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**TO: GENERAL COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT: MEDLEY CORPORATION EVENT AGREEMENT**

**WARD: 2**

**PREPARED BY AND KEY CONTACT: K. DUBEAU, DIRECTOR OF CREATIVE ECONOMY, Ext. 4763**

**GENERAL MANAGER APPROVAL: Z. LIFSHIZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INVEST BARRIE**

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL: C. LADD, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION**

1. That staff in the Creative Economy Department be directed to grant the required exemptions to the Special Event Policy and execute a Special Event Agreement with the Medley Food and Wine Expo for 2018 as set out in Appendix "A" to Staff Report CE007-17.

**PURPOSE & BACKGROUND**

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Staff Report is to present to City Council for its consideration a proposed exemption to the following items in the Special Event Policy:
  - a) 6.1.5. "Full closure of Municipal Property or its amenities is not permitted. This includes but is not limited to beaches, playgrounds, concessions, washrooms, and splash pads."
  - b) 6.1.6. "A Special Event on Municipal Property shall not charge a general admission fee or solicit the general public for funds or membership,"to allow Medley Corporation to operate the Food and Wine Expo as a commercial, ticketed event on Municipal Property.
3. Further, this staff report is to present to City Council a Special Event Agreement which would define the management structure and standards for the permitting and operation of the Medley Food and Wine Expo on municipal property in the City of Barrie in July of 2018.
4. The Creative Economy Department recommends that Medley Corporation be granted the required exemptions to the Special Event Policy and that staff work with Medley Corporation execute this agreement and the issuance of a Special Event Permit for the Food and Wine Expo in 2018.
5. In follow up to this report, staff in the Creative Economy Department will be working on a set of criteria for the evaluation and approval of commercial events which will come forward for General Committee review in the Fall of 2017.

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Background

6. As per motion 17-G-118 dated May 29, 2017:
  - a) That staff in the Creative Economy Department be directed to work with Medley Corp. towards an agreement to allow the Medley Corp Wine and Food Expo to proceed in 2018.
  - b) That staff in the Creative Economy Department be directed to provide criteria related to for-profit events on public property, specifying under what conditions the value to the City and economy present an opportunity for the City, and report back to General Committee.
7. In May of 2014 City Council approved the City of Barrie Special Event Policy to significantly improve the efficiencies in which staff process and oversee special events. The established standards and criteria in that document provide a foundation for approving and managing the events and festivals that provide benefit to the community.
8. One of the objectives of the Special Event Policy was to achieve a balance between use of Municipal Property for event programming and general public use with the intention being that public spaces would remain such and that events would be inclusive and accessible. In order to achieve this objective, section 6.1 of the Special Event Policy outlined 10 General Conditions for Approval including items 6.1.5 and 6.1.6 as outlined above.
9. In the past, concerns had been received from the public and City Council about events using Waterfront Parks specifically those that had fenced and closed off access to Centennial Beach for a ticketed event during the summer months.
10. Since the approval of the Special Event Policy and the creation of Barrie's Event Action Team (BEAT), there have been no new gated or ticketed events approved.
11. In the fall of 2016, Medley Corp approached the Special Events Office about hosting their Food and Wine Expo on the waterfront, specifically, in Heritage Park and had initially proposed a date in July 2017. This proposal was presented to BEAT for their consideration in November 2016 and BEAT recognized that the proposed event fills a gap in the current Barrie market however, it was recommended that the event be re-considered upon completion of construction projects OR that the organizer explore other venue opportunities, including the BMC (which they had indicated was being considered as an alternate location). At that time, BEAT and Special Events Office staff recommended that due to the volume of ongoing construction and concerns about capacity in remaining parks that a recommendation be put to EMT that no new Major Events be approved for 2017.
12. EMT supported this recommendation and staff were then able to inform Medley Corp that their event could not be approved for 2017 but would be re-considered for 2018.

ANALYSIS

13. Medley Corp is proposing a new annual festival called *Medley Solstice* (previously known as the Medley Food and Wine Expo) for the weekend of July 20-22, 2018. The proposed event as outlined in the Medley Food and Wine Expo proposal Appendix "B" would be a ticketed event showcasing wine, spirits, and fine cuisine focusing on both local and provincial food and beverage offerings. The event would feature live entertainment, food and beverage workshops and food demonstrations and shows. The location that is being proposed for this event is the parkland south of Lakeshore Drive and the Southshore Centre.
14. The proposed closure of the parkland south of Lakeshore Drive for this event is shown in Appendix "C".

15. In reference to section 6.1.5 of the Special Event Policy, there are no existing park features at Allandale Station Park that would be impacted by this closure; for example there is no playground, splash pad or beach area and finally no pathways that would be closed to the public as a result of this event.
16. Medley Corp is led by Craig Russell and Phillip Moore, who are both veterans of the food and beverage industry. Mr. Russell is the co-founder and owner of PIE Restaurants which currently has over 200 employees and will be opening its 7<sup>th</sup> location this summer at Cleveland's House Resort in Muskoka. Mr. Moore has previously worked in the nightclub industry and is currently involved in several business ventures including: as a Sales Representative for Sutton Incentive Realty Inc., Founder of Carpe Diem Asset Management and also serves as a Barrie Business Ambassador.
17. Craig Russell has also previously been involved with the Toronto Wine and Spirit Festival which took place from June 16-18, 2016 and included some of the elements that would be incorporated into the proposed Medley Food and Wine Expo.
18. Based on historical data from both the Toronto Wine and Cheese Show and the Toronto Wine and Spirit Festival it is estimated that this event could draw between 9,000 and 17,000 attendees, approximately 200 exhibitors and feature over 25 restaurants.
19. Medley Corp is proposing to charge an admission fee of \$15 per person per day or \$25 for the full 3 day event. By comparison, the Toronto Sugar Beach Wine & Spirit Festival is \$25 per day (2017 ticket price) and the Toronto Wine and Cheese Show at the Metro Toronto Convention in November 2016 Centre was \$36 per person for a half day pass.
20. Should Medley Corp be approved to proceed in signing the agreement they would be required to secure all necessary licenses, permits, approvals and provide management plans as required (security, waste management, and parking) to be approved by BEAT and outlined in Appendix "A".
21. Medley would be required to provide a security deposit of \$2,000 which would be used to repair any damage and/or required clean-up to the parkland as a direct result of the event.
22. Currently there is only one other food and beverage related event on the Waterfront, the Craft Beer and BBQ Festival hosted by Downtown Barrie. That event is focused on different styles of BBQ and the craft beer market.
23. Medley will be using a broad-reach marketing campaign designed to reach both a local Barrie audience, but also a broader market with a heavy focus on the Greater Toronto Area, encouraging overnight stays in Barrie for the event.
24. Medley Food and Wine Expo is proposing to focus on high quality wine, spirits, cheese and fine cuisine by bringing together local and provincial suppliers, wholesalers and restaurateurs. The aim is to have between 40% of all vendors on-site be either local or regional (from Simcoe County), meaning that of the 125 anticipated vendors between 35 and 50 would be local. In addition, the on-site entertainment for the festival will be at least 50% local performers.
25. The approval of this event would provide quality cultural programming on the waterfront supporting the realization Council's Strategic goals related to the downtown and ongoing economic development as well as increase tourism, provide exposure for food and culinary based businesses in the Barrie area to a regional and broader geographic market and increase the overall visibility for the City of Barrie as a food and culinary tourism destination.

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ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

26. There are no environmental matters to consider.

ALTERNATIVES

27. There is one alternative available for consideration by General Committee:

**Alternative #1**

General Committee could direct staff not to authorize and execute an agreement with Medley Corp to permit the operation of the Medley Food and Wine Expo in Allandale Station Park as located in Appendix "C" during the period of July 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018.

This alternative is not recommended as this event has the potential to provide increased economic value annually and continue to profile the City in the broader marketplace. This alternative will result in a lost opportunity for many of our local food & beverage producers, wholesalers and restaurant operators.

FINANCIAL

28. The direct financial impact of the recommended motions is the requirement for Medley to pay the City of Barrie a Special Event Permit Fee of approximately \$3,150 for this event. In addition, Medley Corp will be required to pay all approved fees associated with the municipal services provided in support of this event.

**LINKAGE TO 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN**

29. The recommendations included in this Staff Report support the following goals identified in the 2014-2018 City Council Strategic Plan:
- Vibrant Business Environment
  - Inclusive Community
30. Barrie is host to a variety of festivals and events that are vital to the Barrie's ongoing development as a vibrant community, promote community connections and enrich shared public spaces. The addition of the Medley Food and Wine Expo to our event calendar would provide the following social and economic benefits to residents and businesses:
- a. The event would serve to increase civic pride by celebrating the culture of our community, enhancing quality of life, and providing opportunities for residents to participate and engage with businesses in the growing food and culinary sector.
  - b. It will showcase our waterfront and enhance the city's profile by promoting Barrie as a tourism destination and specifically as a culinary tourism destination, and providing promotion and revenue opportunities for local food and drink based businesses.
31. As outlined in Ontario's Four Year Culinary Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2015 deliberate culinary tourists accounted for 15.2 percent of all Ontario destination trips, generating \$816 million of total trip related expenditures.

32. The “Barrie – A Place to Start a Food Business” published by Invest Barrie shows significant growth in food-based businesses in this city. Between 2010 and 2015 Barrie saw a 39% increase in dairy manufacturing, 41% increase in beverage wholesalers and a 19% increase in specialty food stores. Currently, 30% of Barrie’s Downtown businesses are culinary based. Currently there are no festival offerings in Barrie that focus exclusively on these types of businesses. The addition of Medley to the 2018 event calendar would provide food and culinary based businesses an opportunity to showcase their products to new potential customers and markets.

Attachments: Appendix “A” – Draft Special Event Agreement – Medley Food and Wine Expo  
Appendix “B” – Proposal for the Medley Food and Wine Expo  
Appendix “C” – Allandale Station Park Site Plan (Event Area)