa area
- Over 10,000 people engaged with Barrie Native Friendship Centre staff and programming
- Generated >\$35,000 value in cash and in-kind support from key partners and sponsors



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- Increased audience engagement through the Creative Barrie social media channels and Tourism Barrie social video campaign. The Tourism Barrie video ad campaign reached 339,363 on social media.
- Intercept surveys of attendees at the event indicated that:
  - 74% rated their experience at Winterfest as 8 or more out of 10
  - 96% plan to attend Winterfest in the future
  - 62% shopped or dined downtown Barrie while attending Winterfest

In the year ahead, our goals are to continue to collaborate with partners to provide exciting and valuable programming to Barrie residents that also encourages tourism in all seasons, supports talent attraction efforts, and further enhances Barrie's profile as a destination community with exciting events.