



# Town of Oakville Special Events Plan

August 22, 2025



Photo Credit: Town of Oakville



# Table of Contents

- Land Acknowledgement ..... 1
- Executive Summary.....2
- 1 Project Overview .....6
- 2 Why Invest in Special Events? ..... 10
- 3 Analysis ..... 14
- 4 Vision and Outcomes .....33
- 5 Priorities.....36
- 6 Top 10 Actions and Roles in Implementation.....63
- 7 Conclusion.....67
- Appendices.....69
  - Appendix A – Event Venue Inventory .....70
  - Appendix B – Draft Event Evaluation Criteria.....72
  - Appendix C – Event Service Matrix .....74
  - Appendix D – Resourcing Mechanisms .....75
  - Appendix E – Event Space Location Criteria .....77
  - Appendix F – Expanded Engagement Results .....78
  - Appendix G – Summary of Perceived Challenges in the Events Process .....92
  - Appendix H – Implementation Plan .....93
  - Appendix I – References ..... 101

*Photo Credit: Town of Oakville*

# Land Acknowledgement

## Honouring the Land and Territory

Oakville, as we know it today, is rich in the history and modern traditions of many First Nations. From the lands of the Anishinaabe, to the Attawandaron and Haudenosaunee, these lands surrounding the Great Lakes are steeped in First Nations history. On the sacred lands of Treaties 14 and 22, we are in solidarity with Indigenous brothers and sisters to honour and respect Mother Earth, the original nations of the trees and plants, the four legged, the flyers, the finned and the crawlers as the original stewards of Mother Earth. We acknowledge and give gratitude to the waters as being life and being sacred and to the carriers of those water teachings, the females. We acknowledge and give gratitude for the wisdom of the Grandfathers and the four winds that carry the spirits of our ancestors that walked this land before us.

The Town of Oakville is located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We acknowledge and thank the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Treaty holders, for being stewards of this traditional territory.<sup>1</sup>



# Executive Summary





## Introduction

Oakville is nestled along the southeastern shores of Lake Ontario. It has a rich history of Indigenous peoples stewarding the land including the Anishinaabe, Attawandaron and Haudenosaunee. Today the population of the town is 233,700. This number is growing, along with the diversity of the people that call Oakville home.

Each year the Town of Oakville and local organizations celebrate the many unique qualities of the community by hosting events and festivals such as Canada Day, Culture Days, the Maple Syrup Festival at Bronte Creek, GLODТО and more. The role of events in fostering a sense of community and supporting resident quality of life is well recognized.<sup>2</sup>

The Town of Oakville has prepared a Special Events Plan to identify ways to ensure that events continue to provide opportunities for celebration and connection into the future.

### Why a Special Event Strategy is Needed

Oakville's special event delivery system is at a key stage. Now is the time to position it to thrive in the coming years by evolving how it supports events to a growing number of residents and interests. This Special Events Plan provides the framework for a focused, proactive, and strategic approach. It guides the Town of Oakville in strengthening its facilitator role in supporting events that are delivered by groups and organizations in the community. This approach is about helping events in the community flourish, and adding rigour to the delivery system to ensure that the benefits of special events can be fully realized to meet evolving local needs in a sustainable way.

## Oakville's Vision for Events

*Events will evolve with our growing community, making them a dynamic way to connect people and celebrate what makes Oakville a vibrant and livable community for all.*

## Outcomes

- ✓ 1. Special events satisfy community needs and are reflective of community values.
- ✓ 2. Special events are accessible and inclusive, and support a feeling of community belonging for all residents.
- ✓ 3. Event delivery services are fiscally responsible and viable over the long term.
- ✓ 4. Strong collaborations and partnerships with local organizations leverage resources, expertise, and support the delivery of special events.
- ✓ 5. Community groups have access to enhanced municipal tools and resources to help them deliver events.
- ✓ 6. The event delivery system supports the growing number of events led by the community.
- ✓ 7. Event related decisions are informed by insights gained from evaluations and community engagement.
- ✓ 8. Special events support community development, economic development, and enhancement to quality of life.

## Taking Action Toward the Vision

The plan identifies actions for the Town of Oakville to take in the short and medium term. These actions are varied. Some are new tools for the Town of Oakville to use in decision making, resourcing, and supporting community organizations. Others are new ways of working as well as ideas for new amenities for event hosting. Others still are new policies and plans to improve how events are delivered and how their impacts are managed proactively. Many actions will require the Town of Oakville to work with local organizations, businesses and residents to successfully complete.

### Top 10 Actions

The following actions are identified as top priorities for the Town of Oakville to undertake. They have the most potential to make special events in Oakville responsive to evolving community needs and available resources.



1. Support event organizers with a single point of contact for requests, tools and resources.



2. Implement process improvements to simplify administration for event organizers.



3. Staff continue to directly deliver Department-led events related to service delivery (e.g., Family Day, Culture Days, Fire Prevention Day). Canada Day and the Santa Claus Parade are currently staff-led. Where appropriate, staff will collaborate with interested community groups to support a transition to a community-led model, with the goal of fostering strong community engagement and stewardship.



4. Streamline existing financial supports into a single Community Event Grant Program, including an annual application, evaluation and reporting process.



5. Consider investing additional resources into event development to prepare for future growth (i.e. staff, grant program, and infrastructure).



6. Explore and prioritize opportunities town-wide to enhance the functionality of existing park spaces to host events.



7. Establish capacity limits and controls for event spaces.



8. Develop and execute a revenue development plan that will increase earned revenues for events and increase grants and sponsorships.



9. Explore the feasibility of a purpose-built outdoor venue to host large community events (as recommended in the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan).



10. Enhance event programming to respond to growth across the community.

Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

## Where We Go from Here

The Special Events Plan provides the Town of Oakville with a foundation to adapt how events happen in Oakville as the community grows and changes. The Plan will inform and guide Town of Oakville decision making related to events. It can also be used by event industry partners, community groups, and residents to help clarify roles and the future direction of events in Oakville.



# 1

## Project Overview



Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

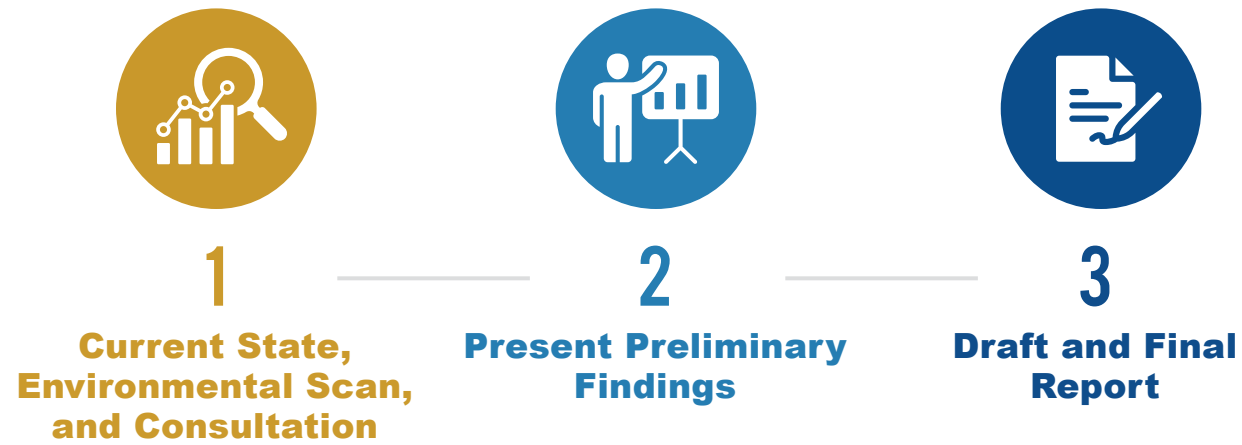


## Introduction

In Oakville, special events are an integral part of the community. They foster community connections, celebrate heritage, history and diversity, and contribute to quality of life for residents. The Town of Oakville is committed to continuing to support high-quality special events as the town grows. To realize this commitment, the Town of Oakville has completed a Special Events Plan. This plan will help guide the Town of Oakville in making decisions that best meet the needs of this vibrant community.

## Process

The Oakville Special Events Plan process had three phases as described next.



## Project Team

The Project Committee was established to oversee the study and provide input and feedback at key junctures. The plan was developed by the consultant team.

Project Steering Committee	
Organization	Representatives
Town of Oakville*	Rachel Fraser – Manager of Recreation and Culture Darryl McWilliam – Manager of Support Services Anna Rookyard – Special Events Coordinator Kristina Zietsma – Director of Recreation and Culture
Consultant Team (Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.)	Justin Rousseau – Managing Director Maxwell Harrison – Senior Associate Cassandra Gilmore – Associate Breanna Hives – Graphic Designer

\*Julie Mitchell, former Director of Recreation and Culture, was also involved in the project.



Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

# Overview of Research

A variety of primary and secondary research activities were conducted to develop this report. Primary research was gathered through a community survey, event vendor and organizer survey, input workshops with residents, event vendors and organizers, Town Council, Special Event Advisory Team (SEAT) Members, and Town staff, interviews with comparable communities, and a community tour. Secondary research consisted of a review of key internal, regional, provincial, and national sources, as well as benchmarking research.

## 1. Surveys Administered

- a. Community Survey (1,151 responses)
- b. Event Vendor and Organizer Survey (24 responses)

## 2. Meetings Conducted:

- a. Project Steering Committee Meetings  
Dates: March 1, April 29, May 9 and 10, June 12, August 22, September 12, October 16, November 7, 2024, and January 15, 2025
- b. SEAT Member Input Workshop  
Date: March 18, 2024
- c. In-Person Community Tour and Discussions  
Date: March 21, 2024
- d. In-Person Input Meetings with Town Staff, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), Oakville Chamber of Commerce, and Visit Oakville  
Date: March 21, 2024
- e. Oakville Town Council Input Workshops  
Dates: April 2 and 17, 2024
- f. Staff Input Sessions  
Dates: April 30, May 2 and 3, 2024
- g. Community Input Workshops  
Dates: June 13 and 26, 2024
- h. Event Vendor and Organizer Input Workshops  
Dates: June 13 and 26, 2024
- i. Oakville Town Council Input Workshop  
Date: May 6, 2025

## 3. Organizations Engaged (through workshops, interviews, and/or survey):

Event organizers, event vendors, community organizations, businesses, and other groups were invited to provide input toward the Special Events Plan. The following chose to participate:

1. A Taste To Savour Inc.
2. ArtHouse for Children and Youth
3. Bandology
4. Bronte BIA
5. Bronte Creek Provincial Park
6. Canada Children's Broadcasting Arts Group
7. Courage Polar Bear Dip
8. Crazy Canuck Smokers
9. Eid Event
10. Glenorchy Community Festival
11. Halton Asian Heritage Society
12. Hillspring Church
13. Islamic Community of Oakville
14. Kerr Village BIA
15. NMEP Municipal Event Planners
16. Oak Medical Education Foundation
17. Oak Park Neighbourhood Centre
18. Oakville Chamber of Commerce
19. Oakville Festivals and Film and Art
20. Oakville Historical Society
21. Oakville Soccer Club
22. Oakville Stokers
23. Oakville Waterfront Festival
24. Ontario Corn Roasters
25. Route 55 BBW
26. SAVIS of Halton
27. Sheridan College
28. The Lighthouse Program for Grieving Children and Families
29. Town of Oakville Staff
30. Visit Oakville
31. West River Residents Association

## 4. Documents Reviewed

- a. Strategies, plans, and other documents from the Town of Oakville.
- b. Reports, statistics, surveys, and planning documents.
- c. Research and plans from provincial and national sources.

# 2

## Why Invest in Special Events?



There are many social, economic, and environmental benefits to be gained by investing in special events. The following describes these benefits.



## Social Benefits



### Improved Health and Well-Being

Events promote improved health and well-being for individuals and the community as a whole.<sup>3,4</sup>



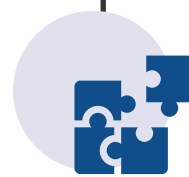
### Community Cohesion

Events bring people together, fostering a sense of belonging and unity within the community.



### Connection and Socialization

Events provide opportunities for people to meet and interact with others they might not encounter in their daily lives, facilitating new friendships and connections.



### Cultural Exchange

Events often celebrate the diversity of a community, allowing for the sharing of different cultural traditions, foods, music, and art.



### Education and Awareness

Events can serve as platforms for educating the community on various issues, such as health, safety, or environmental sustainability.



### Volunteerism and Civic Engagement

Community events often rely on volunteers, promoting a culture of civic engagement and giving back to the community.



### Community Sense of Belonging

Events can be a significant source of resident belonging and pride for communities.<sup>5</sup>

“

*“As a lifelong Oakville resident, I have great memories of attending special events and celebrating our community.”*

– Survey Respondent

Photo Credit: Town of Oakville



## Economic Benefits



### Local Business Support

Events can boost the local economy by increasing demand for goods and services, such as restaurants, shops, and accommodation. This can serve to enhance business retention and attraction.



### Job Creation and Sustainment

New event related jobs are created, and existing jobs are sustained.



### Promotion of Local Products

Businesses can leverage events to increase awareness of their products and services through sponsorship and advertising opportunities.



### Increased Tourism

Events draw visitors to the community, whose spending has a high multiplier effect.



### Increased Resources for Governments

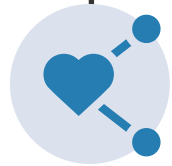
Increased economic activity can lead to increased resources for governments through taxation and service charges.



Photo Credit: Oakville Downtown



# Environmental Benefits



## Enhanced Value

Emotional connections are forged through events that can provide enhanced value to built and natural environments.



## Preservation and Revitalization

Events can contribute to the preservation and revitalization of built and natural environments.



## Promotion of Sustainable Practices

Community events are embracing eco-friendly practices, such as reducing waste, recycling, using renewable energy sources, and promoting public transportation and carpooling.



## Community Beautification

Events often involve beautification efforts, such as planting trees, flowers, or cleaning up litter, which contribute to a cleaner and more aesthetically pleasing community environment.

“

*“Attending free events in my community are important to my quality of life.”*

– Survey Respondent



# 3

## Analysis



## Community Analysis

Oakville is a growing and accessible community located within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The town is situated on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This vibrant lakeside community has a rich history and an abundance of natural and cultural amenities.

The town was founded in 1857.<sup>6</sup> It includes neighbourhoods that are both well established and newly developing. With 1,826 hectares of parkland, hundreds of individual parks, 250 kilometres of trails, numerous historic sites, and over one million square feet of recreation and culture space, Oakville offers something for everyone.<sup>7</sup> The town is also home to unique commercial areas, including Downtown Oakville, Bronte Village, and Kerr Village. BIAs operate in each of

these shopping districts and contribute to local enhancements such as beautification, branding and marketing. They also deliver events that are open to the community.

Residents can enjoy diverse attractions across Oakville, including special events, art galleries, performing arts venues, indoor and outdoor recreational activities, shopping, and a variety of dining experiences. As a lakeside community, Oakville is also home to waterfront public spaces, and two harbours that are equipped with docks and slips for boating enthusiasts. The town has maintained its charming small-town feel, with 80 per cent of residents reporting that it is a better place to live than anywhere else in the GTA.<sup>8</sup> Ninety per cent of residents also report they feel a sense of community belonging.<sup>9</sup>

“

*“Community events are what bring neighbours together and make Oakville special.”*

– Survey Respondent



## Demographics

In 2021, Oakville’s population was 213,759. This was a 9.3 per cent increase from the 2016 census. The current population (2024) is 233,700. Figure 1 illustrates the historical and projected population growth within the community based on a variety of conditions. It is estimated that within 10 years the population will approach 300,000.<sup>10</sup>

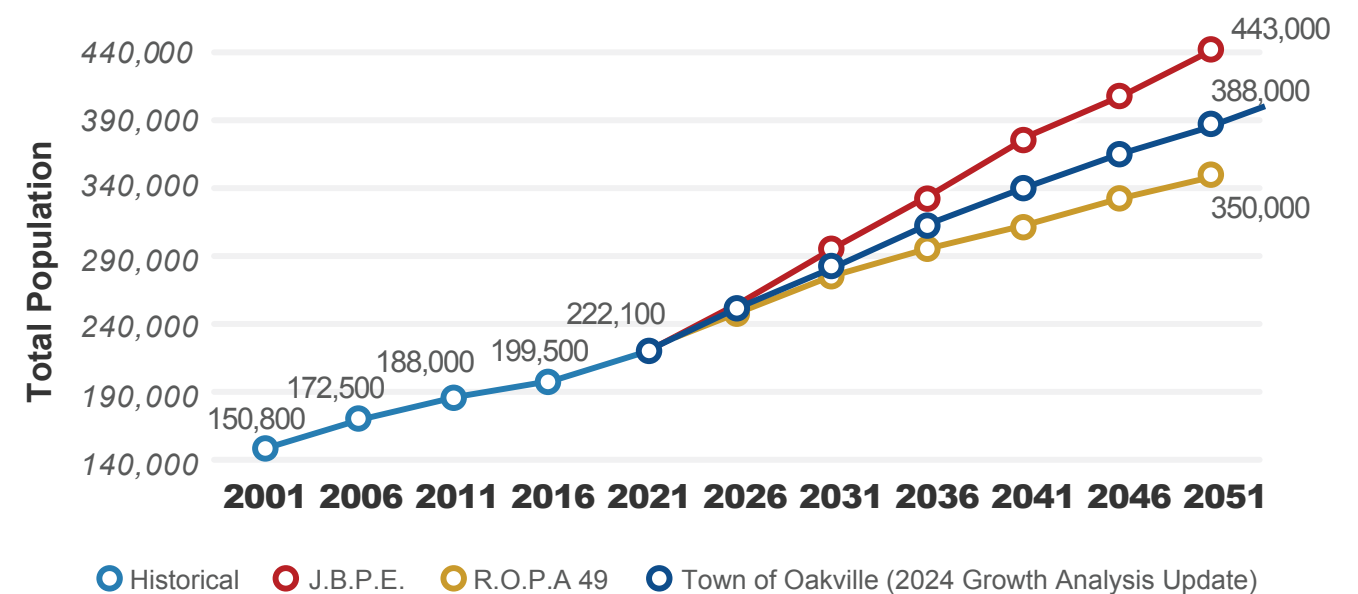
Visible minority groups accounted for 43 per cent of Oakville’s population in 2021.<sup>11</sup> South Asian residents represented 14 per cent of the community’s total population, Chinese residents represented 11 per cent, Arab residents represented five per cent and Black residents represented three per cent.<sup>12</sup> Oakville’s significant cultural diversity is an important factor to consider when planning events.

In 2021, children ages 0 to 14 represented 18 per cent of the total population, which is slightly higher than the national average of 16 per cent. The town’s working age population (15-64) represented 66 per cent of the total population, which is in line with the national average of 65 per cent. The senior population (65 and over) represented 16 per cent of the total population, which is slightly lower than the national average of 19 per cent.<sup>13</sup>

The median after-tax income for Oakville households was \$108,000 in 2020, which is a five per cent increase from 2015. The majority of residents live in single-detached houses (59 per cent) and there are 73,560 occupied dwellings.<sup>14</sup> Housing affordability is increasingly challenging for households that are not in the top 20 to 30 per cent of incomes.<sup>15</sup>

Oakville’s growing population, cultural diversity, age and income characteristics all have implications for events. These include the importance of an event delivery system that can keep up with growing and evolving needs, and that provides events that are accessible to and welcoming of participants of all ages, backgrounds and means.

Figure 1. Historical and Projected Population Growth in Oakville



“

*“I have taken my kids and then my grandkids to the annual Santa Claus Parade. I always see friends, neighbours, and people from local businesses at the parade each year. This event brings the community together.”*

– Survey Respondent

Photo Credit: Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.



## SWOT Analysis

A high-level analysis of Oakville's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) as they relate to special events was completed. The key findings from this analysis are provided next.

### Current State Summary

Special events are an important part of the town's identity. They are enjoyed by tens of thousands of people in the community every year. The Town of Oakville and many other organizations successfully support a variety of events, often in public parks and spaces. A lack of purpose built outdoor and indoor event hosting venues is one of several factors that currently limit event delivery. Others include funding availability, role clarity, supports for community event organizers, and the need for more event revenues. There are also growing risks and threats related to safety and security, rising event production costs, the carrying capacity of existing event spaces, and impacts to nearby residents.

Despite these, the town has several strong opportunities to build on to realize the many positive benefits of events. They include responding to increasing demand for events as the community grows, further leveraging events to strengthen community connections, and building the capacity of community groups to deliver events.

### Strengths

- The community has an established portfolio of special events that are highly valued by participants.
- The Town of Oakville's event staff effectively support events for the community to enjoy.
- Knowledgeable and capable staff from across multiple departments support events.
- There are several community groups and external organizations that deliver a variety of events.
- The community contains hundreds of parks. There are several large waterfront parks with high passive public use.
- The town has three BIAs that support vibrant commercial areas and also deliver events.
- Oakville is a safe, clean, and welcoming community.

### Weaknesses

- Need for strategic direction, clear service levels, role clarity, and parameters for investment related to events.
- Event staff and funding are fully utilized. There is no capacity for growth without increased investment.
- The community's indoor facilities and outdoor spaces were not designed to frequently host large events.
- Community event organizers are experiencing challenges when they engage with multiple agencies and Town of Oakville departments in the planning of their events.
- Growing risks of delivering events, particularly around security.
- Need for more sponsorship of events and other self-generated revenue.

### Opportunities

- Responding to growing demand for events as the community's population increases and diversifies.
- Leveraging events to strengthen community connections.
- Building capacity of community groups to deliver events.
- Considering the needs of events when planning and developing future community infrastructure.
- Maximizing the economic, social, and environmental benefits that events can generate for the community.
- Improving alignment and coordination between stakeholders during event planning.
- Enhancing feedback mechanisms and data tracking to ensure events meet community needs.

### Threats

- Rising event production costs.
- High demand and expectations for events may put further strain on event services and infrastructure.
- Exceeding the carrying capacity of the community and host spaces for events.
- Impacts on residents living close to event spaces.
- Politicization of community events (e.g. protests).
- Risks associated with mass gatherings (e.g. terrorism, pandemics, uncontrolled crowds).
- Some events can carry significant economic and reputational risk.
- Extreme weather challenges.
- Competition for park and green space use.
- Conflicts regarding appropriate use of park space.
- Volunteer fatigue and risk of burnout, which could impact the ability to deliver community-led events.

# Event Offering Analysis

Community groups within the Town of Oakville organize a variety of well-received events delivered by BIAs, community organizations, sports organizations and individuals. Interest in existing and new events is growing. The number of permitted events rose from an estimated 231 in 2019 to 294 in 2024. Eighty nine per cent (262) of events held in Oakville in 2024 were delivered by the community. Town of Oakville staff deliver Department-led events related to service delivery and attract more than 100,000 attendees each year.<sup>16</sup> As an exception, under the direction of Council, staff directly deliver a limited number events that are considered significant to the Town, but only in cases where no community group has the capacity to take the lead. However, it is the Town’s intent to foster community ownership of these events wherever possible. Where a community group expresses interest, staff will work collaboratively to transition the event to a community-led model, providing support to ensure continuity and success.

The following identifies the main events and event categories that are offered in the town.

## Town of Oakville Delivered Events

- Culture Days
- Family Day
- Holiday Lights
- Fire Prevention Day
- Movies in the Park (7 events)
- Summer Splash (7 events)

## Town of Oakville Delivered Events (Exceptions)

- Canada Day
- Santa Claus Parade



**Eighty nine per cent (262) of events held in Oakville in 2024 were delivered by the community.**

## Externally Delivered Events

- BIA events (e.g. Kerrfest, Bronte Farmers Market, TD Summer Music Series, GLODITO)
- Community events (e.g. Northeast Oakville Fair, Oak Park Fall Fair, Oakville Asian Heritage Festival, Oakville Latino Festival, Iskcon Festival of India, Oakville Film Festival, Oakville Wind Orchestra Summer Concert Series)
- Private events (e.g. Ribfest, Celtic Festival)
- Major sporting events (e.g. Centennial Cup, RBC Canadian Open, Pinty’s Grand Slam of Curling)
- Sport tournaments
- Ceremonies and celebrations

“The Santa Claus Parade is an annual family tradition since we moved to Oakville 13 years ago. Knowing that it is the second Saturday of November, we plan to kick off the holiday season with this parade.”  
 – Survey Respondent



## Spotlight on Culture Days

The Town of Oakville hosts Culture Days every fall. The multi-day event includes performances, workshops, tours, and exhibitions in multiple venues throughout the community. In 2024 the Town of Oakville was an official Ontario Culture Days Festival Hub. It was ranked as the #1 overall participating community. Local artists, creators, and community members offered more than 280 free programs and activities.

Source: Town of Oakville

Photo Credit: Culture Days

# Event Infrastructure Analysis

Oakville’s most highly utilized outdoor event spaces are in the southern parts of the community, including along the lakeshore. Most are public parks. Key among them are Bronte Waterfront Heritage Park and Coronation Park (this park was used for large events prior to 2018). There are also three urban public squares that are used for events including Towne Square, Centennial Square, and Bronte Village Square. There is a limited mix of event supporting infrastructure among these spaces, including washrooms, stages, seating areas, and electrical connections. The Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts and the Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre are key spaces where indoor events can be held. The latter is one of six community centres operated by the Town of Oakville. Indoor events can be and are held on arena floors such as Joshua Creek Arena and Sixteen Mile Sports Complex. An inventory of core event spaces in Oakville is included in Appendix A.

Most existing event spaces in the community were not designed to host and accommodate large events. Parks were instead designed and built for passive public use. These spaces are facing particular pressure. They are highly used by residents, and some are also used for other permitted activities such as picnic rentals and commercial filming. As the community’s population and density increases there will be higher demand for these spaces. This could result in reduced availability for event hosting.

*Most existing event spaces in the community were not designed to host and accommodate large events. Parks were instead designed and built for passive public use. These spaces are facing particular pressure.*



## Spotlight on BIAs

Downtown Oakville, Bronte Village, and Kerr Village are unique commercial districts within Oakville. They each have their own character and feature local shops, restaurants and services. These amenities are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. BIAs operate in these areas and help to keep them vibrant by contributing to local enhancements, supporting economic development, and delivering events.

## Canada Day at Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park

Oakville’s Canada Day event draws an estimated 25,000 participants to Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park over the course of a single day. The park’s size, limited event amenities, and proximity to residential areas create challenges to hosting an event of that size. Key among these are parking and traffic operations.

Photo Credits: Town of Oakville

Figure 2. Existing Event Infrastructure



### Spotlight on Movies in the Park

Movies in the Park is a family-friendly event that happens every summer. The Town hosts seven outdoor movies, one in each of the seven wards. Attendees bring their own picnic blankets, chairs, and snacks and can enjoy activities on site before the movie begins.

Source: Town of Oakville and Visit Oakville

### Coronation Park

While it was not purpose built for events, Coronation Park has excellent event hosting infrastructure, including a large stage, viewing areas, washrooms, and supporting recreational amenities. It has a beautiful location on the shore of Lake Ontario and is connected to the Waterfront Trail. The park is currently not fully utilized as a space for medium to large scale events due to impacts on neighbouring residents. These impacts include noise, traffic, and safety concerns. There is only one vehicular access point into and out of the park from Lakeshore Road.

Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

## Service Delivery Model Analysis

The Town of Oakville currently acts as a direct provider, partner and facilitator in event delivery. The Town of Oakville directly plans, produces, and delivers a variety of community events throughout the year that are directly related to the town’s services (i.e. Fire Services, Recreation and Culture). Additionally, the Town of Oakville fulfills a facilitator role because it provides infrastructure and other supports for events that are delivered by third party organizers such as BIAs, community groups and businesses.

To support event delivery, the Town of Oakville employs two full-time staff members and one part-time event support staff. These positions are overseen by the Senior Manager of Culture in the Recreation and Culture Division in the Community Services department. In total, the Town of Oakville dedicates 2.5 FTEs specifically towards event delivery (see Figure 3). A Special Event Advisory Team is in place to bolster collaboration between municipal departments. Based on the current volume of events, this team is under resourced.

The Town of Oakville’s ability to deliver events is made possible through significant internal collaboration and the allocation of various departmental resources (e.g. Culture, Parks and Open Spaces, Fire Services, Transit, Traffic Operations, Transportation, Engineering and Construction, Enforcement Services, Facility Services, Legal and Risk Management, Finance, and the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts). However, during periods of high demand for event delivery, some departments report having reduced capacity to deliver on their core service mandates because of limited resources.<sup>17</sup> This is particularly true in relation to large events that require significant staff support to successfully deliver (e.g. set up/tear down, traffic control, transit services, audio/visual services, event supervision, health/safety, permitting, etc.).

Figure 3. Town of Oakville Recreation and Culture Department Event Staff FTE Calculation

Position	FTE Allocation for Events*
Senior Manager, Culture	0.25
Special Events Coordinator	1.00
Events Assistant	1.00
Part Time Event Support Staff	0.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.50</b>

\*As reported by Town of Oakville staff.

## Comparative Benchmarking Analysis

Communities similar to Oakville were compared in order to benchmark and provide a reference point for the current level of service provision. Communities were chosen as comparators if they met at least two of the following criteria.



The municipality organizes and delivers events in its community and provides resources and support to third party event organizers.



The municipality's population was between 150,000 and 350,000 in 2021.



The municipality is located within the Greater Toronto Area.

The communities of Burlington, Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Markham, Whitby, and Oshawa were chosen as comparators. Interviews were conducted with event staff from each comparator to collect information. Figure 4 provides a summary of benchmarking information. Key findings include:

- The Town of Oakville offers a similar number of municipally run events to its comparators in terms of the number and types of events.
- The Town of Oakville is below comparative benchmarks for municipal event staff. Town of Oakville staff deliver 7.2 events per FTE, whereas comparators deliver 3.7 events per FTE on average.
- The town is behind some comparators in terms of dedicated event hosting spaces.



Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

Figure 4. Benchmarking Information

Municipality	Oakville	Comparator Average	Burlington	Richmond Hill	Vaughan	Markham	Whitby	Oshawa
Population (2021)	213,759	213,920	186,948	202,022	323,103	338,503	138,501	175,383
Number of Community Events Delivered by Municipal Staff*	18	20	11	19	25	N/S	19	27
Municipal Event Staff (FTE)**	2.5	5.8	4.9	5.5	8.0	6.2	3.2	7.1
Ratio of Staff to Events Delivered	1:7.2	1:3.7	1:2.2	1:3.5	1:3.1	N/S	1:6.0	1:3.8

\*Internal/corporate events for municipal staff are not included in the figures.

\*\*FTE stands for Full Time Equivalent. These figures only include staff involved in the direct planning and delivery of events. Municipal staff that support event delivery (e.g. policy/by-law, parks, traffic, etc.) are not included.



### Case Study: Alternative Approach to Event Service Delivery

The Town of Milton, ON (133K population) takes a different approach to event service delivery. The Town does not directly deliver any events and therefore does not have any event staff. Instead, the Town supports community events primarily from an infrastructure standpoint (i.e. providing facilities and spaces to host events in). It also occasionally provides in-kind services for community-led events (e.g. garbage collection, security).



## Strategic Alignment Analysis

A strategic alignment analysis was used to identify alignment between the ideas put forward in this document and policy guidance used to plan other services, programs and infrastructure in the town.

### **Town of Oakville Council Strategic Plan and 2023-2026 Action Plan<sup>18</sup>**

The plan demonstrates Town Council's commitment to building a vibrant and livable community for all. Community belonging is one of four strategic priorities that is most aligned with special events. The plan's three other priorities are also tied to events in some way. Environmental sustainability speaks to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Accountable government includes service delivery and responsible management of resources. Growth management supports the development of complete communities and meeting infrastructure needs.

### **Livable Oakville – Town of Oakville Official Plan 2021<sup>19</sup>**

The plan lays out the direction for future growth and development in the community. Related policies for growth areas including Downtown, Uptown, Midtown and Kerr Village speak to creating streets and public spaces that could be used for hosting a variety of public events.

### **Oakville Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan**

This plan recognizes the importance of events to strengthen community, engage residents and address social isolation. It includes several objectives and recommended actions related to special events. Objectives include animating parks and supporting local and community-driven events in them, and activating Oakville's waterfront with special events.

Recommended actions include designating a minimum of two parks as 'event parks' and establishing priorities for related capital investments. They also include exploring opportunities to enhance access to public parks and lands for hosting major events, and updating the Special Event Plan to provide additional direction for designing and resourcing localized sites for smaller scale or pop-up events. The plan also recommends undertaking an infrastructure condition assessment at Deerfield Golf Course including consideration of the potential of the site for hosting special events.

### **Town of Oakville Cultural Plan 2016-2021<sup>20</sup>**

The Cultural Plan recognizes the importance of culture to the community and sets out eight recommendations and supporting initiatives. Among the recommendations are streamlined processes and investments in Town of Oakville-owned facilities that would help organizers plan their events and provide amenities for events in park spaces.

### **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Multi-Year Plan<sup>21</sup>**

The plan identifies the desire for the Town of Oakville to be an inclusive workplace and community where everyone feels they belong. One of the plan's goals is to reflect the Town of Oakville's inclusive culture throughout the range of services it provides to the community.

### **Downtown Oakville Strategic Action Plan<sup>22</sup>**

The plan identifies the development of more events and experiences downtown as a strategic action. The Downtown Cultural Hub Initiative will also support improvements to public spaces that will help them better accommodate events.

# Trends Analysis

Trends related to special event delivery were reviewed to inform the planning process. The most relevant trends for Oakville are provided next.

## Immersive Experiences

Event attendees are seeking immersive, meaningful, and personalized event experiences above pure entertainment.<sup>23</sup> ‘Experience first’ venues are becoming more desirable than traditional event spaces.<sup>24</sup>

## Growing Demand for Events and for Spaces to Gather

As the population and diversity of a community increases, so does the demand for events. Related to this is a growing demand for public spaces for people to gather.

## Environmental Sustainability

Eventgoers expect event producers to plan with sustainability in mind. Producers are taking a variety of steps to do this including reducing waste at events, using recyclable materials, and encouraging public and active transportation to and from event venues.<sup>25</sup>

## Politicization of Events

Community events are being used as platforms to promote and/or protest political stances. Governments are being pressured to “pick a side”, which may infringe on their duty to impartiality.

### Case Study: Immersive Experiences

The Town of Aurora’s Haunted Forest is recognized as one of Ontario’s Top 100 Festivals and Events. The event delivers a range of immersive experiences for all ages including the Haunted Forest at Sheppard’s Bush. Guests can explore decorated trails and cabins, choosing between a family friendly path or a spookier route.

Source: *Newmarket Today*



Photo Credits (L-R): Geranium, Newmarket Today



### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Society is embracing a shifting culture whereby diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are becoming increasingly prominent. There is a growing expectation among event attendees for DEI commitments from event producers.<sup>26</sup>



### Rising Event Production Costs

The costs associated with producing events have risen considerably in recent years and are outpacing inflation in the broader economy.



### Extreme Weather

Climate change is worsening the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, forcing community events to respond and adapt.



### Safety and Risk Management

Growing concerns around public safety at events are requiring organizers to apply additional risk management and mitigation strategies in event planning and delivery.



#### Case Study: Rising Costs

In 2024, the City of Toronto introduced a new Special Events Stabilization Initiative. The initiative is a one-time grant program providing a total of up to \$2 million in financial relief to local special event organizers affected by rising operating costs.

Source: City of Toronto

#### Case Study: Extreme Weather

In 2024, the Edmonton Heritage Festival canceled the final and busiest day of their event after heavy rain damaged pavilion tents and electrical, propane, and water infrastructure. Cultural artifacts were also damaged.

Source: CBC News



#### Case Study: Rising Costs

The Taste of Danforth, a well-attended street festival in Toronto, was canceled in 2024 due to funding issues. In 2023, the festival experienced a significant loss of \$257,000.

Source: Now Toronto

Photo Credits (L-R): CTV News, On the Danforth

## Climate Change and Risk Mitigation

Planning for and mitigating the risks of climate change has become a growing priority in relation to event delivery. Increasingly severe weather is a threat to the health and safety of everyone involved in events. It is also a threat to event infrastructure and equipment. Across Canada high heat and humidity, extreme cold and snow, heavy rain and flooding, strong winds, lightning, wildfire smoke and poor air quality are all becoming increasingly common. In the coming decades, Oakville can expect warmer temperatures in spring and summer, more precipitation throughout the year including intense rain events with risks of flooding and high water levels, and windier and more unpredictable weather overall.<sup>27</sup>

Managing the risks associated with weather events and weather pattern changes is a sign of professionalism in event delivery. Delivering safe events is also a key responsibility and expectation of municipal service provision. It is important that everyone involved in event delivery feels confident in their ability to consider and implement climate change related health and safety actions.

*Photo Credit: Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.*



## Tourism Linkages

Special events that are enjoyed by Oakville residents can also attract visitors and support tourism, which can benefit the local economy. Oakville has much to offer and build on from an events tourism perspective. Its park spaces and trails, connection to water and Lake Ontario, sport and recreation facilities, interesting culinary offerings, charming boutiques, and vibrant arts and culture scene are all aspects that could be leveraged to create and attract new event offerings that appeal to visitors and boost visitor spending. Additionally, Oakville's proximity to large urban markets positions it well to draw visitors from nearby areas. As such, opportunities could be explored to leverage Municipal Accommodation Tax to support funding needs related to events.

However, there are risks and challenges to pursuing event tourism. These include overcrowding as more people attend events, the commercialization of community events as their focus turns toward revenue generation, and local disappointment if the spirit and charm of community events change. Should Oakville choose to link its event offerings with tourism, it should carefully manage these risks and opportunities to ensure that the wide ranging social and economic benefits of events are maintained.<sup>28</sup>

Photo Credits (top-bottom): Expedition Management Consulting Ltd., Town of Oakville

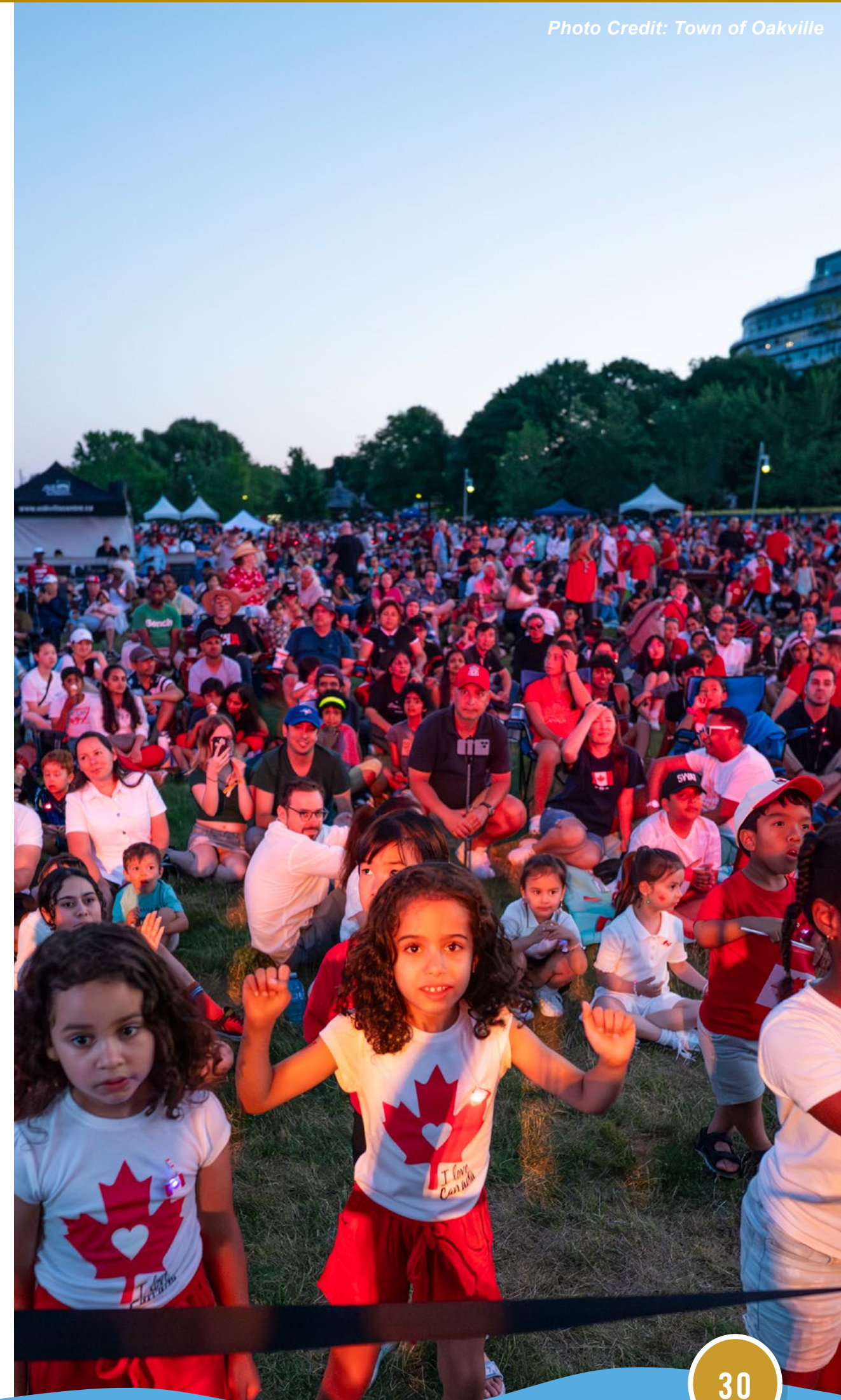


# Summary of Community Engagement

Input from residents, event vendors and organizers, local organizations, Town Council, and Town Staff was gathered from March 18 to July 8, 2024. In total, the engagement process produced 1,274 touchpoints. The following provides a summary of the key findings from the engagement process. Please see Appendix F for the expanded engagement results.

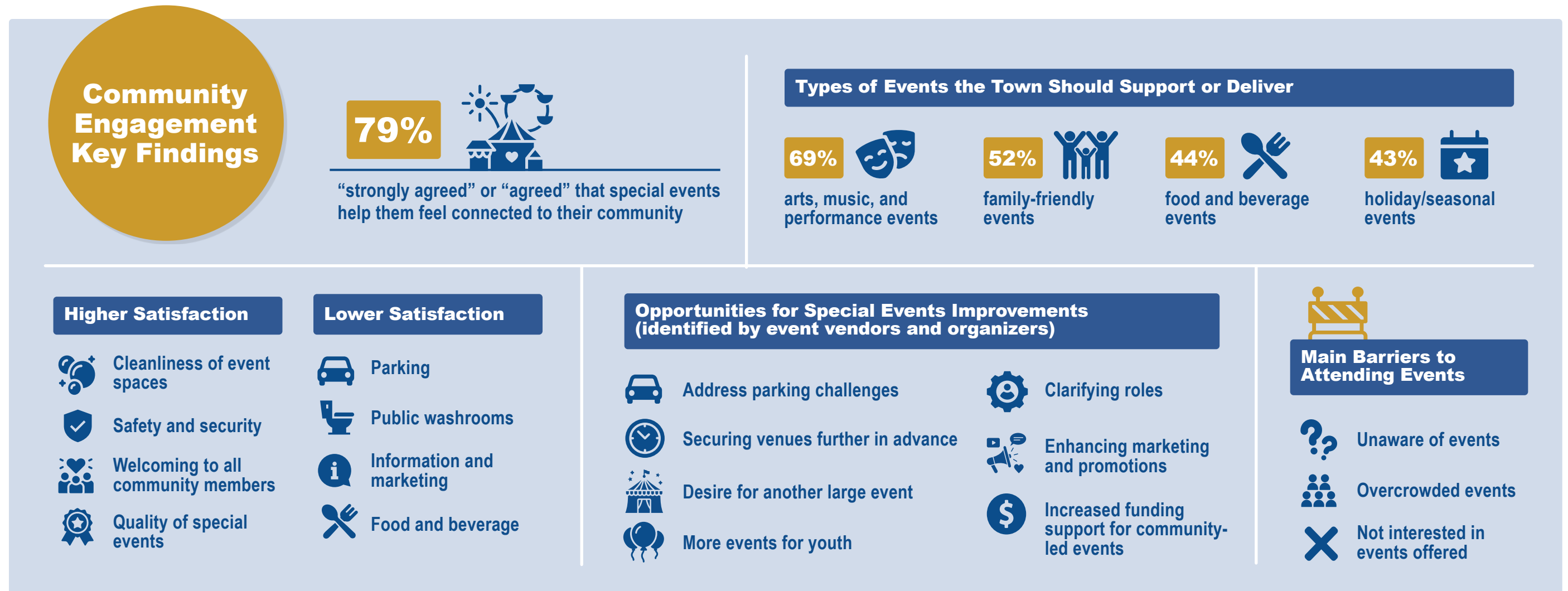
Figure 5. Engagement Summary

Input Opportunity	Response/RSVP
Community Survey	1,151 responses
Event Vendor and Organizer Survey	24 responses
Community Input Workshops	9 participants
Event Vendor and Organizer Input Workshops	3 participants
In-Person Tour and Meetings	10 participants
Oakville Town Council Input Workshops	12 participants
SEAT Member Input Workshop	19 participants
Staff Input Sessions	32 participants
Interviews	14 completed
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,274 touchpoints</b>



## Key Findings from Community Engagement

- Seventy-nine per cent of community survey respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that special events help them feel connected to their community.
- Respondents to the community survey identified what they want the top areas of focus to be for the plan. The most common responses included identifying if events are meeting the needs of the community, introducing new events, and improving marketing and promotion of events.
- Respondents to the community survey selected the types of events they think the Town of Oakville should focus on supporting and/or delivering in the future. The top choices included arts, music, and performance events (69 per cent), family-friendly events (52 per cent), food and beverage events (44 per cent), and holiday/seasonal events throughout the year (43 per cent).
- There is a desire from the community for more events, enhanced transportation options, a centralized source of event information, bringing back or reimagining previous events such as the Waterfront Festival, increasing the quantity of events, utilizing more facilities for events, and for events to be more evenly spread throughout Oakville.
- There are high levels of satisfaction for cleanliness of event spaces, safety and security, welcoming to all community members, and quality of special events. There are lower levels of satisfaction for parking, public washrooms, information and marketing, and food and beverage.
- The main barriers to attending events included being unaware of events, overcrowded events, and not being interested in the events offered.



### Key Findings from Community Engagement (continued)

- Event vendors identified improving event venues/facilities, introducing new events, and ensuring event delivery is sustainable over the long term as the top focus areas for the plan.
- Event organizers reported identifying if events are meeting the needs of the community, understanding the case for investment in events, improving marketing and promotion of events, improving event venues/facilities, and introducing new events as the top focus areas for the plan.
- When asked what assistance and/or resources would help event organizers host special events, respondents requested funding support, advertising and promotions, and planning tools and guides.
- When asked what assistance and/or resources would help event vendors provide services to Town of Oakville-run special events, respondents indicated advertising and promotions, fee reductions/waivers, and guidance and/or mentorship.
- There is demand from event organizers for a one-door-in approach from the Town of Oakville, providing more opportunities for feedback, and simplifying the permit approval process.
- Event vendors and organizers identified improvements that could be made to special events, including addressing parking challenges, securing venues further in advance, enhancing marketing and promotions, increased funding support for community-led events, clarifying roles, desire for another large event, and more events for youth.

### Key Findings from Town of Oakville Staff and Council Engagement

- Strong demand in the community for more special events, specifically more diverse and inclusive event offerings.
- Desire to more evenly distribute special events throughout Oakville (especially in north Oakville).
- Desire for a “one-stop-shop” approach to event development from the Town of Oakville and improved support for community-led events with a reduction of administrative burden. Provide practical, strategic and financial tools to help organizers succeed.
- The Town of Oakville’s events staff is facing challenges related to limited capacity, aligning event needs with venue capacities, vehicle traffic and parking constraints during events, and event safety.
- Lack of event-ready infrastructure in parks, particularly in the north (e.g. parking, electricity, etc.).
- Need for a decision-making framework to determine what events the Town of Oakville will or will not support and what level of support will be provided.
- Need for key performance indicators in relation to events and understanding the full impacts and costs of event delivery from the Town of Oakville.
- Considering the sustainability of event delivery from the Town of Oakville and preparing for future growth.



**There is a desire from Town Council and Staff to more evenly distribute special events throughout Oakville.**

# 4

## Vision and Outcomes



## Why Change?

Special events play an important role in building connections and community in Oakville. They offer opportunities for entertainment, learning and unique experiences close to home. They contribute to the town's vibrant economy and enhance quality of life for all residents.

Oakville's special event delivery system is at a key stage in its development. It is faced with several significant opportunities and challenges. Rapid population growth and increasing cultural diversity fall into both categories. The town has an opportunity now to position itself to thrive in response to these changes, evolving how it supports events to a growing number of residents and interests. It can adapt processes, programming, and supports for events, while still ensuring events are accessible to all and meet community needs.

The Town of Oakville can also position itself to respond proactively to the rising costs of event production, a need for additional event hosting infrastructure, and increasing pressures on the Town of Oakville's human and financial resources. The impact of climate change and the importance of event safety management can also be addressed.

Event-related decisions in Oakville have largely been informed by historical and legacy considerations. This Special Events Plan provides the framework for a more focused, proactive and strategic approach. This approach is about helping events in the community flourish and adding rigour to the delivery system to ensure that the benefits of special events can be fully realized to meet the needs of the community now and in the coming years. Building a more resilient event delivery system today will in turn allow the Town of Oakville to better respond and adapt to changes in the longer term.



**Oakville's population is projected to see significant growth by 2051. The community's event delivery system can be primed to respond to this growth so that it can continue to engage Oakville's residents into the future.**



**Pro-active and strategic event delivery will directly support three of the Town of Oakville's strategic priorities: Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability, and Accountable Government.**

Photo Credit: Oakville News / Marcel Painchaud



Photo Credit: Town of Oakville



## Vision

*Events will evolve with our growing community, making them a dynamic way to connect people and celebrate what makes Oakville a vibrant and livable community for all.*

## Outcomes

- ✓ 1. Special events satisfy community needs and are reflective of community values.
- ✓ 2. Special events are accessible and inclusive, and support a feeling of community belonging for all residents.
- ✓ 3. Event delivery services are fiscally responsible and viable over the long term.
- ✓ 4. Strong collaborations and partnerships with local organizations leverage resources, expertise, and support the delivery of special events.
- ✓ 5. Community groups have access to enhanced municipal tools and resources to help them deliver events.
- ✓ 6. The event delivery system supports the growing number of events led by the community.
- ✓ 7. Event related decisions are informed by insights gained from evaluations and community engagement.
- ✓ 8. Special events support community development, economic development, and enhancement to quality of life.

# 5

## Priorities



This section describes the core priorities for the Special Events Plan, associated initiatives, and supporting recommendations. Initiatives were identified based on community engagement, input from Town Council and administration, research, analysis, and consultant assessments. Some actions will take more time to accomplish than others, so the Town of Oakville is encouraged to pursue multiple initiatives at the same time as resources allow.

In addition to supporting the vision and outcomes of this plan, advancing these priorities will advance implementation of the Town of Oakville’s Strategic Plan, particularly in the areas of Community Belonging, Environmental Sustainability, and Accountable Government.


Please see Appendix G for an action plan that consolidates all the recommendations.

Initiatives have been divided into two categories (note that the numbering does not indicate priority). These categories include:


1. Organizational Development
2. Event and Program Development

## Legend


### Recommended Direction

-  **MAINTAIN** Continue using existing tools, processes, activities


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-  **IMPROVE** Enhance existing tools, processes, activities


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-  **INVEST** Add additional resources to tools, processes, activities

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-  **EVALUATE** Further examine options for potential tools, processes, activities

---

-  **CREATE** Develop new tools, processes, activities

### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Low Cost	Less than \$5,000
Medium Cost	\$5,000 - \$50,000
Medium-High Cost	\$50,000 to \$100,000
High Cost	More than \$100,000
Staff	Cost varies

### Timeline

Short	1 to 2 years
Medium	3 to 5 years
Long	6 to 10 years
Ongoing	Will require continuing action

It should be recognized that this document is a non-statutory plan whose purpose is to provide direction and guidance. Implementation will be impacted by a variety of factors, including Council priorities, available resources, budget approval and emerging opportunities/challenges.



## Organizational Development

- A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework
- B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth
- C. Develop and Grow the Town's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms
- D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting
- E. Ongoing and Future Planning

# 1. Organizational Development

**Goal:** Develop a sustainable, well-resourced, and clear event delivery framework that enhances service delivery, strengthens evaluation and reporting, and leverages diverse revenue streams to support the growth of special events in Oakville.



Photo Credits: Town of Oakville



## Organizational Development

### A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

### B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

### C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

### D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

### E. Ongoing and Future Planning

### A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

The Town of Oakville should establish an overarching approach to support event service delivery, clarify roles for everyone involved, and identify what kind of events it will or will not support. Doing this will help to organize and streamline activities, and add rigour and transparency to decision making and investments related to events. This will ensure that the Town of Oakville and its residents are able to fully realize the positive benefits of events.

The Town of Oakville should continue to take a direct provider approach to delivering department-led events that are related to service delivery (i.e. Fire Services, Recreation and Culture). The result would be ongoing involvement in events that promote education and access to Town services. Delivery of events that cater to specific interests or groups should be led by external organizations. The Town of Oakville should take on a supportive role of facilitator for events that are community-led. This would involve process improvements to simplify event administration for event organizers and would result in more events being delivered by the community.

There are tools that the Town of Oakville can use to determine its level of involvement, service provision, investment in different events, including Event Evaluation Criteria and an Event Service Matrix. Event Evaluation Criteria can be used to inform decisions related to whether the Town of Oakville should lead, partner, facilitate, or not participate in new event opportunities. An Event Service Matrix would assist staff in determining what level of involvement and support the Town of Oakville will provide for different types of events led by different groups in the community. See Appendix B for proposed Event Evaluation Criteria and Appendix C for a proposed Event Service Matrix. More stringent event planning guidelines and timelines for external organizations to follow would also support a clear event development framework. Such requirements create more streamlined and predictable processes and help to reduce pressure on staff resources. While the approach should establish clear expectations, it must also remain flexible to accommodate unique or evolving event needs.

Establishing a customer-first and one-door-in approach to supporting external organizations will also be key. A customer-first approach involves helping such groups in ways that meet their needs, build relationships, and facilitate their events. A one-door-in approach provides a single point of contact within the Administration for event related inquiries. It streamlines and improves communication with vendors, community groups, event sponsors, and other partners, and provides consistent information and services to them. This in turn supports better community-led event delivery.



# Organizational Development

## A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville’s Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

E. Ongoing and Future Planning



### Recommended Direction

- MAINTAIN
- CREATE



### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff



### Timeline

Short/Medium



### Recommendations

- 1.A.1. Focus event delivery by the Town of Oakville on department-led events that are related to service delivery (i.e. Fire Services, Recreation and Culture).
- 1.A.2. Undertake a Lean process review to streamline the facilitation of community-led events, using a customer-first approach to identify and eliminate inefficiencies, reduce waste, and improve service delivery for event organizers.
- 1.A.3. Develop clear criteria for future Town-led events.
- 1.A.4. Implement an Event Services Matrix to assist staff in determining what level of staff involvement and other support the Town of Oakville will provide for different types of outdoor events.
- 1.A.5. Establish a single point of contact for all event related inquiries and requests.
- 1.A.6. Develop and communicate defined event planning guidelines and timelines for external organizations.



## Organizational Development

### A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

### B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

### C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

### D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

### E. Ongoing and Future Planning

## B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

The Town of Oakville should consider strategically investing in its event service delivery system to ensure that it can continue delivering at a high level and action the process improvements identified within the plan. The current team has no additional capacity so new investments in a Supervisor of Events position will ensure proposed process improvements identified within the plan are achievable. As community-led events continue to grow, additional staff support may be required. The additional staff will also better align the Town of Oakville with comparator benchmarks for event staffing, contribute to preventing staff burnout, enable more efficient use of existing resources, enhance support for community-led event delivery, and reduce exposure to event-related risks. A commitment to investing resources now will help to ensure the Town of Oakville is set up for success to deliver and support events over the long term in a sustainable way.

Additional human resources could take the form of new staff, reallocated existing staff, or contracted resources. Alternatively, the Town of Oakville could reprioritize existing event staff's responsibilities toward implementing the plan. However, doing this would likely result in fewer events being supported by staff given that the events team is currently fully utilized.

Potential positions to consider, as funding allows and in order of priority, include:

1. Events Supervisor
2. Community-led Events Coordinator
3. Events Assistant

While there is an immediate need for the Supervisor of Events role, the remaining positions should be phased in over time as demand for event services grows. The current staff structure involves the Senior Manager of Culture in the direct management of event operations. The proposed recommendation aligns with the organizational framework within the Recreation and Culture Department. Introducing these roles will provide the necessary capacity to effectively implement the plan. See Figure 6 for a potential staffing structure for the Town's event team. The structure identifies existing positions and potential future resources.



## Organizational Development

A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

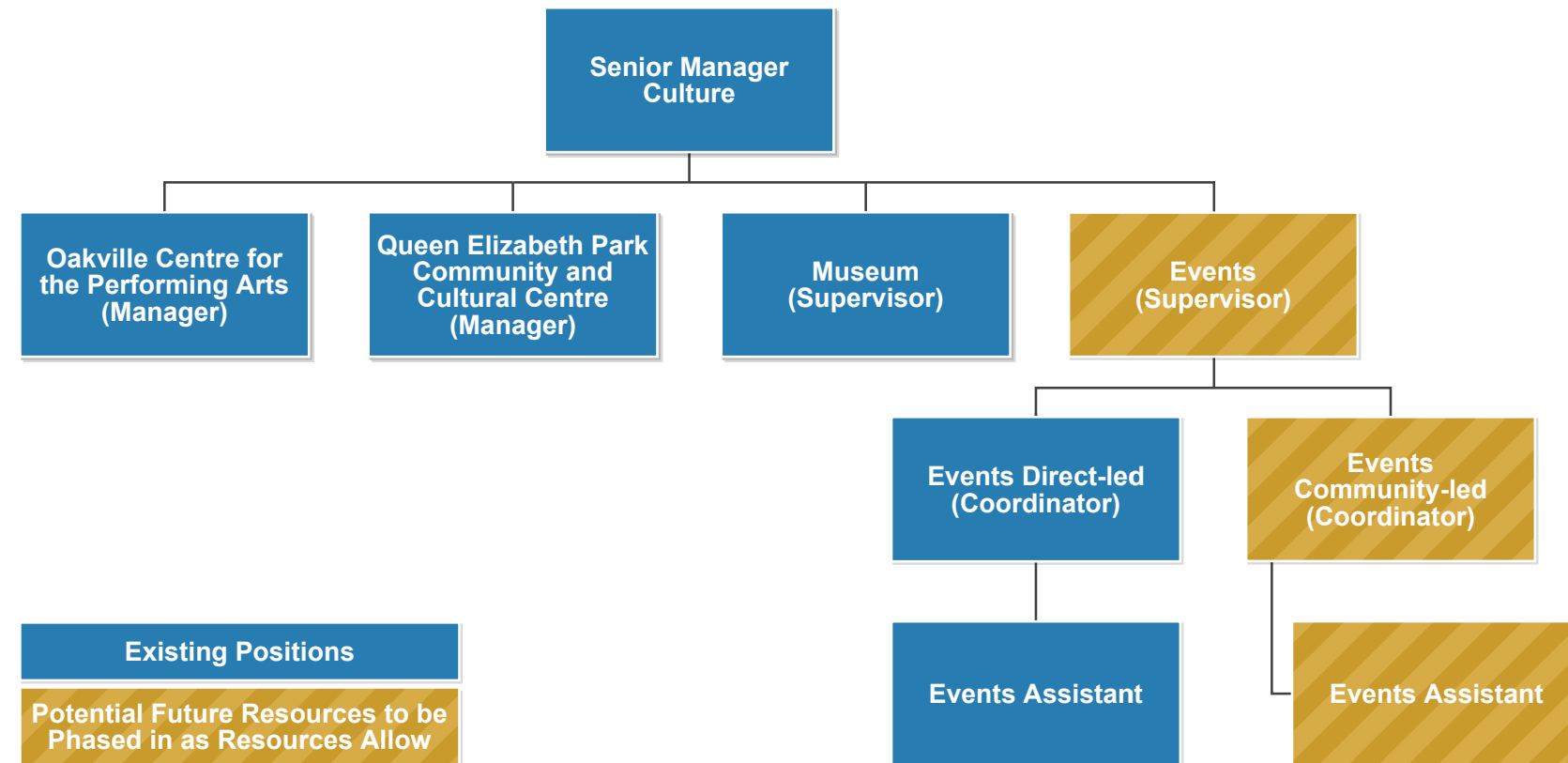
B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

E. Ongoing and Future Planning

Figure 6. Potential Future Staffing Structure for the Event Team



### Contracted Resources

Contracted resources could be used to support Town of Oakville event staff. These could be seasonal full or part time positions that are brought on during the Town of Oakville's 'prime event season'. They could also be casual staff that are assigned specific event tasks on an as-needed basis or external consultants brought in for a pre-determined period for a particular purpose. Another example of a contracted resource is an external business or organization hired by the Town of Oakville to provide services on an as-needed basis such as event production, venue set-up and clean up, and other event infrastructure related services (e.g. lighting, signage, seating, technical support, and tents). Contracted resources may be particularly helpful toward supporting the resource needs of the various Town of Oakville departments that provide event support service, such as Roads and Works. New tools and processes related to sourcing external services would help to streamline these activities.





## Organizational Development

A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

E. Ongoing and Future Planning

## Descriptions of Potential Future Positions

### Events Supervisor

The introduction of a supervisor role is consistent with the Recreation and Culture department's organizational structure and relieves the senior manager from direct event management to allow for broader oversight of the various lines of business. This position would manage the event team and the implementation of the Special Events Plan. They would provide leadership for staff responsible for planning, executing, and evaluating events delivered by the municipality, as well as staff responsible for supporting community-led event delivery. This position would also lead non-municipal revenue development activities, such as securing grants, sponsorships and advertising. In addition, the person in this position would work with the communications team to develop and implement impactful marketing plans for Town of Oakville-run events. Marketing-related responsibilities would also include working with local partners to align event messaging and brand representation, and building relationships with local media outlets and influencers to generate expanded coverage for events in the town. Additional responsibilities could include supporting more effective promotion of town-run events and amplifying community-led activities in collaboration with local partners (e.g. Visit Oakville, BIAs, etc.)

### Events Coordinator

The primary purpose of this position would be to help community organizations develop and deliver their own events and attract new event producers to the town. This position takes the lead in providing a "one-door-in" approach by being the single point of contact at the Town of Oakville for event development requests from the community. The position would act in a consultative role with community organizations helping to build their capacity. It would be important for this position to build strong relationships with event partners both within the community and outside the community. It will play an important strategic role, ensuring the right partnerships are made at the right time so that the community is well positioned to respond to growing demand for events. This role would also be responsible for the administration and operation of the Community Event Grant program.

### Events Assistant

This position would take on administrative tasks for the event team. They would help to keep other staff organized, allowing them to focus their attention on delivering core annual events, supporting community organizations to put on events, marketing and revenue generation. Potential responsibilities include supporting event and meeting scheduling, permit processing, budget tracking, correspondence, and maintaining databases and documentation to keep event planning on track.



## Organizational Development

A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

**B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth**

C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

E. Ongoing and Future Planning



### Recommended Direction



### Preliminary Cost Estimate

High/Staff



### Timeline

Short/Medium



### Recommendations

- 1.B.1. Invest in human resources to increase the capacity of the Town of Oakville's event team and deliver on the recommendations within the plan.
- 1.B.2. Evaluate the financial and human resource needs of other Town of Oakville departments related to event support, and consider sourcing external contractors to scale up event support services as needed.
- 1.B.3. Implement a codified method of ensuring annual funding and human resources keeps up with growth in the event portfolio and rising costs of inflation and event production.
- 1.B.4. Establish a Request for Proposal template that can be used to source event production services from external organizations when needed.



## Organizational Development

- A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework
- B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth
- C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms**
- D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting
- E. Ongoing and Future Planning

### C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms

The Town of Oakville should explore a variety of funding mechanisms and revenue streams beyond property taxes to increase and diversify its financial resources. This includes considering the feasibility of accessing Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) to support events, helping to address the growing scale and needs of events as the community's population expands. Examples of mechanisms include self-generated revenues, sponsorships, grants, donations, volunteer efforts, and in-kind contributions, as outlined in Appendix D. Where appropriate and with consideration of the impact to event organizers, the Town may also explore ways to recover costs for services provided to community-led events, such as security, road closures, or other services, using approaches like fee-for-service. In pursuing sponsorship, the Town will be mindful of potential impacts on community-led events, ensuring its efforts complement rather than compete with the community's ability to secure sponsorship.

Developing a revenue plan can guide these efforts by identifying opportunities and prioritizing actions to maximize revenue potential. Additionally, a more focused and collaborative approach to sponsorship acquisition can help enhance support from existing and new sponsors.



## Organizational Development

A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework

B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth

**C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms**

D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

E. Ongoing and Future Planning



### Recommended Direction

 **IMPROVE**  
 **INVEST**



### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Medium/Staff



### Timeline

Short



### Recommendations

- 1.C.1. Develop and execute a revenue development plan that will increase earned revenues for events and increase grants and sponsorships.
- 1.C.2. Identify and implement ways to recover costs to the Town of Oakville associated with supporting community-led events.
- 1.C.3. Review event related rates and fees, including benchmarking against industry standards, to ensure that the appropriate charges are being applied.
- 1.C.4. Review the possibility of allocating funds from the municipal allocation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax revenue to appropriate special events.
- 1.C.5. Increase resourcing as needed to respond to growth in the number and size of events.
- 1.C.6. Develop business cases for existing and potential new sponsors to become further involved in Town of Oakville-run events.
- 1.C.7. Undertake a comprehensive review and update of the existing Corporate Grants, Sponsorships, Naming Rights, and Advertising Sales Policy to ensure alignment with current industry standards, strategic objectives, and community expectations. The review process should actively involve key stakeholders, particularly event organizers, to incorporate their perspectives, streamline application processes, and enhance the policy's relevance and effectiveness.



## Organizational Development

- A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework
- B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth
- C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville’s Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms
- D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting**
- E. Ongoing and Future Planning

### D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting

The Town of Oakville should collect useful data that can be leveraged to inform decision making and educate the community regarding the value of events. To support effective event planning and resource management, it is recommended that the Town develop a structured framework for tracking and allocating in-kind support to events from all departments. This framework would categorize events by type and apply clear criteria such as anticipated attendance, event location, infrastructure and equipment needs, and safety requirements. It should also consider the Town’s capacity and the sustainability of support levels over time. Implementing this framework will help ensure fair, consistent, and transparent decision-making in the provision of in-kind support. A clear framework to evaluate the success of events in meeting the needs and expectations of event participants in Oakville should be established. The evaluation should be informed by meaningful data, including feedback from event attendees and the broader community. This information will help assess community impact, identify areas for improvement, and guide future event planning to ensure continued relevance, inclusivity, and value to the Town. A valid approach to estimating event attendance will be needed to enable the consistent collection of data across all events in Oakville.



#### Recommended Direction



#### Recommendations



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/Low



#### Timeline

Short/Ongoing

- 1.D.1. Measure the social, economic, and environmental return on investment (ROI) of events.
- 1.D.2. Share ROI information with Town Council, senior administration, sponsors, and grant funding partners.
- 1.D.3. Conduct post-event surveys to collect data from participants.
- 1.D.4. Implement a measurement and reporting framework for all Town of Oakville staff who contribute toward event planning and delivery.
- 1.D.5. Develop a valid approach to estimating event attendance and implement it consistently across all events in Oakville.
- 1.D.6. Conduct a community-wide survey on a two or three year cycle to gauge overall resident satisfaction with events in Oakville.
- 1.D.7. Establish a grant-specific reporting requirement for events supported through Town funding programs, including final reporting templates to assess community impact and alignment with funding goals.



## Organizational Development

- A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework
- B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth
- C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville’s Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms
- D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting
- E. Ongoing and Future Planning**

### E. Ongoing and Future Planning

The success of this plan will require the Town of Oakville to evaluate progress on and results of initiatives, and to formally review and update the plan. Updating the plan will help to ensure that it continues to provide valuable direction for the Town of Oakville into the future.



#### Recommended Direction

 **EVALUATE**  
 **IMPROVE**



#### Recommendations

1.E.1. In year five of implementation, formally review and update the Special Events Plan. Adjust as necessary and chart a course for the next five years.



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Medium-High



#### Timeline

Medium



## Event and Program Development

### A. Support Event Delivery from the Community

### B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community

### C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces

### D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure

### E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events

### F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth

### G. Enhance Event Marketing

### H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase

### I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

## 2. Event and Program Development

**Goal:** Build local capacity, encourage events across the community, optimize existing infrastructure, and develop new spaces for inclusive events that meet diverse and evolving resident needs.

### A. Support Event Delivery from the Community

To support an increase in community-delivered special events it will be important to strengthen the capacity of local organizations. Achieving this will involve addressing barriers, streamlining processes, and equipping community-run event organizers with the necessary tools and resources.

The Town of Oakville's existing funding programs could be consolidated into an annual grant program with a variety of streams to fund community-led events of different sizes and scales. This would help community organizers plan in advance for their events and codify how Town of Oakville staff respond to event funding requests, with consistency and transparency. Consideration could also be given to expanding eligibility to include indoor events to support a greater diversity of activities as well as event delivery through all seasons of the year. The Town should explore opportunities to consolidate or streamline event-related funding programs, ensuring equity and access remains a priority (e.g. equity deserving groups, new and emerging groups, small neighbourhood events, etc.).

Practical resources such as checklists, templates, toolkits, materials and assets could also be developed and acquired to enhance organizer capacity. Topic-specific tools would assist organizers with event planning and delivery in areas such as event safety, accessibility, inclusion, marketing and promotion, financial support, permitting, vendors and climate action. A preferred or suggested vendor list would help streamline the work of event organizers.

### Case Study: Waterloo Neighbourhood Fund

Provides several streams of grant funding, including \$300 'mini-grants' for small neighbourhood events/activities and up to \$7,500 for neighbourhood based initiatives (including events) that are primarily resident-led and delivered, aimed at community-building, enhancing sense of belonging, and that are equitable, accessible and inclusive.





## Event and Program Development

### A. Support Event Delivery from the Community

### B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community

### C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces

### D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure

### E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events

### F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth

### G. Enhance Event Marketing

### H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase

### I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

Ensuring event friendly Town of Oakville by-laws, programs, permitting and booking processes would further support and reduce barriers to community-run events. The Town of Oakville should look for opportunities to improve on existing programs and potentially reallocate levels of support to where they will provide the most benefit to event organizers and the wider community. In addition, retaining permitting information for regular event organizers and vendors will better support all parties.

An annual event development forum could serve as a platform for sharing successes, discussing future initiatives, and fostering collaboration within the events sector. Lessons learned from similar gatherings that were hosted by Special Event Services in the past could be used to guide the format and focus of the forum.

It is also important to note that while the presence of a Business Improvement Area (BIA) in a ward brings significant benefits, such as strong local leadership, streamlined event administration, and enhanced capacity for organizing and promoting events, it does not necessarily mean that events are occurring across the entire ward. Activities are often concentrated within the BIA boundaries, potentially leaving other neighbourhoods without the same level of engagement or support. Broader strategies may be needed to ensure more equitable distribution of events and opportunities.

Together, these actions to support event delivery from external organizations will enable existing groups to grow and improve their offerings and encourage new groups to deliver events. Ultimately this will result in a diversity of community-run events that cater to varied interests and needs, and that overtime adapt and evolve alongside residents and event attendees.

### Case Study: Festivals Burnaby Grant

Provides funding for up to 40 per cent of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of \$4,000, to support new small scale festivals delivered by local registered non-profit community organizations. The program also provides funding for medium and large scale events that have been produced by a community organization at least one time. The maximum amount of funding for these scales of festivals is \$12,000 and \$25,000 respectively.





## Event and Program Development

### A. Support Event Delivery from the Community

### B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community

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### D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure

### E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events

### F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth

### G. Enhance Event Marketing

### H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase

### I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan



#### Recommended Direction



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/Low to High



#### Timeline

Short/Medium



#### Recommendations

- 2.A.1. Streamline the Town of Oakville’s financial supports for events into a Community Event Grant program.
- 2.A.2. Explore the feasibility of replacing the existing fee waiver process with a revised grant program.
- 2.A.3. Develop separate application streams for small and large community-led events and right-size permitting requirements for the needs of the Town of Oakville and the event organizer.
- 2.A.4. Review Town of Oakville by-laws and administrative processes to ensure they are supportive of hosting community and special events.
- 2.A.5. Develop a database to retain permitting information for regular event organizers and vendors.
- 2.A.6. Develop easy to use reference tools and resources that will help community groups and organizations plan and deliver events. Potential tools include Accessibility and Inclusion Checklist, Climate-Action Checklist, Marketing and Promotion Toolkit, Financial Support Toolkit, Permitting Checklist, Event Safety Toolkit, a training incubator program, an annual special event organizer meeting, training to support volunteerism, and a suggested vendor list for events.



## Event and Program Development

A. Support Event Delivery from the Community

**B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community**

C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces

D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure

E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events

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G. Enhance Event Marketing

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### B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community

Events should be encouraged across the community to improve the accessibility of events and to enable more residents to participate in activities close to where they live. Decentralized (or distributed) event approaches are one way to do this. They entail spreading out events geographically (i.e. by utilizing multiple locations) and over time (i.e. by running an event over multiple weekends). This can serve to reduce or mitigate the challenges associated with organizing and delivering large-scale events that happen over the course of only one or two days and that attract large crowds to one venue. To deliver decentralized approaches within the resources of the Town of Oakville and to limit the need for additional staff time and resources to support added events, only easily replicable events should be considered for decentralization. Easily replicable events are those that are essentially turnkey operations, requiring little in the way of additional logistical planning and day-of staffing and equipment. The suitability of individual events for this approach should be evaluated. The Town of Oakville is already successfully using this approach with Movie Nights.



#### Recommended Direction



#### Recommendations

- 2.B.1. Implement decentralized event approaches to increase event programming across the community.
- 2.B.2. Develop a tool for event organizers that identifies event-friendly spaces with geographical distribution across the town (including basic site information, permitting tips, etc.)



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Low



#### Timeline

Short/Medium



## Event and Program Development



- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
- B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community
- C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces**
- D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure
- E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events
- F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth
- G. Enhance Event Marketing
- H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase
- I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

### C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces

In some instances, large community events in Oakville have surpassed the carrying capacity of existing host spaces. For this reason it is advisable to set capacity limits on the Town of Oakville’s event spaces. These limits should include both the number of events each space can handle over periods of time throughout the year as well as the number of participants each space can accommodate during an event. Control measures to ensure compliance should be considered alongside limits. These could include fencing to control access and event ticketing to manage attendee numbers. The parking capacity of event venues should also be established, along with requirements for event producers related to parking management. Including “Getting to the Event” information in communication materials for event attendees can encourage use of more multi-modal transportation options. In addition, communication requirements for event organizers would help to manage potential impacts on nearby residents related to amplified sounds.



#### Recommended Direction

-  **EVALUATE**
-  **CREATE**



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/Low



#### Timeline

Short



#### Recommendations

- 2.C.1. Set capacity limits on the Town of Oakville’s event spaces for both frequency and participant volume.
- 2.C.2. Consider implementing attendance tracking and control methods to ensure compliance with capacity limits.
- 2.C.3. Develop an event parking management policy aligned with site-specific capacity and transportation planning.
- 2.C.4. Incorporate “Getting to the Event” information in event communication materials to promote sustainable and multi-modal transportation options.
- 2.C.5. Establish communication requirements for event organizers in relation to residents living in proximity to events that will have amplified sounds.
- 2.C.6. Consider introducing cost-recovery mechanisms, such as charge back model, for additional municipal services required at large or high-risk events (e.g., police/security presence, road closures, waste management, by-law enforcement).



## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
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### D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure

Making improvements to event hosting amenities in existing public spaces across the community would support more locally accessible events and maximize use of Town of Oakville assets. Enhancements could include utility connections, washrooms, stages, and seating areas. Adding amenities that would support more local small-scale and pop-up events would also advance implementation of the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan.

Event hosting infrastructure should also be considered in future municipal planning, including land use planning, facility designs, transportation infrastructure, service level decisions, as well as master plans for all Town of Oakville departments. The Downtown Oakville Strategic Action Plan and the Downtown Cultural Hub Initiative are two strong examples of where this is already occurring.

Consideration should also be given to assessing the feasibility of using existing major park spaces for events of different scales. For example, the Town of Oakville could consider options for reopening Coronation Park for appropriately sized community events. Engagement with nearby residents should seek common ground and identify appropriate controls to address concerns. Noise and parking mitigation strategies, along with upgrades and other steps that would be needed to reopen the park as an event space, could be incorporated into an events plan for the park. Similarly, the former Fogolars Country Club site could be appropriate for small scale events with site specific parameters in place that work with its unique characteristics. There may also be opportunities to partner with Bronte Provincial Park to host community events, especially those that are expected to have large crowds.

### Common Event Hosting Amenities

- Stage with adequate sightlines
- Utility connections (water and electricity)
- Hardscaping
- Loading areas
- Washrooms
- Seating
- Shaded and weather protected areas
- Parking





## Event and Program Development

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### Recommended Direction

-  **EVALUATE**
-  **CREATE**



### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/High



### Timeline

Medium



### Recommendations

- 2.D.1. Explore and prioritize opportunities town-wide to enhance the functionality of existing park and indoor spaces to host events.
- 2.D.2. Incorporate event hosting considerations in future municipal planning, including capital projects, and park and facility redevelopments
- 2.D.3. Engage with nearby residents to consider options for reopening Coronation Park for appropriately sized community events.
- 2.D.4. Explore opportunities to partner with Bronte Provincial Park to host community events.
- 2.D.5. Evaluate the current Event Venue Inventory (Appendix A) against the Event Space Location Criteria (Appendix E) to identify specific needs and recommend updates to existing park and facility infrastructure.



## Event Parking and Transportation Strategies

**Transit shuttles and e-scooters:** Edmonton’s Heritage Fest has no public parking at the venue. Edmonton Transit runs shuttles every 10 minutes to and from the festival site and several Park and Ride locations around the city. Special event two-way transit fares are in effect for that service. The festival also partners with an e-scooter provider to offer attendees complementary unlocks after the festival.

*Source: Heritage Fest*

**Bike valet:** The City of Vancouver encourages event organizers to offer bike valet services for attendees. Such services provide free, convenient and secure bicycle parking for concert-goers, sports fans, and those attending festivals and community events.

*Source: City of Vancouver*

**Resident event zone parking programs:** The City of Winnipeg uses its Stadium Event Zone Permit program to manage parking and access for fans attending events at the stadium and for residents of the area. Residents within the designated ‘event zone’ can apply for complementary parking passes, allowing them to park on street on event day.

*Source: City of Winnipeg*



## Event and Program Development

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- I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

### E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events

Oakville could benefit from developing a purpose-built venue to host major community events that attract thousands of attendees. This would help to ensure the community has the right facility to host existing and future events as the population grows in the coming decades and as event programming evolves. A new facility should include a hardscaped outdoor square, lighting, areas for vendors including access to utilities (water and electricity), an outdoor stage, seating and shaded areas, washrooms, loading areas, parking or access to parking, accessible pathways, and access control points. The Town of Oakville could also consider including other outdoor recreation amenities such as gardens, indoor support facilities, a wading pool, and skating rink. A new event space such as this should be designed for year-round use and potential for future expansion. Broad criteria for selecting a site for a new venue are included in Appendix E.



#### Recommended Direction

 **CREATE**



#### Recommendations

2.E.1. Explore the feasibility of a purpose-built outdoor venue to host large community events (as recommended in the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan).



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

High



#### Timeline

Medium



Photo Credit: City of Mississauga

#### Case Study: Mississauga Celebration Square

This space is an example of a purpose-built outdoor event venue. The hardscape ground provides flexibility of use and ease of maintenance. There are numerous support amenities, including stages, utility hookups, seating, and access control. Nearby indoor spaces can be used to support event delivery as well.





## Event and Program Development

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- G. Enhance Event Marketing
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- I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

### F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth

There is an opportunity for Oakville’s event offering to evolve in response to rising demand for both the quantity and diversity of events. Introducing new events and revamping existing ones will also be an important way to reflect changing resident interest in events. Events that were identified as being most in demand through the engagement process include arts/music/performance, family-friendly, food and beverage, and holiday/seasonal events throughout the year. To celebrate the community as a whole, the Town of Oakville could consider supporting the development of an inclusive multicultural festival to showcase the community’s cultural diversity and to celebrate multiculturalism. The Heritage Festival in Edmonton is an example of such an event.

Event programming could also be enhanced by engaging relevant Town of Oakville departments and stakeholders during event planning. Bringing departments together at an early event planning stage will help align goals and actions, including those related to accessibility. Engaging businesses and community groups in delivering experiences at events will help meet changing participant expectations and keep event programming fresh year after year.



#### Recommended Direction



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/Low to High



#### Timeline

Short/Long



#### Recommendations

- 2.F.1. Engage relevant Town of Oakville departments and stakeholders during event planning (e.g. Accessibility Advisory Committee).
- 2.F.2. Further engage businesses and community groups in delivering experiences.
- 2.F.3. Support the development of new community-led events that respond to resident demand.
- 2.F.4. Create a Success Evaluation Framework for direct-led events to understand if they continue to support a vibrant and livable community for all.
- 2.F.5. Evolve the Community Event Grant Program to align with emerging priorities (e.g., arts and culture, food, family, season) and to support inclusive community-led programming that reflects Oakville’s diversity.



## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
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### Case Study: Edmonton Heritage Festival

Edmonton hosts an annual Heritage Festival that brings together diverse cultural groups to share their history, music, dance, and food with the city. The event is organized by the Edmonton Heritage Festival Association and takes place over three days. The festival celebrates multiculturalism. The Festival's mission is to "promote public awareness, understanding and appreciation for cultural diversity through an annual summer festival." This family-friendly event provides residents and visitors with the opportunity to explore different ethnic traditions and engage in cultural exchange.

*Sources: Edmonton Heritage Festival and Explore Edmonton*





## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
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### G. Enhance Event Marketing

Enhanced event programming should be paired with enhanced marketing and communication to enable the community to fully participate in and enjoy events. Marketing plans should use multiple channels to reach a wide variety of audiences, promoting both town and community-led events. Allocating more resources to marketing efforts would also help to achieve greater reach. This could be in the form of contracted resources or new events-related internal staff positions or roles with marketing expertise. The Town of Oakville’s Recreation and Culture Team would be best positioned to continue to lead marketing efforts, with support from the Supervisor of Events, whose prospective portfolio would be inclusive of marketing and communications for events.

Improved coordination with partner agencies such as Visit Oakville would also ensure event marketing fully leverages available channels and avoids duplication. Similarly, an Event Marketing Guide for organizers would help them to also leverage available channels to promote their events.



#### Recommended Direction



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Low/Staff



#### Timeline

Medium



#### Recommendations

- 2.G.1. Consider allocating additional financial resources to support event marketing efforts.
- 2.G.2. Improve marketing coordination between Town of Oakville staff and Visit Oakville.
- 2.G.3. Develop an Event Marketing Guide that organizers can use to help them leverage available channels to promote their events.
- 2.G.4. Explore the feasibility of a consolidated events calendar for promotion of all community and town led events.



## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
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- E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events
- F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth
- G. Enhance Event Marketing
- H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase**
- I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

### H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase

Safety will continue to be an important consideration for all events, no matter who delivers them. Incorporating best practices related to safety into event planning and delivery, and adapting tools and requirements to emerging needs, will support the well-being of Town of Oakville staff, external event organizers, participants and attendees. It will also preserve and enhance the Town of Oakville’s reputation for delivering and supporting high quality special events. Risk assessments, emergency response plans and risk mitigation strategies will become more important for both Town of Oakville-run and community-run event delivery. Considerations should include inclement and extreme weather, firework and hostile vehicle mitigation, crowd control, threat management, as well as routine safety training and other potential risks that may be identified as critical to address by the Town of Oakville. Public communication strategies and contingency planning are also important to ensuring safe, accessible, and inclusive event experiences.



#### Recommended Direction



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Staff/Low to Medium



#### Timeline

Short/Ongoing



#### Recommendations

- 2.H.1. Ensure that all existing and future Town of Oakville event staff receive regular event safety training.
- 2.H.2. Incorporate risk assessments and mitigation strategies into Town of Oakville-run event delivery, inclusive of hostile vehicle mitigation, crowd safety measures, and emergency response protocols.
- 2.H.3. Develop, share, and utilize templates for risk assessments, emergency management, and response plans that can be used by external organizations.
- 2.H.4. Review the Terms of Reference for the Town of Oakville’s Special Events Advisory Table (SEAT) including consideration for emergency services partners.
- 2.H.5. Continue updating the Town of Oakville’s Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and take steps to respond to the changing climate and its impacts on events.



## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
- B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community
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- E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events
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### Hostile Vehicle Mitigation Measures

The Ontario Traffic Council's Hostile Vehicle Mitigation Measures report outlines measures that event organizers can take to mitigate risks associated with hostile or unintentional acts that result in injuries to pedestrians or cyclists, or damage to infrastructure. It identifies tasks for event organizers, provides tools to be used in event planning, and reviews temporary mitigation measures. Tasks include assessing risks and risk factors such as anticipated event size and duration, and developing a hostile vehicle plan to address them. Tools include risk matrices, case studies, and a sample event application form. Potential mitigation measures include event location and access considerations, such as establishing an event perimeter, road closures, and the use of anti-vehicle equipment such as barricades, bollards, and other barriers including other vehicles.



Source: Ontario Traffic Council  
Photo Credit: Rapid Stop Barrier



## Event and Program Development

- A. Support Event Delivery from the Community
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- E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events
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- H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase
- I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan**

### I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan

A Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan would build on existing assets and major sport hosting experiences in Oakville to draw visitors and visitor dollars to the community. The state-of-the-art quad pad arena at the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex is a key asset, as are the lit fields, courts, fieldhouse and washroom facilities at the 79-hectare community park. A hosting strategy would also help to implement the Town of Oakville’s Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan. That plan directs the development of a sport tourism strategy for the planning and management of major sports facilities using a regional lens, and to address sport specific priorities and hosting requirements.



#### Recommended Direction

 **CREATE**



#### Recommendations

2.1.1. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan.



#### Preliminary Cost Estimate

Medium-High



#### Timeline

Medium

# 6

## Top 10 Actions and Roles in Implementation



## Top 10 Actions

The following actions have been identified as top priorities. They are activities with the most potential to advance the vision and outcomes of the Special Events Plan. They are also those with the most potential to support an event delivery system that is adaptable and designed to withstand future changes and challenges. It is expected that the Town of Oakville would implement them as resources allow. Actions are listed in a recommended order of priority.



1. Support event organizers with a single point of contact for requests, tools and resources.



2. Implement process improvements to simplify administration for event organizers.



3. Staff continue to directly deliver Department-led events related to service delivery (e.g., Family Day, Culture Days, Fire Prevention Day). Canada Day and the Santa Claus Parade are currently staff-led. Where appropriate, staff will collaborate with interested community groups to support a transition to a community-led model, with the goal of fostering strong community engagement and stewardship.



4. Streamline existing financial supports into a single Community Event Grant Program, including an annual application, evaluation and reporting process.



5. Consider investing additional resources into event development to prepare for future growth (i.e. staff, grant program, and infrastructure).



6. Explore and prioritize opportunities town-wide to enhance the functionality of existing park spaces to host events.



7. Establish capacity limits and controls for event spaces.



8. Develop and execute a revenue development plan that will increase earned revenues for events and increase grants and sponsorships.



9. Explore the feasibility of a purpose-built outdoor venue to host large community events (as recommended in the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan).



10. Enhance event programming to respond to growth across the community.

## Partner Roles and Responsibilities

The implementation of this plan will require the cultivation of partnerships to collaboratively accomplish initiatives. The following identifies key partners for the plan and describes their role.

Organization	Role
Town Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt new by-laws, programs, policies, and procedures required to advance the plan’s initiatives. Consider resource requests to support the plan through the annual budgeting process.</li> </ul>
Town Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Led by the Recreation and Culture Division in the Community Services department, Administration will work collaboratively to implement action items identified in the plan.</li> </ul>
Business Improvement Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support implementation by continuing to deliver events, evolving events to meet changing local needs, collecting, and sharing data on their events, and providing input into initiatives aimed at streamlining processes, and developing tools and resources for community-based organizations delivering events.</li> </ul>
Oakville Arts Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support arts and culture organizations, operating at arms length from the Town of Oakville with Town of Oakville funding. Administer grants can be used to support arts and cultural events.</li> </ul>
Resident and Community Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resident and community associations register with the Town of Oakville each year. They are formally organized groups of citizens that represent a geographic area or a particular issue.</li> <li>Support implementation by providing insights that contribute to specific plan actions, in particular actions related to supporting community capacity and distributing events across the town.</li> <li>Associations should be engaged as appropriate in implementation activities that will have implications on particular areas or issues. They may, for example, be interested in capacity limits for local parks, potential park space improvements to support events, and tools that will help them deliver events.</li> </ul>
Local Groups and Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes a diversity of local organizations, clubs, and groups.</li> <li>Support implementation by developing new community-run events in alignment with this plan and with well-defined supports from Town of Oakville staff (event staff and other). Provide input into initiatives aimed at building community capacity.</li> </ul>

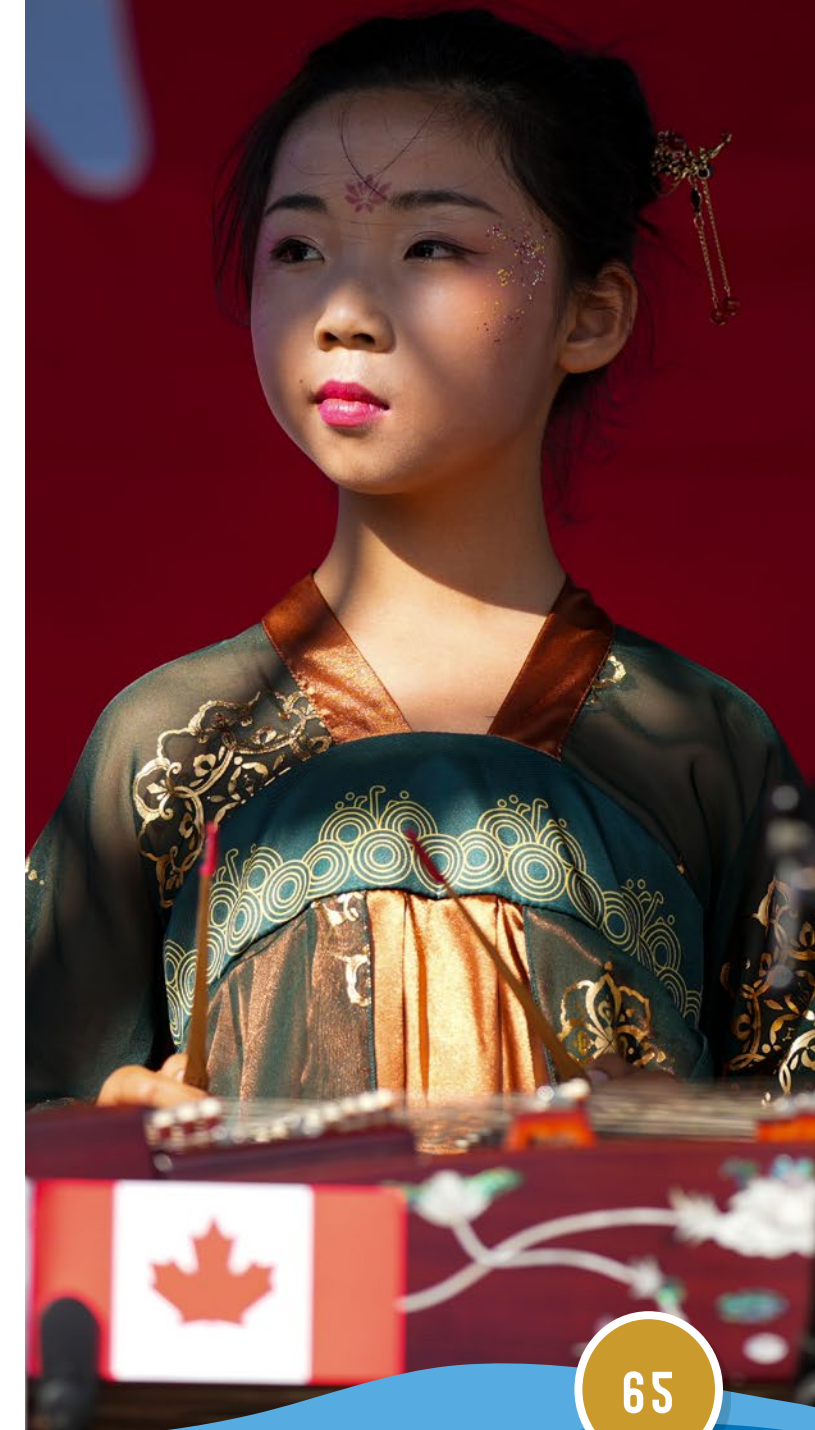


Photo Credit: Town of Oakville

Organization	Role
Businesses (Vendors) and Entrepreneurs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes businesses who participate in events as vendors, those who participate as sponsors, and those that might benefit from and contribute to local events.</li> <li>Support implementation by providing input into initiatives aimed at supporting enhanced sponsor revenues, and by participating or partnering in the delivery of Town of Oakville-run and community-run events, including providing front-line services to eventgoers and providing highly engaging experiences during events.</li> </ul>
Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents should be encouraged to attend events, provide feedback on events, volunteer for events, and work together to organize events in their own neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
Oakville Chamber of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocates for local businesses and economic development, and provides business support services to businesses in Oakville.</li> <li>Could support implementation through relationship building with potential event sponsors, and providing input into activities aimed at evolving, creating and marketing events.</li> </ul>
Visit Oakville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocates on behalf of Oakville’s tourism industry and aims to drive economic impact through marketing and partnerships.</li> <li>Could support implementation through marketing and partnership collaboration, as well as through input into new events and event programming in support of tourism attraction.</li> <li>Distributes a portion of Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) to eligible events and administers a grant program to support event delivery for tourism-focused programming.</li> </ul>
Halton Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides services for the Town of Oakville and other communities in the region.</li> <li>Could support implementation by working with the Town of Oakville to improve coordination of processes and services for special events.</li> </ul>
Province of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Owns and manages Bronte Creek Provincial Park and other provincial lands used for events.</li> <li>Could support implementation through provincial funding programs for community, cultural, or tourism-focused events.</li> </ul>



# 7

## Conclusion



Photo Credit: Expedition Management Consulting Ltd.



## Conclusion

The Special Events Plan is a roadmap for enhancing and evolving the Town of Oakville's event delivery system. It will strategically guide the Town of Oakville's actions over the coming years so that it may continue to support events that are enjoyed by all residents and that are within the capacity of the municipality to deliver. This in turn will ensure that the benefits of special events are realized across the community as it continues to grow. It will also ensure that the event delivery system overall is primed to respond and adapt to changing trends, needs, demographics, and resources in the long term.

Implementing the plan will require ongoing internal collaboration and organization, dedicated resources, and engagement and partnerships with community organizations, event sponsors, staff and residents. This will create an event delivery system that is resilient and well adapted to Oakville's needs.

# Appendices



## Appendix A – Event Venue Inventory

The following provides an overview of key outdoor and indoor event venues in Oakville.

### Outdoor Event Hosting Facilities

#### Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park

Bronte Heritage Waterfront Park is located on Ontario Street in Ward 1. It is 7.78 hectares and is classified as a community park. The park features 212 parking spaces, a washroom facility, and water feature.<sup>29</sup> Several events are hosted at the park including Canada Day, Art in the Park, and Black Music on the Block. Additionally, the Bronte Butterfly Gazebo can be booked for private events and is an ideal spot for ceremonies.

#### Shell Park

Shell Park is located on Lakeshore Road in Ward 1. It is 20.61 hectares and is classified as a community park. The park features an off-leash dog park, playground, skateboard park, four soccer fields, field house, washroom facility, and 216 parking spaces. For garden enthusiasts, it also features community garden plots and has more than 500 roses between June and September and 10,000 annuals in flower from May to September.<sup>30</sup> The Town of Oakville utilizes the park for their staff summer picnic.

#### Bronte Market Square

Bronte Market Square is located on Lakeshore Road in Ward 1. The space includes seating areas, a water feature, and access to electrical power.<sup>31</sup> Bronte Market Square is used to host a variety of special events in the community.

#### Coronation Park

Coronation Park is located on Lakeshore Road in Ward 2. It is 9.6 hectares and is classified as a community park.<sup>32</sup> The park features several amenities including five picnic areas, covered/shelter area, splash pad, two beach volleyball courts, playgrounds, stage, washrooms, snack bar facility, and 221 parking spaces.<sup>33</sup> Coronation Park was used for large events prior to 2018.

#### Westwood Park

Westwood Park is located on Wilson Street in Ward 2. It is 0.68 hectares and is classified as a neighbourhood park. The park was redeveloped and included boulevard upgrades along Kerr and Wilson Street, installation of walkways, decorative walls, trees, and shrubs, custom-designed metal gazebo and trellis feature, lighting irrigation, completion of the central plaza area, water feature, and landscaping.<sup>34</sup> Kerrfest, which is an annual event in September is hosted at Westwood Park.

#### Towne Square

Towne Square is located on Lakeshore Road in Ward 3 and is a vibrant public gathering space for residents and visitors. It frequently hosts a variety of events and is often utilized by the BIA. It is surrounded by shops and restaurants and offers seating areas. As part of Oakville's downtown revitalization plan, Towne Square is undergoing a redesign, with completion anticipated in 2026.<sup>35</sup>

#### Centennial Square

Centennial Square is located on Navy Street in Ward 3 and serves as a venue for various events. The BIA organizes events here, including Holiday Happy Hours and Holiday Horse and Carriage Rides. There are plans to redevelop the square in the coming years through the Town of Oakville's Downtown Cultural Hub initiative.

#### Lions Valley Park

Lions Valley Park is located on Lions Valley Road in Ward 7. The park is 11.47 hectares and features parking, two large picnic areas, a playground, and access to several trails.<sup>36</sup> The Town of Oakville's summer picnic is hosted at Lions Valley Park.

## Indoor Event Hosting Facilities

### Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre

The Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre is located on Bridge Road in Ward 1 and is home to a wide variety of programs, art exhibitions, rental spaces, conferences, and special events. The facility is one of six community centres operated by the Town of Oakville and stands out as the most frequently used for events. The facility features diverse amenities, including a main gallery, black box theatre, aquatics centre, community kitchen, two gymnasiums, youth centre, older adults centre, dance studios, recording studio, fine arts studios, and a rehearsal hall. The Black Box Theatre is ideal for theatre productions, performing arts shows, conferences, workshops, and exhibitions. The main performance area is 40 feet by 60 feet and the floor is fully sprung. It also includes stage decks, railings, and 40 feet by 20 feet of storage space, along with two dressing rooms and a grand piano. The theatre also includes multimedia capabilities, such as a 17 foot projector screen and comprehensive lighting and sound systems.<sup>37</sup>

### Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts

The Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts is located on Navy Street in Ward 3 and features the AEG Liebherr Auditorium and main stage, lobby, Studio Theatre, patio, and front entrance. The AEG Liebherr Auditorium accommodates 485 seats, all within 55 feet of the stage, and is equipped with technical features such as lighting, audio-visual capabilities, a fly system, drapery, and stage accessories. The Studio Theatre offers cabaret-style seating for up to 114 people, with general admission performances seating 116. Additionally, the facility includes a loading dock and stage door, making it ideal for events.<sup>38</sup>

### Sixteen Mile Sports Complex

The Sixteen Mile Sports Complex is located in Ward 7 and is a 79-hectare park with three distinct areas. The first area includes portions of the Sixteen Mile Creek valley and forms part of the Natural Heritage System. The second is planned to accommodate active sports fields. The third includes the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex, two lit sport fields and a leash free area. Eventually, this area will also include a library branch and additional outdoor amenities.<sup>39</sup>

## Appendix B – Draft Event Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria can be used as a tool to assist the Town of Oakville in determining how best to allocate financial and other resources for community-run events. The first five are recommended to be considered mandatory criteria that an event must satisfy in order to receive support from the Town of Oakville. The remaining criteria can be used to further evaluate event opportunities and inform decision-making. Criteria 6 to 15 are not listed in a suggested order of priority and are not weighted. Evaluators may prioritize and weight these criteria in order to reflect particular priorities. The Town of Oakville may choose to further elaborate on criteria descriptions to guide its evaluation activities.

### Scoring Chart

The following chart provides an example of how criteria could be scored.

0= clearly does not meet the description

1= somewhat meets the description

2= clearly meets the description

3= exceeds the description (new and innovative thinking is demonstrated)

	Criteria	Description							
<b>Mandatory Criteria</b>	1. Physical Infrastructure Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community has sufficient and appropriate infrastructure in place to successfully host and support the event (e.g. facilities, transportation, parking, etc.).</li> <li>If additional infrastructure is required, it is feasible that the community could meet the requirements.</li> </ul>							
	2. Capacity of Event Producer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event will be produced by an organization with a strong capacity. The leadership, business acumen, experience, organizational structure, resources (human and financial), and other factors as appropriate, of the event producer instill confidence that the event will be a success.</li> </ul>							
	3. Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event demonstrates a high level of accessibility to the public.</li> <li>All members of the community are encouraged to participate.</li> </ul>							
	4. Political Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event is non-partisan and will not be used to promote the political interests of any group, party, or individual.</li> </ul>							
	5. Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risks associated with the event are clearly identified and understood. Plans are in place to mitigate identified risks. The following risk areas should be considered:                             <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>a. Financial</td> <td>e. Reputational (of the municipality and community)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>b. Environmental</td> <td>f. Logistics and Safety</td> </tr> <tr> <td>c. Political</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>d. Social</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </li> </ul>	a. Financial	e. Reputational (of the municipality and community)	b. Environmental	f. Logistics and Safety	c. Political		d. Social
a. Financial	e. Reputational (of the municipality and community)								
b. Environmental	f. Logistics and Safety								
c. Political									
d. Social									
	6. Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event makes all members of the community feel welcome and does not promote one race, culture, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or ability/disability over another.</li> </ul>							
	7. Human Resource Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the event will not put undue stress on existing human resources, including the Town of Oakville, community volunteers, and others as appropriate.</li> </ul>							

### Scoring Chart

The following chart provides an example of how criteria could be scored.

0= clearly does not meet the description

1= somewhat meets the description

2= clearly meets the description

3= exceeds the description (new and innovative thinking is demonstrated)

	Criteria	Description
<b>Additional Criteria</b>	8. Strategic Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event aligns with the strategic direction of the Town of Oakville and other stakeholders/partners that may be involved.</li> </ul>
	9. Calendar Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event will enhance the community’s overall calendar of events and not conflict with current Town of Oakville-run events.</li> <li>The event will enhance existing event offerings in the community and any potential negative impacts will be minimized.</li> </ul>
	10. Reputation Enhancement and Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event will enhance the reputation and awareness of Oakville as a community that offers outstanding events.</li> </ul>
	11. Partnerships and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event supports opportunities for local partnerships (public and private) and demonstrates strong buy-in from local groups.</li> </ul>
	12. Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The community is supportive of hosting the event.</li> <li>The event has the potential to activate multiple areas in the community.</li> <li>The event promotes business engagement and supports the generation of complementary experiences offered by businesses.</li> </ul>
	13. Community Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event will have minimal negative impacts to regular community programming or spontaneous use of publicly accessible assets.</li> <li>The event has plans in place to minimize impacts to nearby residents.</li> </ul>
	14. Market Demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The event demonstrates community demand through relevant indicators (population projections, survey data, trends, etc.).</li> </ul>
	15. Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenses associated with hosting the event will be reasonable in relation to its revenue potential, expected return on investment, and overall economic impacts.</li> <li>Expenses will not exceed the financial capacity of the partners involved.</li> <li>The event should generate positive economic impacts for the town and local businesses.</li> </ul>

## Appendix C – Event Service Matrix

The following matrix outlines services the Town of Oakville could offer to different types of community-led events in its event facilitator role. It is intended to help inform how staff could support event organizers, and the extent of assistance offered. The Town of Oakville could build on this matrix to provide further direction to staff in their work with organizers, and to ensure a sustainable level of service is provided.

Potential Supports for Event Organizers*	Town Events	BIA Events	Community Events	Private Events
Assistance with Applications and Permits (e.g. providing links to and answering questions about applications and event permit processes)	✓	✓	✓	*
Leading Event Production and Delivery (e.g. managing event planning, production or delivery)	✓	-	-	-
Access to Municipally Owned Spaces to Host Events (e.g. providing access to event spaces through permits and fees)	✓	*	*	-
Funding Support (e.g. grants, sponsorships, etc.)**	✓	*	*	-
Marketing and Promotion Assistance (e.g. listing on event calendar, content creation, social media posts, etc.)	✓	*	*	-
Planning Support (e.g. site plan review, emergency and risk management plan template, etc.)	✓	*	*	-
Logistical Support for Event Production and Delivery (e.g. enforcing parking restrictions, garbage collection, security services, traffic control, event staff support)	✓	*	*	-
Evaluation (e.g. post-event attendee survey templates, economic impact analysis)	✓	*	*	-

\*The Town of Oakville may choose to offer any of the services described in the chart above if the proposed event is strongly aligned with its evaluation criteria.

\*\*There is no generalizable philosophy/singularly applicable approach to event funding sources (i.e. X% from the Town of Oakville, X% from event organizer, X% from sponsors, etc.).

#### Notes Regarding Private Events:

<sup>1</sup> The Town of Oakville could consider providing more service offerings to private events by charging a fee on a cost recovery basis.

<sup>2</sup> The Town of Oakville may consider providing enhanced, one-time services and/or funding to private events if they are anticipated to bring considerable value to the broader community (e.g. sport tourism events, conferences, etc.). However, the Town of Oakville is encouraged to recover costs wherever feasible. Requests for enhanced support for private events could go to Council for decision.

#### Event Definitions

**Town Events** – These include all events directly delivered by Town staff. The events have broad-based appeal and community-wide inclusivity.

**BIA Events** – These include all events delivered by BIAs in Oakville. The events take place within BIA areas, have broad-based appeal and community-wide inclusivity, and serve to enhance economic and community vibrancy.

**Community Events** – These include events that have broad-based appeal and community-wide inclusivity and are delivered by community groups/organizations and individuals from Oakville. These events require permitting permissions from the Town of Oakville.

**Private Events** – These include events that are delivered by private businesses, organizations, or individuals.

## Appendix D – Resourcing Mechanisms

The following is a description of potential resourcing mechanisms to support the delivery of special events in Oakville.

### Self-generated Revenue

Self-generated revenue includes things like facility rentals, vendor fees, and any other purchasable services offered by the Town of Oakville at events. Growing self-generated sources of revenue will be important to the financial sustainability of the municipality's event delivery system.

### Sponsorship

Corporate sponsorship of events in Oakville could be enhanced to increase revenues. The Town of Oakville could review and strengthen its existing Community and Corporate Partnership Program, including evaluating and enhancing sponsorship opportunities, assessing agreements and benefits for sponsors, and implementing new sponsor attraction tools and activities. As the community grows and attracts new businesses, additional corporations can be invited to sponsor Town of Oakville-run events.

### Grants

Provincial and federal grant opportunities for special events and recreation facilities that can host events should be reviewed and considered on an annual basis. An example of an existing grant programs is the Province of Ontario's **Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund**. It helps fund upgrades to existing sport and recreation facilities and the building of new transformative facilities. The current **Experience Ontario Program** offers grants for special events of at least two consecutive days that draw at least 5,000 tourists.<sup>40</sup>

## Volunteers and In-Kind Support

The Town of Oakville could explore further volunteer involvement and in-kind support for events. This may include an expansion of existing volunteer opportunities and roles for Town of Oakville-run special events. It may also include providing opportunities for local businesses and organizations to provide in-kind support for events in a variety of forms such as provision of materials and equipment at reduced rates or no cost, volunteer labour for set up and clean up, and joint promotions.

## Legacy Contributions and Donations

Donations from the community can also play a role in event delivery and infrastructure development. Donations to support specific facilities, amenities and/or events are a way for people to give back to their community, support the many positive impacts that events can bring, and cement their legacy or the legacy of their loved ones for future generations. The Town of Oakville's Memorial Bench and Memorial Tree Sponsorship Programs offer a template for small scale legacy contributions to support event amenities. A separate formal mechanism would be needed to receive and manage large donations, and ensure proper recognition is given toward remarkable gifts. Any donations and sponsorships should be aligned with Town of Oakville policy related to sponsorships, donations and advertising.

## Regional Collaboration

Collaborating with partners in the Halton region is a strategy that can provide financial benefits to the Town of Oakville. Coordinating the timing of events and the range of events delivered can reduce redundancy in the number of similar events offered in the region. This can result in cost savings for all parties by focusing on events unique to particular communities and those that do not compete for regional attendees.

## Involvement of the Non-Profit Sector

The non-profit sector can be of assistance in reducing capital development and event delivery costs in a variety of ways. For example, non-profit societies can access grants that are not available to municipalities or private sector organizations. They can also fundraise for new event hosting facilities or improvements to existing event spaces.

## Developer Contributions

Developers can contribute to event spaces, infrastructure and amenities in Oakville as they build new neighbourhoods or redevelop existing areas. The Town of Oakville can use this Special Events Plan as a tool to communicate community priorities and seek to increase developer investment in events.

## Municipal Accommodation Tax

The Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) is a fee applied to accommodations of less than 30 consecutive days. The Town of Oakville has an MAT rate of 4%. The authority to implement a tax on short term accommodations is established under Section 400.1 of the Municipal Act, 2001 and Ontario Regulation 435/17 authorize the establishment and collection of the MAT. There may be potential for the Town of Oakville to direct some of the proceeds to special events.

## Appendix E – Event Space Location Criteria

The following are criteria that can be used to assess the location of new event spaces. They can also be used to assess the current feasibility of existing event venues listed in Appendix A.

### 1. Capacity

- Capacity of the site to accommodate all desired event amenities.

### 2. Site Accessibility and Visibility

- Prominence and ease of access, including location on or near a major transportation corridor and good visibility. Multi-modal access should be prioritized, including access by public transit, cycling, and walking.

### 3. Land Use Compatibility

- The extent to which event hosting at the site will be compatible with activities on adjacent lands. Consideration should be given to impacts on nearby residential and business areas.

### 4. Site Availability and Potential Cost of Development

- Confirmation of whether the site can feasibly be acquired.
- Potential cost to service and develop the site and desired event supporting amenities.

### 5. Proximity to Complementary Amenities

- The extent to which the site supports access to and patronage of key community amenities such as libraries, cultural and recreation centres, and shopping districts.

### 6. Site Distribution

- The extent to which the site contributes to the distribution of event spaces across the municipality.

### 7. Site Synergies

- Opportunities for partnerships to develop the site and to serve event space users and residents. Examples include location within a newly developing area and potential for a partnership with the private sector to contribute to construction, opportunities to partner for on-site maintenance with adjacent facilities, and opportunities for the space to be managed and programmed by an external entity.

### 8. Operations and Revenue Generation

- Considerations that may affect event space operations (e.g. municipal operational efficiencies, potential revenue streams from event hosting, etc.).

### A Note on Event Hosting Amenities

The following event amenities should be considered for approved expansion parks:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Increased electrical power and number of outlets | • Options for road closure efficiencies and emergency access |
| • Potable water options                            | • Seating/picnic tables                                      |
| • Shade structures                                 | • WIFI capabilities and/or enhancements                      |
| • Permanent bandshells                             | • Lighting   |
| • Parking options                                  | • Storage units  |
| • Fencing enhancements to allow ticketed events    | • Waste management   |

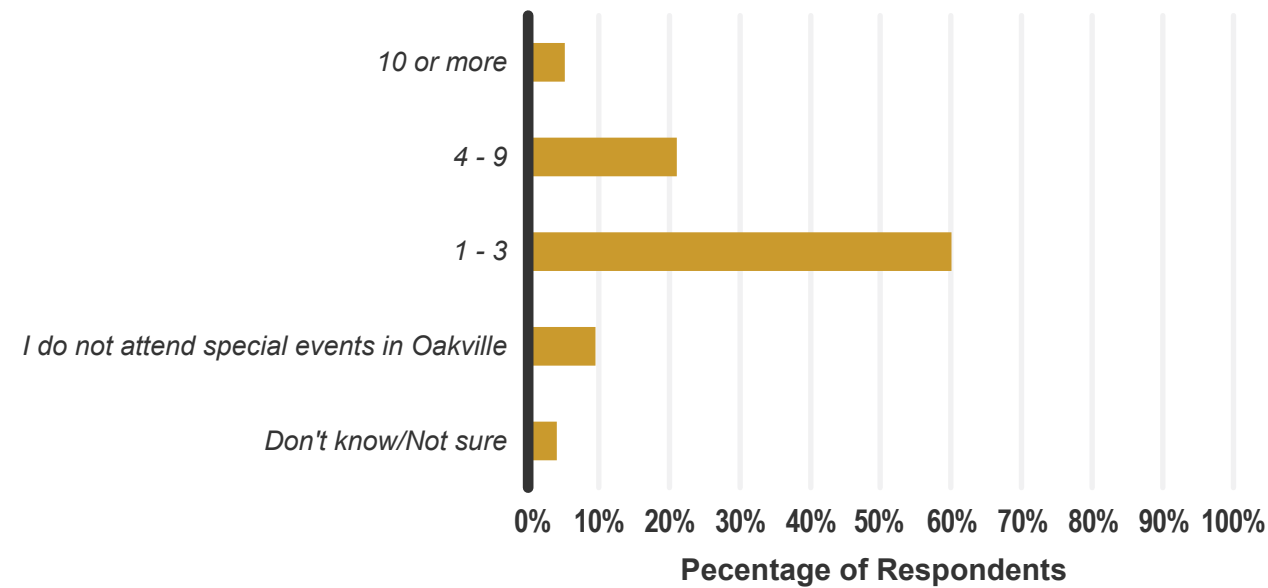
# Appendix F – Expanded Engagement Results

## Special Events Survey

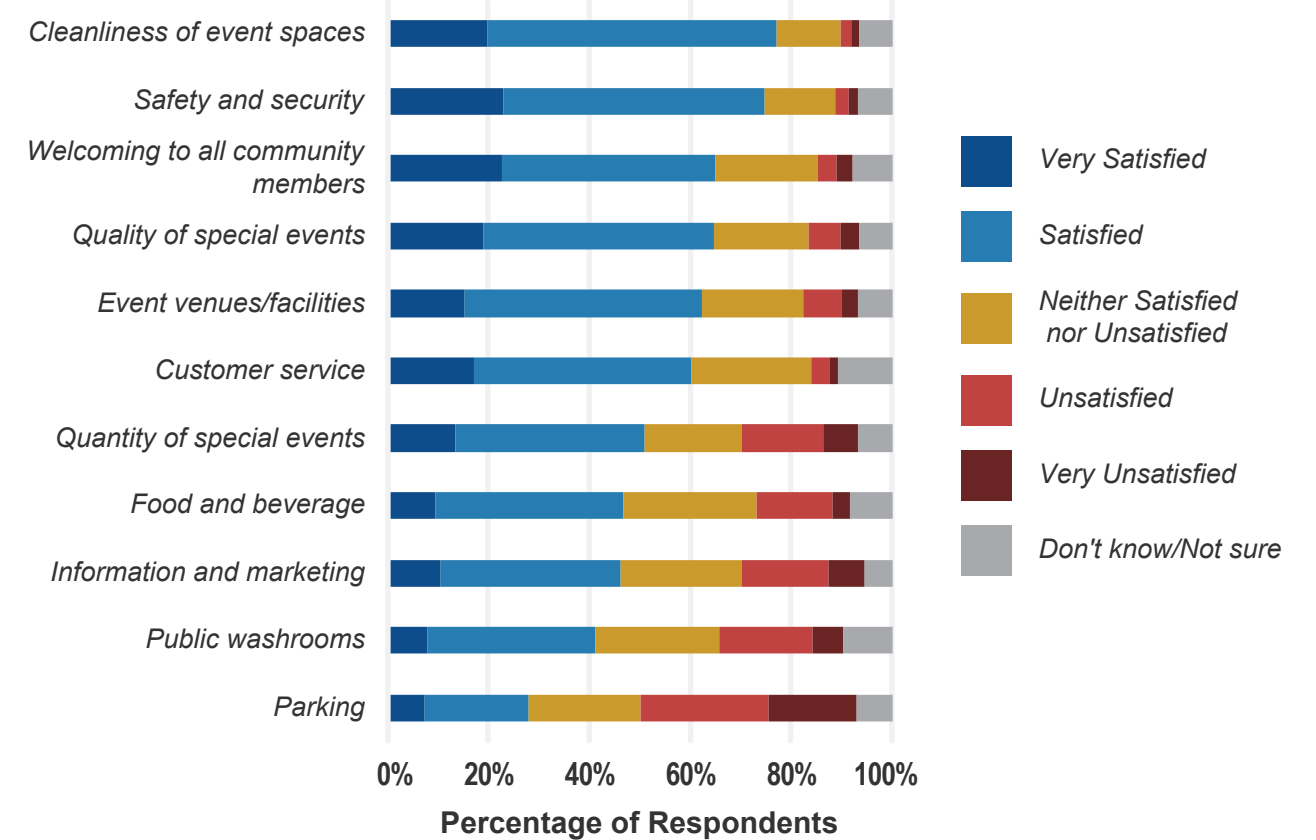
An online special events survey collected input from respondents from May 22 to July 8, 2024. In total, 1,151 responses were received. Twenty-one per cent of respondents indicated they reside in Ward 1, 17 per cent reside in Ward 2, 16 per cent reside in Ward 4, 15 per cent reside in Ward 3, 12 per cent reside in Ward 5, nine per cent reside in Ward 6, seven per cent reside in Ward 7, and three per cent indicated they are not a Town of Oakville resident. Respondents were primarily between the ages of 40-49 (23 per cent), 50-59 (22 per cent), 50-59 (21 per cent), and 30-39 (13 per cent).



*On average, how many special events do you attend each year in the Town of Oakville?*

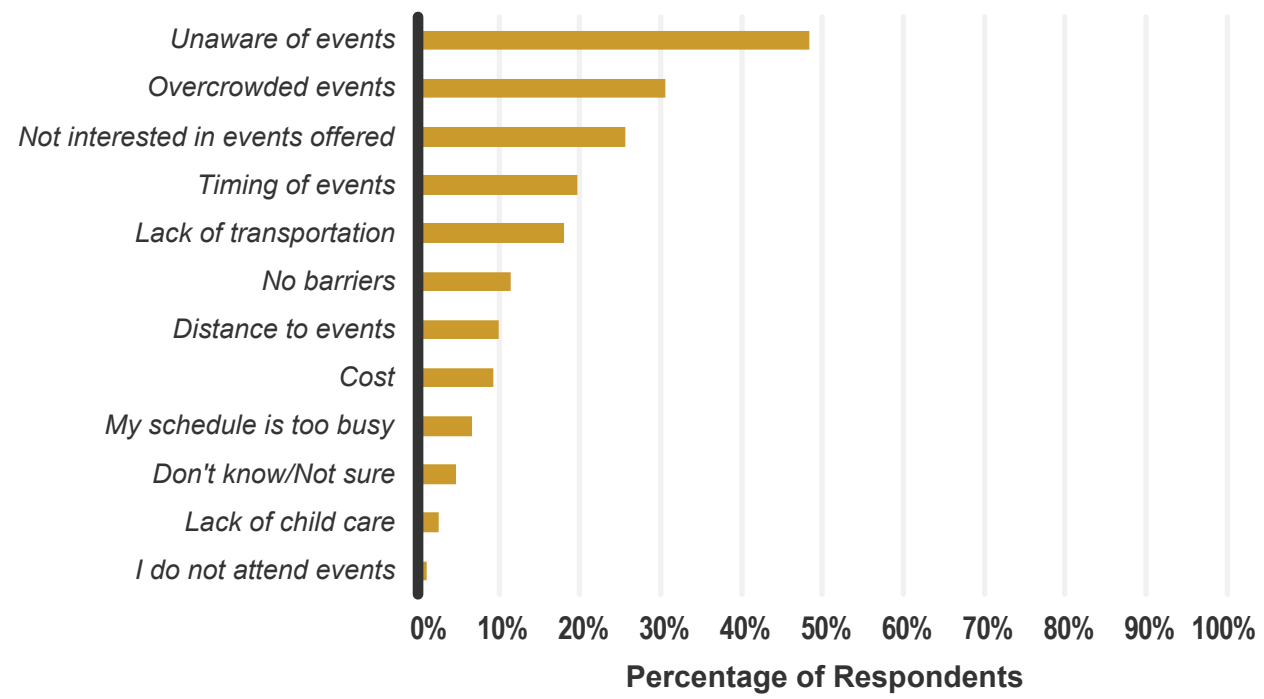


*Please rate your satisfaction with the following aspects of special events in Oakville.*

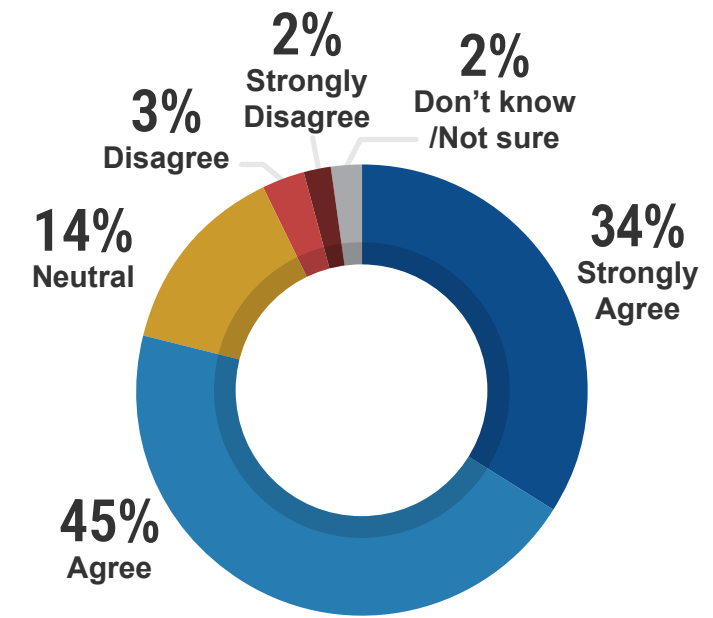




**What barriers (if any) prevent you from attending special events in Oakville? Please select all that apply.**

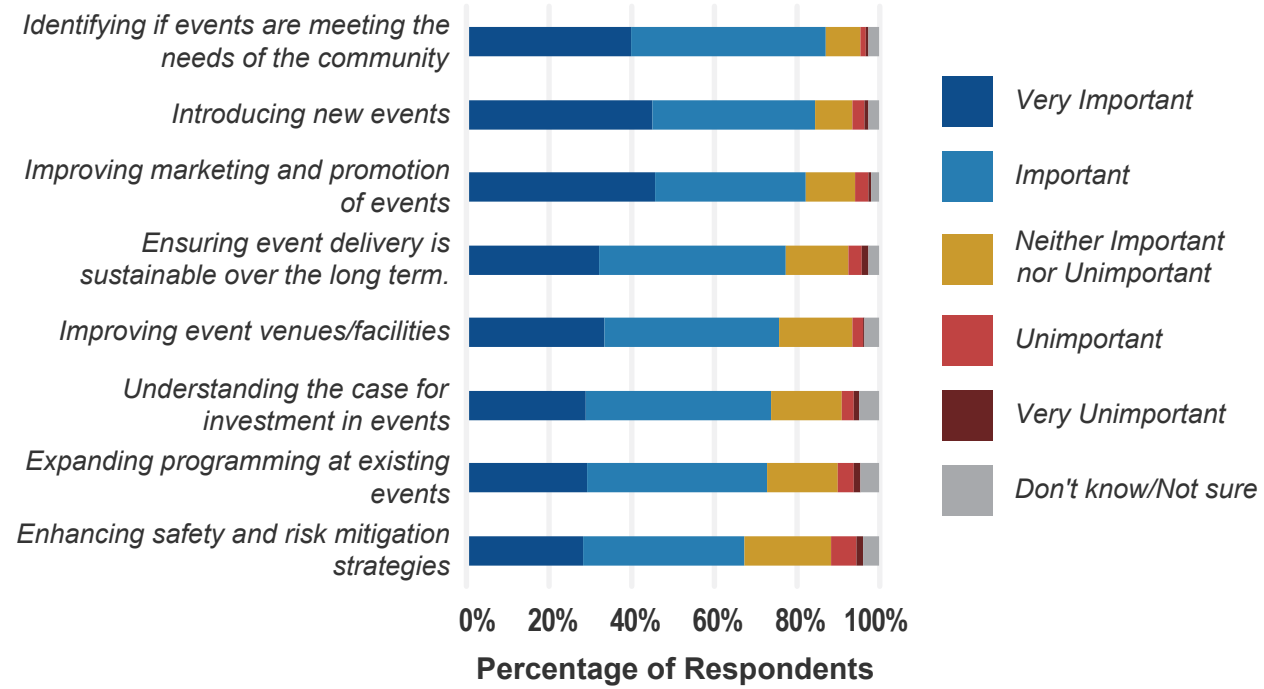


**Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: Attending special events helps me feel connected to my community.**

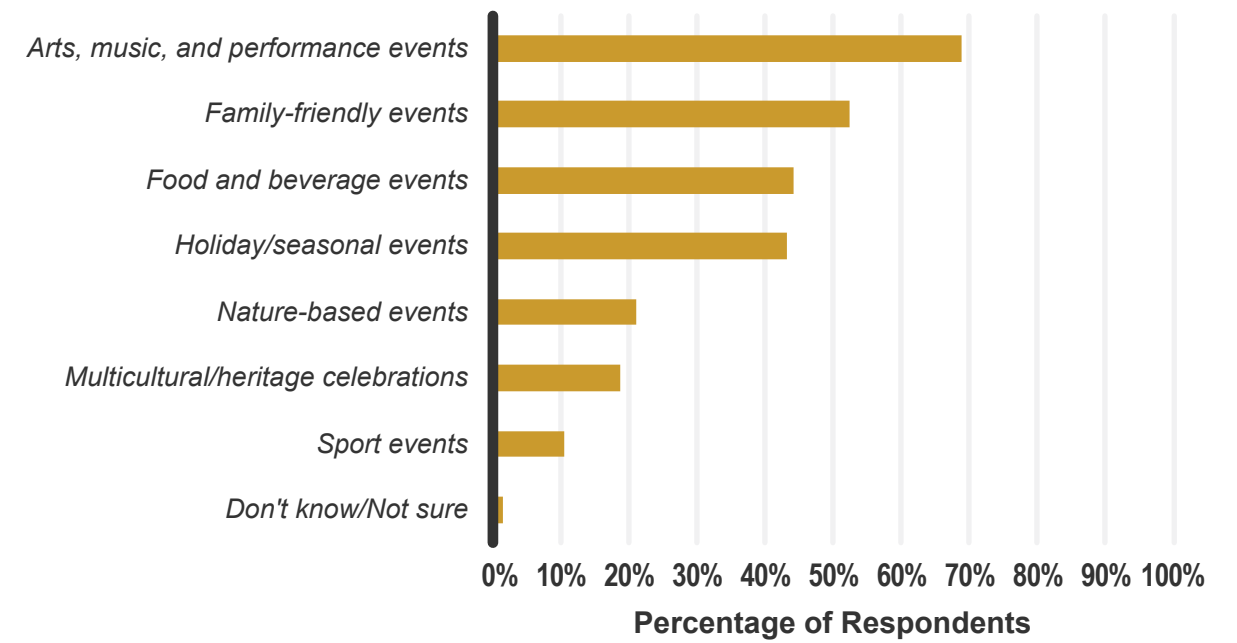




As we begin developing the Special Events Plan for Oakville, please indicate the importance of the following focus areas.

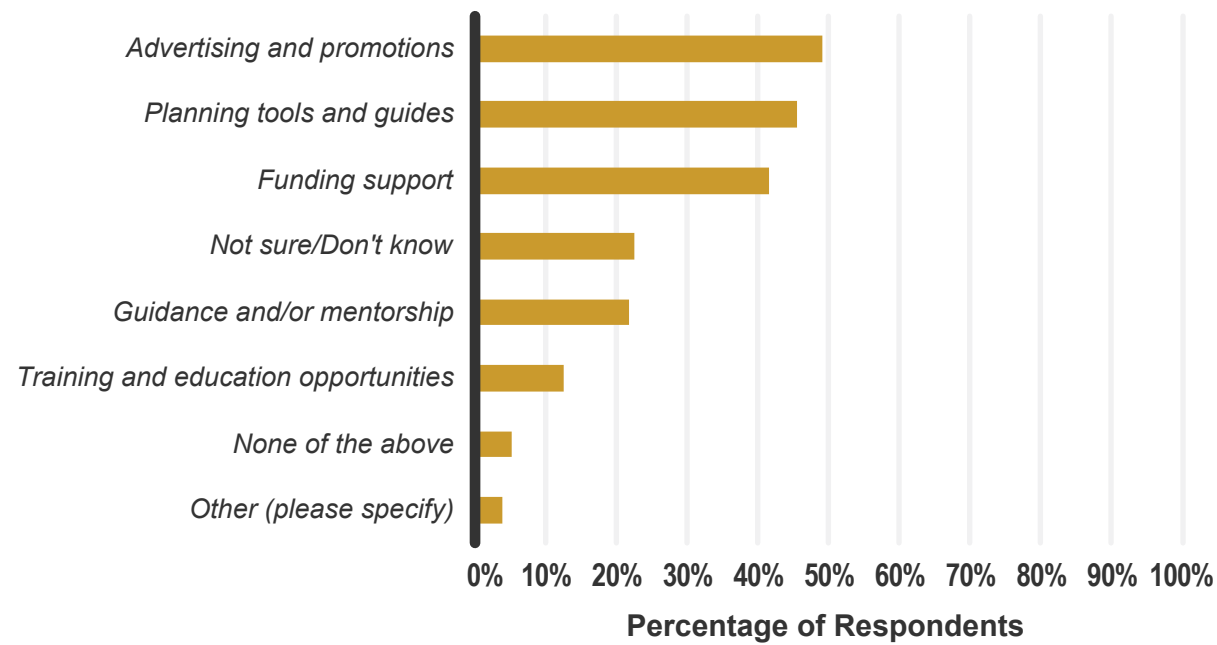


What types of special events should the Town of Oakville focus on supporting and/or delivering in the future? Please select up to three options.





*If you were looking to host a special event in Oakville, what types of assistance and/or resources would be most helpful to you? Please select up to three options.*



*If we could do one thing that would most improve special events in Oakville, what do you think it should be? For example, this could include increasing or decreasing the number of events, changing where events occur in the community, making it easier to host an event, or anything else you can think of.*

Respondents identified the following most often:

- Challenges with parking during events, a need for more parking opportunities, and free parking.
- Need for better marketing and advertising of events and more advanced notice of when events are occurring.
- Desire for past events to come back such as the Waterfront Festival, Midnight Madness, and the Jazz Festival.
- Desire for an increased number of events.
- Expanding the location of events. Examples include Bronte Park, North Oakville, North of the QEW, and Downtown.
- More events catered towards adults, families, seniors, and teens.
- Need for a dedicated event venue.
- Utilize existing facilities more often such as parks.
- Desire for more music events.
- Need for transportation improvements such as more bussing and shuttle services as well as not blocking traffic during events.
- Desire for more free events.
- More multicultural events.
- Considering the timing of events. For example, more events later in the evening, longer events, and limiting the time of events to reduce noise.

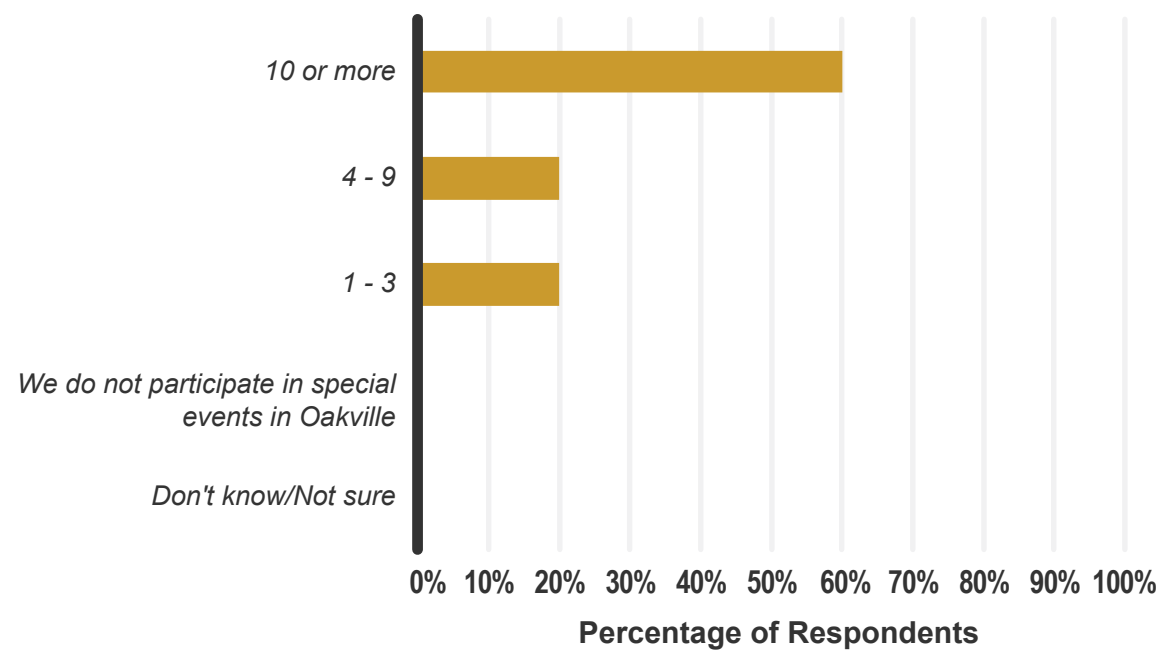
## Event Vendor and Organizer Survey

An online event vendor and organizer survey collected input from respondents from May 22 to July 8, 2024. In total, 24 responses were received. The online survey streamed respondents to different questions based on if they identified themselves as an event vendor or event organizer. Twenty-five per cent identified as an event vendor and 75 per cent identified as an event organizer.

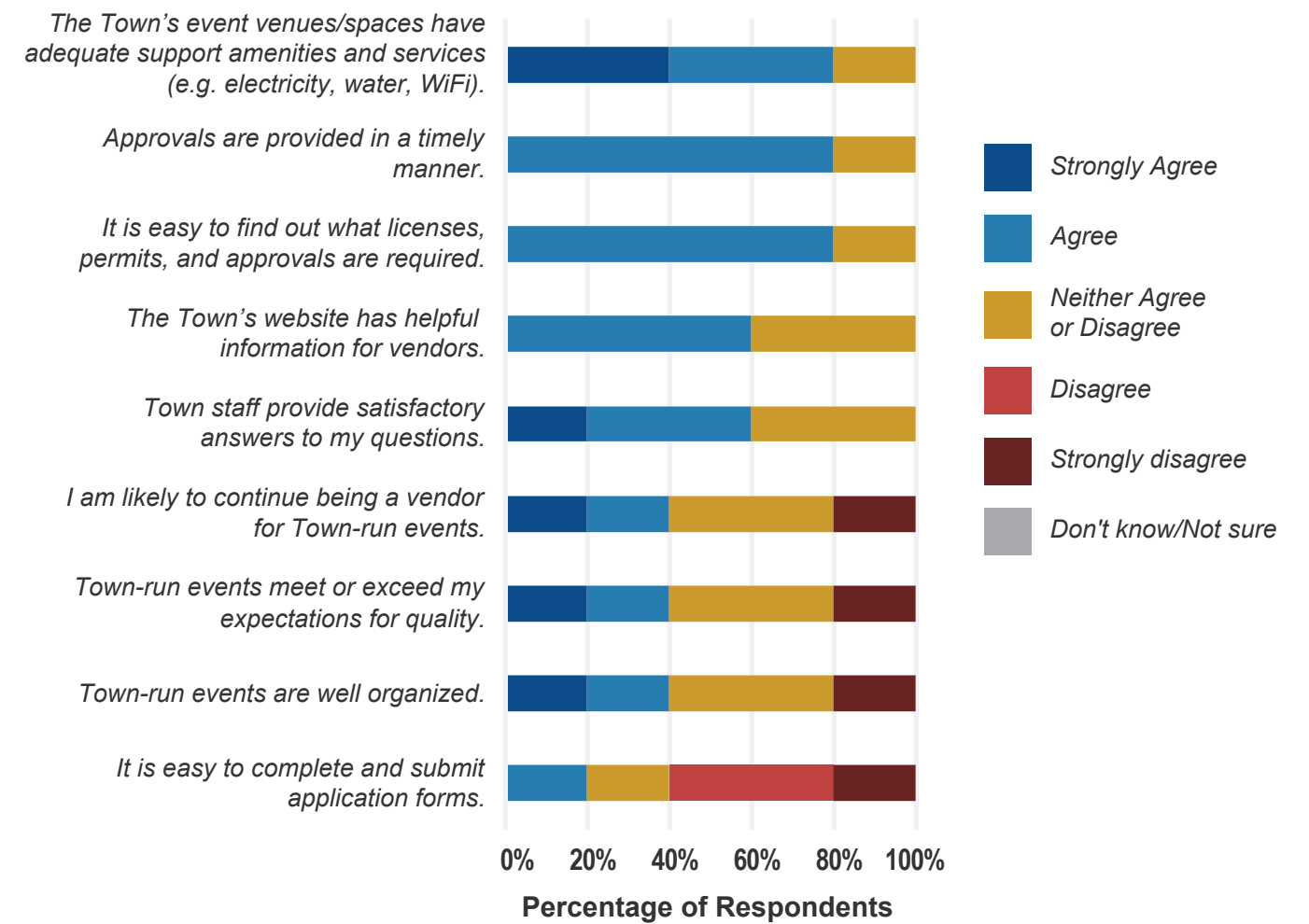
### Event Vendors



*On average, how many special events does your business/ organization participate in as a vendor each year?*

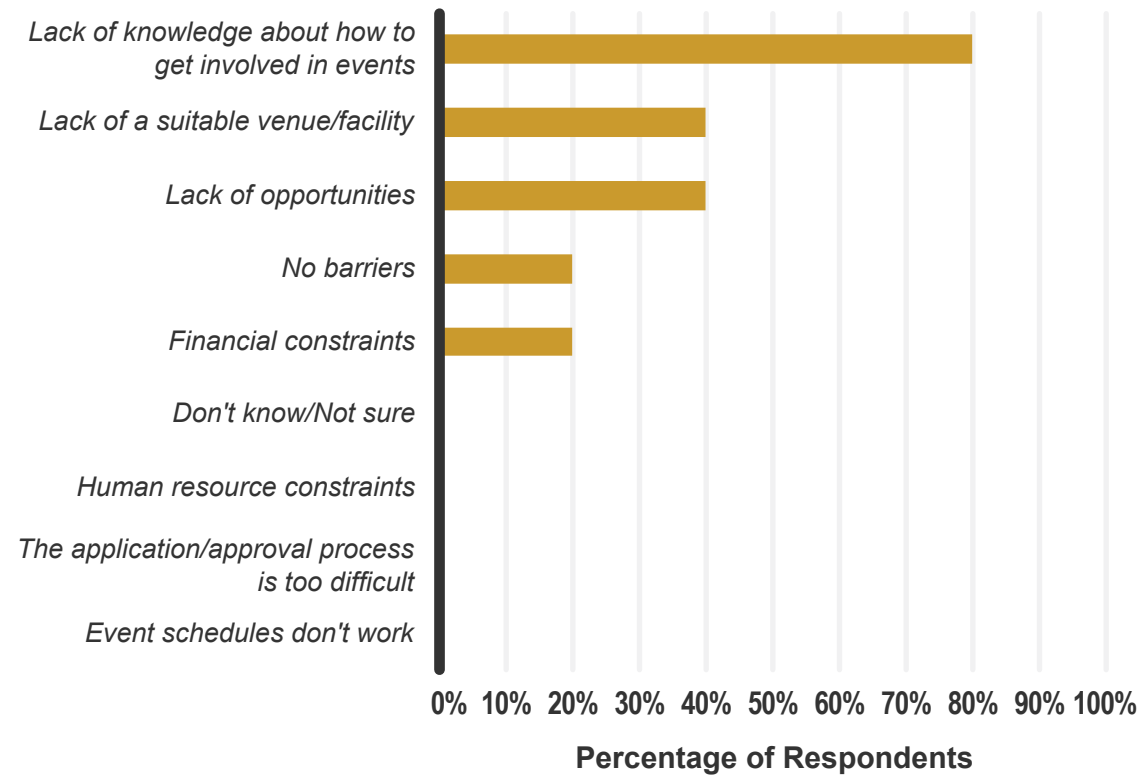


*Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements related to being a vendor for Town-run special events. Note that Town-run special events include Canada Day, Culture Days, Family Day, Movie Nights in the Park, Sparky's Dog Days of Summer, and Santa Claus Parade.*

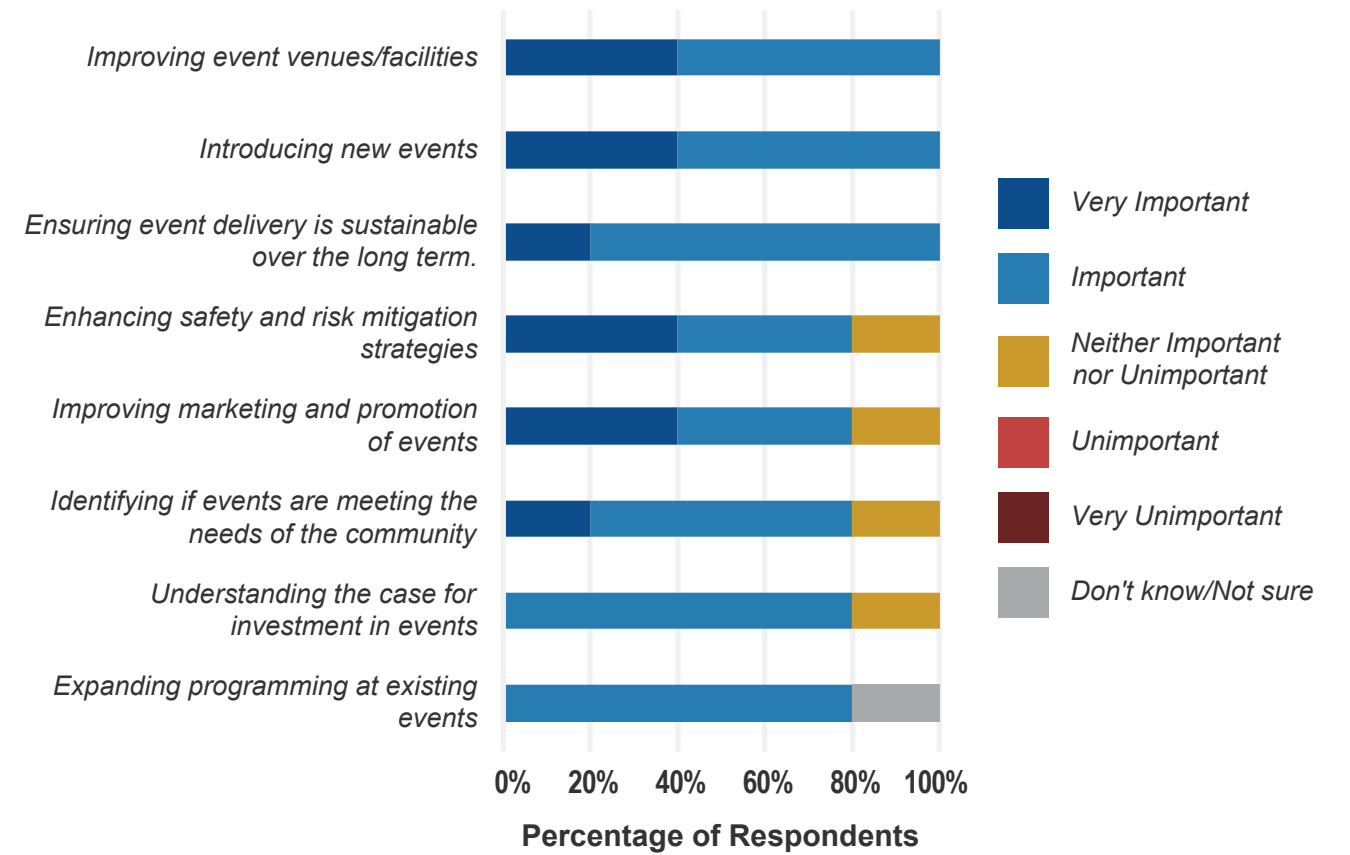




**What, if anything, prevents your business/organization from participating in Town-run events as a vendor more often? (check all that apply)**

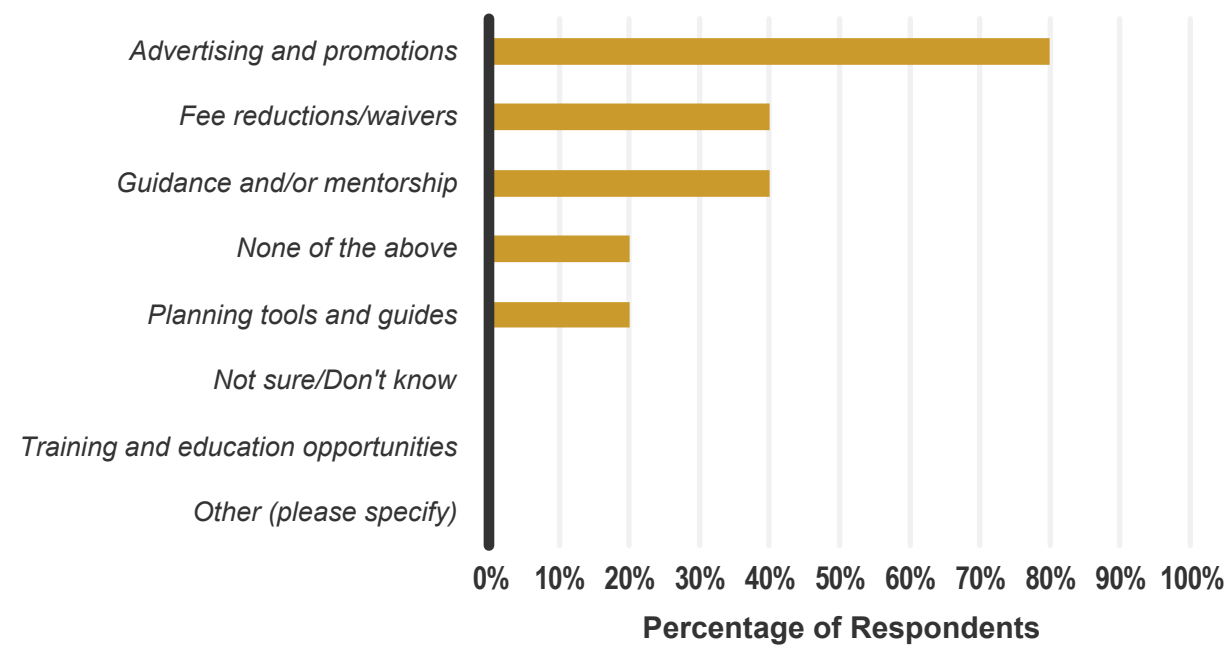


**As we begin developing the Special Events Plan for Oakville, please indicate the importance of the following focus areas.**





*If your business/organization were looking to provide services to a Town-run special event in Oakville, what assistance and/or resources would be most helpful to you? Please select up to three options.*



*If the Town could do one thing that would most improve the vendor experience, what do you think it should be?*

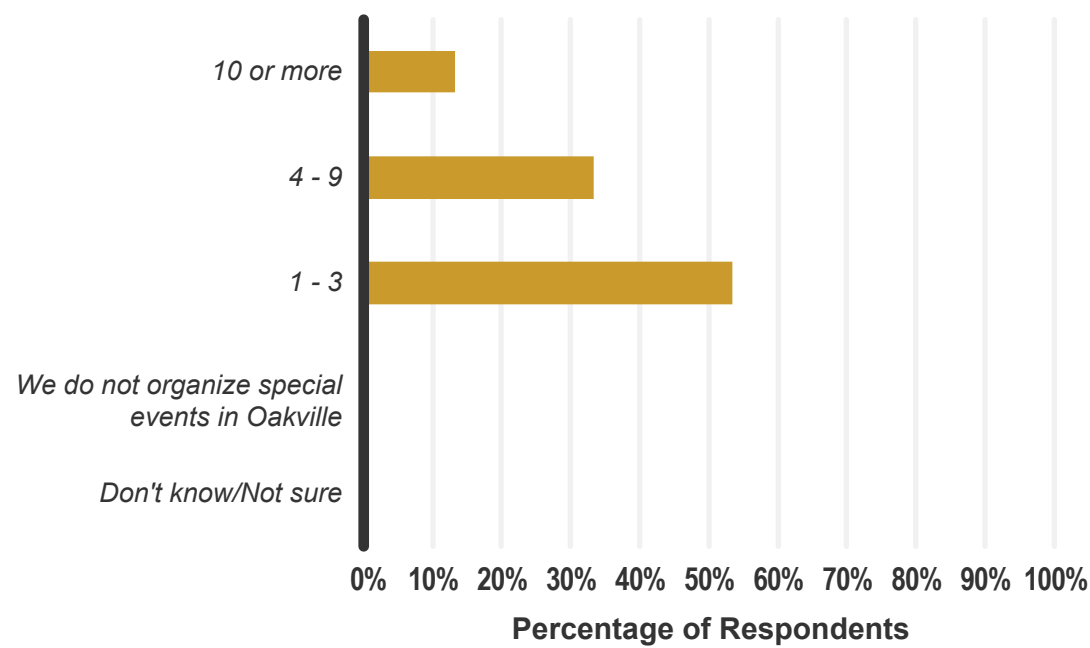
Respondents identified the following most often:

- Need for more sponsors.
- More advertising and communication.
- Enhancing the efficiency of the Special Event Vendors Permit. Information from previous years should be kept on file.

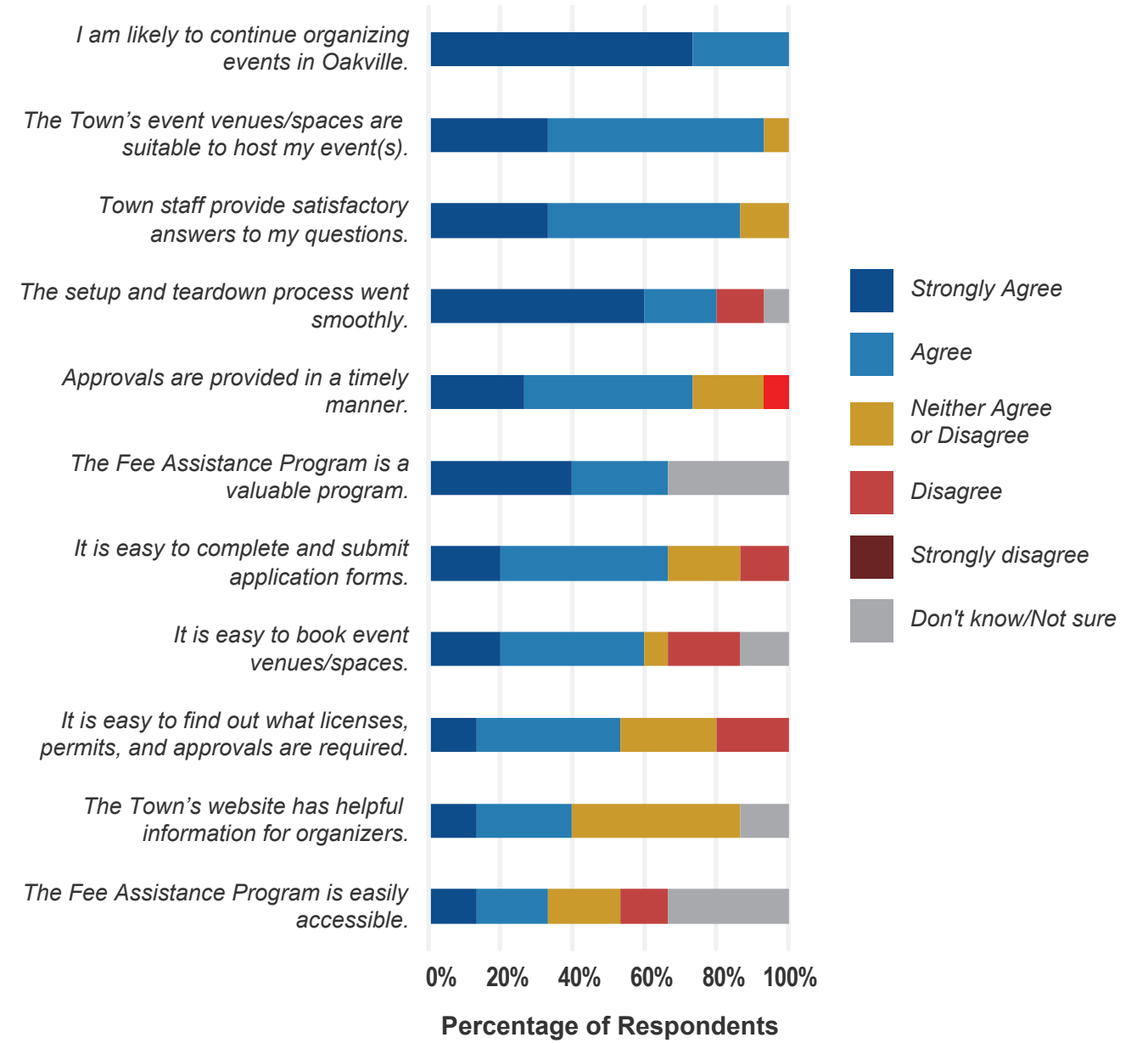
### Event Organizers



On average, how many special events does your organization/business organize each year?

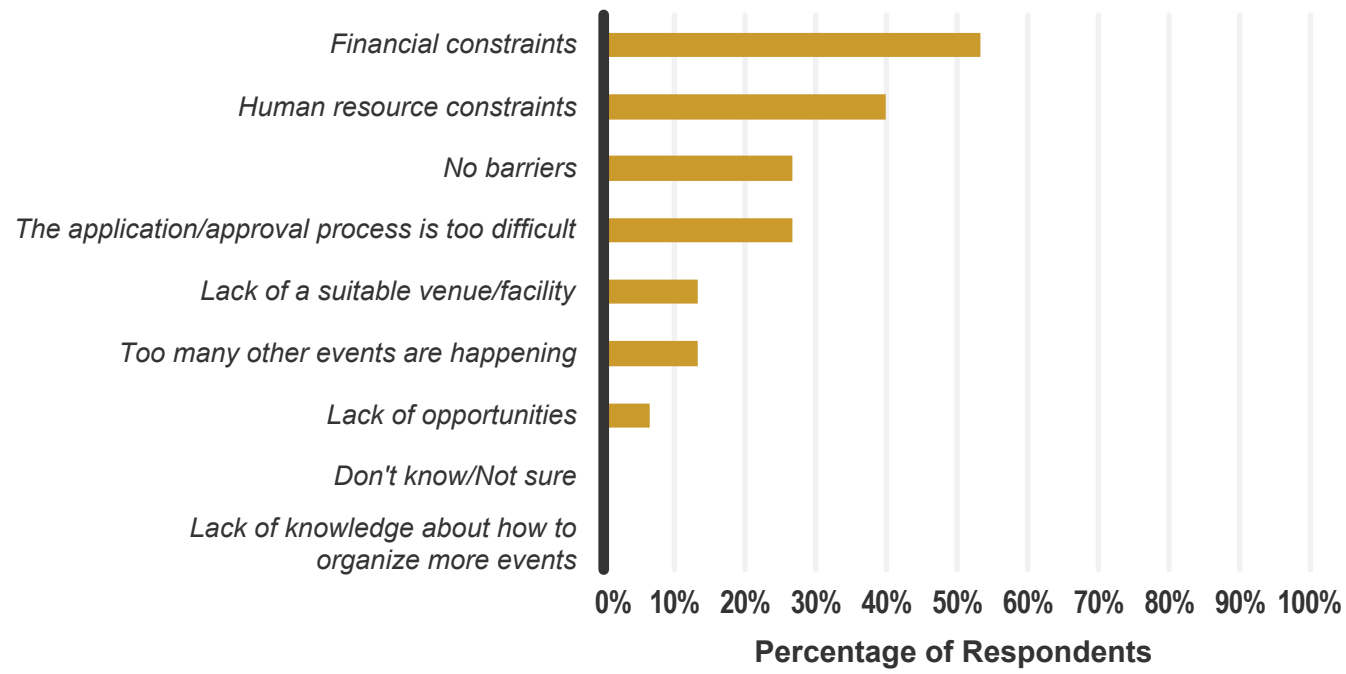


Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements related to organizing special events in Oakville.

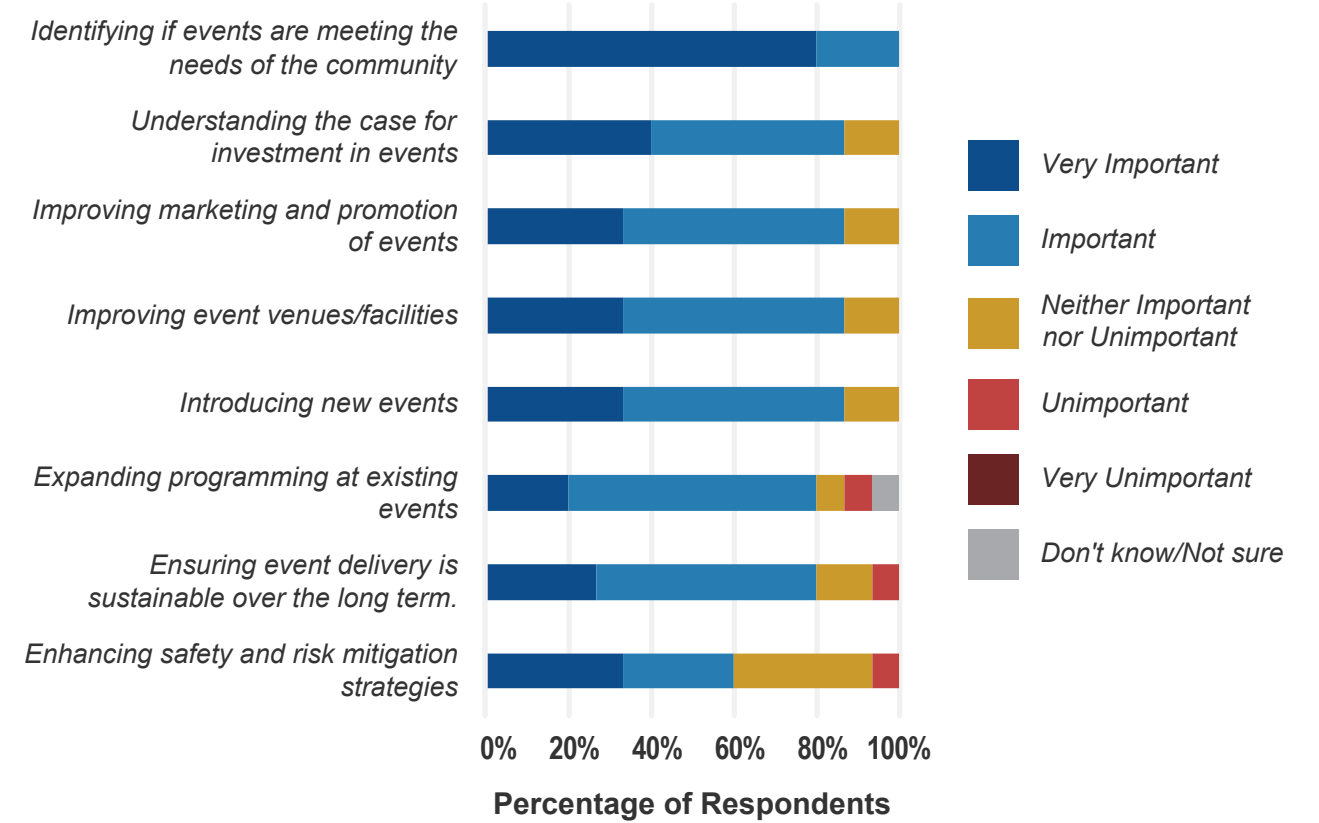




**What, if anything, prevents your business/organization from organizing events more often? (check all that apply)**

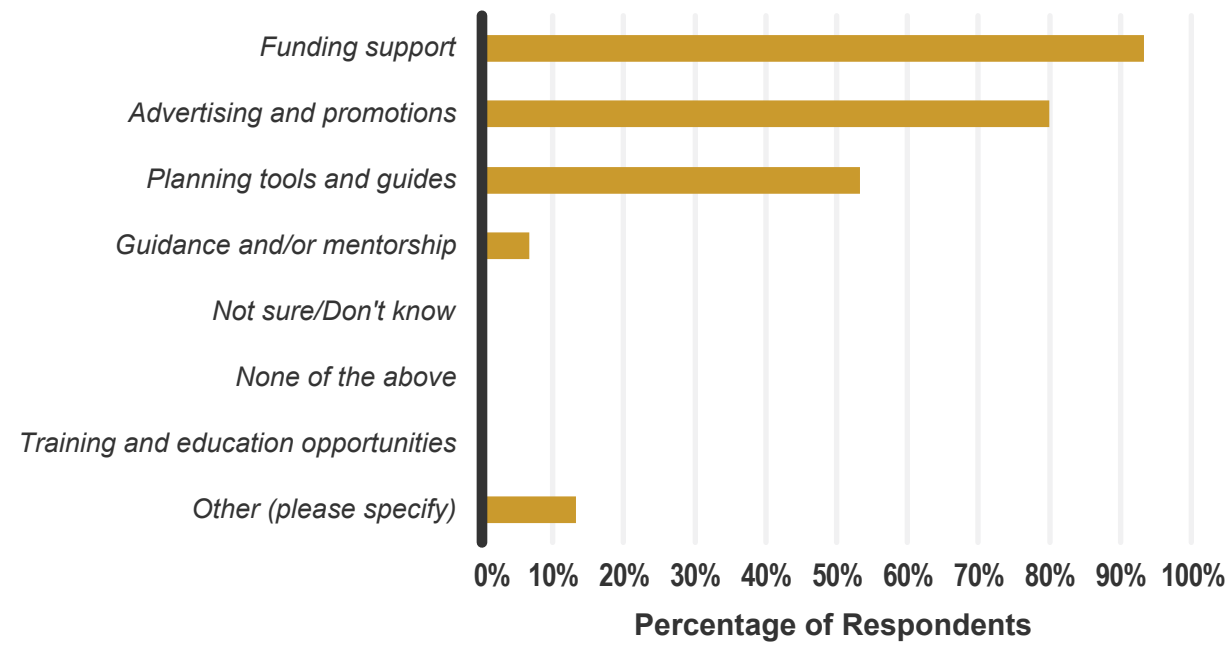


**As we begin developing the Special Events Plan for Oakville, please indicate the importance of the following focus areas.**





*If your business/organization were looking to host a special event in Oakville, what assistance and/or resources would be most helpful to you? Please select up to three options.*



*If the Town could do one thing that would most improve the special event organizing experience, what do you think it should be?*

Respondents identified the following most often:

- There is a need to have one point of contact at the Town of Oakville.
- More opportunities to provide feedback.
- Desire for simplifying the permit approval process.
- Improving predictability of venue availability.
- Improving advertising and promotions.
- More funding support.
- Enhancing the timeliness of communications.
- Opportunity to connect with Halton regarding town permitting processes.
- Providing vendors with special pricing.
- Improving the time it takes for processing.

## Community Input Workshops

Two community input workshops were hosted on June 13 and 26, 2024. Nine participants attended the workshops. The following summarizes the input received.



### *What is going well with Special Events in the Town of Oakville?*

- Residents enjoy events that occur in the town.
- Several past events were community oriented and high quality.
- Staff have done a great job in providing support and assisting with events.
- The community looks forward to annual events.



### *What could be improved with Special Events in the Town of Oakville?*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desire for more community events, particularly in the north.</li> <li>• There is a need for enhanced transportation options.</li> <li>• Lack of awareness about events.</li> <li>• Need for a centralized source of event information.</li> <li>• There are opportunities to learn from other communities and improve local business engagement.</li> <li>• Interest for more music, food events and smaller scale festivals year-round.</li> <li>• Desire for events to be spread throughout Oakville.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges with parking availability.</li> <li>• More financial support from the Town of Oakville for events to encourage organizers.</li> <li>• Challenges in securing sponsorships.</li> <li>• Interest in bringing back the Waterfront Festival.</li> <li>• Utilizing more facilities such as Town Hall and the Senior Centre for events.</li> <li>• Opportunity for collaboration with high schools for volunteer involvement.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|



### *As we begin developing the Special Events Plan, what do you think is the most important thing to focus on?*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving marketing and promotions.</li> <li>• Enhancing the Town of Oakville's website to consolidate all events into one place.</li> <li>• Expanding programming and introducing new events.</li> <li>• Events need to be safe and sustainable.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important to identify if events are meeting the needs of the community as community demographics are changing.</li> <li>• Improving event venues and facilities. For example, spreading events throughout Oakville, bringing people to core areas, and ensuring venues are accessible to everyone.</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

## Event Vendor and Organizer Workshops

Two event vendor and organizer workshops were hosted on June 13 and 26, 2024. Three participants attended the workshops. The following summarizes the input received.



*From the perspective of an event vendor or organizer, what is working well in regard to Special Events hosted in the Town of Oakville?*

- Marketing is great for events.
- There is a strong tradition of events.
- Town of Oakville staff are great to work with.
- Appreciation of family focused events.



*From the perspective of an event vendor or organizer, what could be improved in regard to Special Events hosted in the Town of Oakville?*

- Parking is a challenge. There may be an opportunity to have volunteers help with traffic control.
- Lack of large indoor venues.
- Interest in securing venues further in advance for events.
- Having a single point of contact at the Town of Oakville.
- Enhancing marketing and promotions of events.
- Enhancing communication in neighbourhoods when events are taking place.
- Defining signature/anchor events.
- Increased funding support for third party events.
- Promoting Oakville to be more inclusive. Opportunities to deliver more religious, cultural, and ethnic events that are community focused.
- Interest in establishing an Oakville Partnership Committee to bring event planners together to discuss upcoming events.
- Need for role clarity.
- Desire for another large event and more events for youth.



*What one thing could be done to most improve your experience as an event vendor or organizer?*

- Dedicated event liaison at the Town of Oakville.
- Clear processes and order of operations for event development.
- Clearer understanding of how Town of Oakville departments and external organizations are involved in events.
- Having the ability to book venues earlier in the year.

## Staff Input Sessions

Four staff input sessions were hosted over the course of the engagement process. In total 32 staff participated. The following summarizes the input received.

- Good internal team dynamics.
- Events team is effective in communication.
- Keeping attendees safe is a top priority.
- Need for structured security plans and clear parameters for event size.
- Need for additional staff.
- Challenges in scheduling and getting staff for setup and teardown.
- Significant staff time required for planning and managing events.
- Rising demand from the community and new events frequently emerging.
- Need a one-door-in approach for working with external event producers.
- Improvement needed in organizing and sharing event information across departments.
- Lack of large venues.
- Need for a designated event space.
- Challenges with parking.
- Need for better planning processes and clarity on roles/responsibilities.
- Consider setting a maximum number of events per month and/or per year.
- Explore alternative service models for event management.

## SEAT Member Input Workshop

A SEAT Input Workshop was hosted on March 18, 2024. 19 participants attended the workshop. The following summarizes the input received.

- Lack of staff, materials, and infrastructure.
- Challenges accommodating large-scale events.
- High demand for events from the community.
- Growing importance of event safety without staff having specific training.
- There are traffic challenges with short notice and multiple events occurring at the same time.
- There is an impact on transit schedules due to road closures.
- Staff shortages on weekends affect operations.
- There is difficulty predicting and aligning resources during events.
- There is a lack of clear event definitions and policies.
- It is challenging to align event needs with venue capacities.
- There is competition for space between events and sport user groups.
- There is a need to define key performance indicators for events.
- Need for refining event definitions and establishing formal reporting structures.
- There is a need to formalize Town of Oakville event policies and procedures.

## Council Input Workshops

Four Council Input Workshops were hosted on April 2 and 17, 2024. Twelve Councillors participated in the workshops. The following summarizes the input received.

- Some areas are lacking event representation.
- There is a strong demand for local events in neighbourhoods.
- Need for broader and more diverse events, including heritage celebrations.
- Challenges with insurance paperwork for event organizers.
- Need for simplified and centralized processes.
- Desire for enhanced Town of Oakville support to community organizations.
- Need for a community-based playbook for event organization.
- Important to balance Town of Oakville involvement to ensure sustainability.
- Need for larger event spaces both indoor and outdoors.
- Challenges with parking during events.
- Consider utilizing underused buildings and facilities.
- Desire for more residents to organize events.
- Providing more support to volunteers financially and with marketing initiatives.
- Importance of clear decision-making processes and role clarification.
- Need to ensure there is a strategic approach to event planning.
- Desire for a one-stop-shop and a centralized location to communicate events.

## Council Feedback Workshop Notes

Expedition Consulting facilitated a digital workshop with Town Council on May 6, 2025 to present highlights from the draft Oakville Special Events Plan and collect feedback on it. Eleven Councillors participated in the workshop. The following summarizes the feedback received.

- Supportive of the Town taking a facilitative, “one-stop-shop” approach to event development and building the capacity of the community to deliver events. Providing training opportunities and orientations for event producers would help. Letters of support from the Town could assist event producers with securing grant funding.
- Supportive of greater geographic dispersion of events throughout Oakville. There was a request to see a breakdown of public survey respondents by Ward. There was also a request for images to better showcase all Wards in Oakville.
- Desire to explore opportunities to make it easier for event producers and vendors to host and participate in events in Oakville (e.g. reducing red tape and administrative burdens where possible, simplifying processes, minimizing permit renewals, providing tools and easy to use guides, lowering fees and potentially charge-back rates, providing funding support, being flexible in terms of lead times for new events, adjusting bylaws and policies to be more event friendly).
- Interest in growing sponsorship revenue to support event delivery. The Town’s new sponsorship policy should be reviewed through an events lens.
- Interest in attracting sport tourism events. Need for clarity in terms of the Town’s role in this.
- Interest in hosting a food truck festival. Edmonton’s festival was identified as an example.
- It will be important to differentiate between for-profit and non-profit events. Classifying events by size/scope will also be important.
- Desire for direction related to one-off/reactionary events, and whether these are something the Town will or won’t take on.
- Need to consider best practices and enhance transportation options to/from events.
- Need to manage risk and right-size mitigation and police/security requirements based on the risk of the event.
- Support for purpose-built event spaces. A location that can safely accommodate fireworks would be good to have.
- Would like to better understand the full picture of what the Town’s investment in events is.
- Satisfaction with the Town’s current events team and the services they provide.

## Appendix G – Summary of Perceived Challenges in the Events Process

The following table summarizes feedback related to event permitting challenges. This input was collected between March 18 and July 8, 2024, through all engagement opportunities, including an Event Vendor and Organizer Survey, a Community Survey, Event Vendor and Organizer Input Workshops, Community Input Workshops, Town Council input sessions, and interviews conducted by the consultant team. Input from a Council Feedback Workshop that was hosted on May 6, 2025 was also incorporated.

Figure 7. What We Heard Through Project Engagement

Theme	Items Identified by Participants
Issue resolution and communication methods	Some organizers noted that issues can be challenging to resolve because there is no single point of contact that they can call and because communication is via email only.
Coordination between the Town and Region	Some people expressed frustration over the need for organizers to relay communication between the Town of Oakville and Halton Region related to services for events such as policing and waste management.
Timing of permit application and processing	There are organizers who are interested in being able to apply for and have permits processed further in advance of event dates.
Inefficiencies	The need to interact with several Town of Oakville staff through the event development process was noted as inefficient by some organizers.
Order of operations	Some feel that current processes are unclear, including the required order of operations for event development.
Securing event venues	Some organizers would prefer to 'soft' book venues far in advance of events occurring to provide more predictability year over year.
Information requirements	It was noted that information from previous years should be kept on file to support future event related applications by the same organizations/individuals. Some feel that the Town of Oakville requires too much information for the Special Event Vendors Permit.
Venue allocation and access	Some organizers would like there to be more predictable allocation of space for recurring large scale community events and simpler process to access facilities for events.
Permit processing time	Processing time and coordination between community centres could be improved according to some organizers.
Vendor permits	Permit costs are considered excessive by some vendors.
Food related regulations	Interest in streamlining public health regulations for food handling was noted, as were changes to the requirement for food vendors to apply for a special business licence (Special Event Refreshment Vehicle and Food Shop Licence) to sell food and refreshments at events.
Insurance requirements	Some people wondered whether insurance requirements for vendors could be reduced.

# Appendix H – Implementation Plan

## Implementation Plan

The implementation plan is divided into sub-sections, which include:

Organizational Development.....	94
Event and Program Development .....	97
Performance Measures.....	100

Action items were formulated based on input from the community, findings from the consultant assessment, results of the comparative analysis, and best practices. Completing the action plan will drive the Town of Oakville towards its vision for special events.

Each action item has been assigned a suggested priority rating, estimated cost, and anticipated timeline for implementation.

### Priority

- High Priority
- Medium Priority

### Implementation Timeline

- Short Term 1 – 2 years
- Medium Term 3 – 5 years
- Long Term 6 – 10 years
- Ongoing Will require continuing action

### Cost Criteria

- Low Cost Less than \$5,000
- Medium Cost \$5,000 - \$50,000
- Medium-High Cost \$50,000 to \$100,000
- High Cost More than \$100,000
- Staff Cost varies

## Future Planning, Evaluation, and Reporting

A key component of the success of this plan will be the evaluation of its initiatives. The action plan should be reviewed bi-annually, at which time priorities should be re-evaluated and a discussion of any variances should occur in reference to key performance indicators (KPI's). If new projects are added (or old projects removed) as the plan progresses, this should be done by weighing the relative priority of all projects in the plan. The action plan should be updated on a yearly basis. It is further recommended that the entire plan should be updated in year five of implementation.

### Implementation Considerations

The implementation plan identifies several initiatives and action items. Attempting to complete all of them concurrently will stretch the resources and limit the focus of the organization as it implements the plan. Therefore, it is recommended that implementation begin with the highest priority items. These include investing additional resources into events. Doing so will help the Town of Oakville implement the plan more quickly and thoroughly than would otherwise be possible.

The Recreation and Culture Division in the Community Services department will lead implementation, working collaboratively across the Administration. It is important to acknowledge that as new events are added to the community's offering there will be carry-through impacts on all Town of Oakville departments that support events.

It should be recognized that this document is a non-statutory plan whose purpose is to provide direction and guidance. Implementation may be impacted by a variety of factors, including Council priorities, available resources, and emerging opportunities/challenges.

# 1. Organizational Development

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Establish a Clear Event Development Framework	1.A.1 Focus event delivery by the Town of Oakville on department-led events that are related to service delivery (i.e. Fire Services, Recreation and Culture)	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.A.2 Undertake a Lean process review to streamline the facilitation of community-led events, using a customer-first approach to identify and eliminate inefficiencies, reduce waste, and improve service delivery for event organizers.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.A.3 Develop clear criteria for future Town-led events.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.A.4 Implement an Event Services Matrix to assist staff in determining what level of staff involvement and other support the Town of Oakville will provide for different types of outdoor events.	High	1-2 year	Staff
	1.A.5 Establish a single point of contact for all event related inquiries and requests.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.A.6 Develop and communicate more defined event planning guidelines and timelines for external organizations.	Medium	3-5 years	Staff
B. Consider Investing Additional Resources into Event Development to Prepare for Future Growth	1.B.1 Invest in human resources to increase the capacity of the Town of Oakville's events team and deliver on the recommendations within the plan.	High	1-2 years	High
	1.B.2 Evaluate the financial and human resource needs of other Town of Oakville departments related to event support, and consider sourcing external contractors to scale up event support services as needed.	High	1-2 years	Medium to High
	1.B.3 Implement a codified method of ensuring annual funding and human resources keeps up with growth in the event portfolio and rising costs of inflation and event production.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	1.B.4 Establish a Request for Proposal template that can be used to source event production services from external organizations when needed.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost	
C. Develop and Grow the Town of Oakville's Event Revenues and Resourcing Mechanisms	1.C.1	Develop and execute a revenue development plan that will increase earned revenues for events and increase grants and sponsorships.	High	1-2 years	Medium
	1.C.2	Identify and implement ways to recover costs to the Town of Oakville associated with community-led events.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.C.3	Review event related rates and fees, including benchmarking against industry standards, to ensure that the appropriate charges are being applied.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.C.4	Review the possibility of allocating funds from the municipal allocation of the Municipal Accommodation Tax revenue to appropriate special events.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	1.C.5	Increase resourcing as needed to respond to growth in the number and size of events.	Medium	3-5 years	Medium
	1.C.6	Develop business cases for existing and potential new sponsors to become further involved in Town of Oakville-run events.	Medium	3-5 years	Staff
	1.C.7	Undertake a comprehensive review and update of the existing Corporate Grants, Sponsorships, Naming Rights, and Advertising Sales Policy to ensure alignment with current industry standards, strategic objectives, and community expectations. The review process should actively involve key stakeholders, particularly event organizers, to incorporate their perspectives, streamline application processes, and enhance the policy's relevance and effectiveness.	Medium	3-5 years	Staff
D. Improve Evaluation Processes and Reporting	1.D.1	Measure the social, economic, and environmental return on investment (ROI) of events.	High	Ongoing	Staff
	1.D.2	Share ROI information with Town Council, senior administration, sponsors, and grant funding partners.	High	Ongoing	Staff
	1.D.3	Conduct post-event surveys to collect data from participants.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.D.4	Implement a measurement and reporting framework for all Town of Oakville staff who contribute toward event planning and delivery.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	1.D.5	Develop a valid approach to estimating event attendance and implement it consistently across all events in Oakville.	High	1-2 years	Staff

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
	1.D.6 Conduct a community-wide survey on a two or three year cycle to gauge overall resident satisfaction with events in Oakville.	Medium	Ongoing	Low
	1.D.7 Establish a grant-specific reporting requirement for events supported through Town funding programs, including final reporting templates to assess community impact and alignment with funding goals.	Medium	Ongoing	Staff
E. Ongoing and Future Planning	1.E.1 In year five of implementation, formally review and update the Special Events Plan. Adjust as necessary and chart a course for the next five years.	Medium	3-5 years	Medium-High

## 2. Event and Program Development

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
A. Support Event Delivery from the Community	2.A.1 Streamline the Town of Oakville's financial supports for events into a Community Event Grant program.	High	1-2 years	High
	2.A.2 Explore the feasibility of replacing the existing fee waiver process with a revised grant program.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.A.3 Develop separate application streams for small and large community-led events and right-size permitting requirements for the needs of the Town of Oakville and the event organizer.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.A.4 Review Town of Oakville by-laws and administrative processes to ensure they are supportive of hosting community and special events.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.A.5 Develop a database to retain permitting information for regular event organizers and vendors.	High	1-2 years	Low
	2.A.6 Develop easy to use reference tools and resources that will help community groups and organizations plan and deliver events. Potential tools include Accessibility and Inclusion Checklist, Climate-Action Checklist, Marketing and Promotion Toolkit, Financial Support Toolkit, Permitting Checklist, Event Safety Toolkit, a training incubator program, an annual special event organizer meeting, training to support volunteerism, and a suggested vendor list for events.	Medium	3-5 years	Low
B. Encourage Events to be Hosted Across the Community	2.B.1 Implement decentralized event approaches to increase event programming across the community.	High	Ongoing	Low
	2.B.2 Develop a tool for event organizers that identifies event-friendly spaces with geographical distribution across the town (including basic site information, permitting tips, etc.)	High	1-2 years	Staff
C. Establish Capacity Limits and Controls for Event Spaces	2.C.1 Set capacity limits on the Town of Oakville's event spaces for both frequency and participant volume.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.C.2 Consider implementing attendance tracking and control methods to ensure compliance with capacity limits.	High	1-2 years	Low

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
	2.C.3 Develop an event parking management policy aligned with site-specific capacity and transportation planning.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.C.4 Incorporate “Getting to the Event” information in event communication materials to promote sustainable and multi-modal transportation options.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	2.C.5 Establish communication requirements for event organizers in relation to residents living in proximity to events that will have amplified sounds.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	2.C.6 Consider introducing cost-recovery mechanisms, such as charge back model, for additional municipal services required at large or high-risk events (e.g., police/ security presence, road closures, waste management, by-law enforcement).	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
D. Fully Leverage Existing Event Hosting Infrastructure	2.D.1 Explore and prioritize opportunities town-wide to enhance the functionality of existing park and indoor spaces to host events.	High	3-5 years	High
	2.D.2 Incorporate event hosting considerations in future municipal planning, including capital projects, and park and facility redevelopments.	High	3-5 years	Staff
	2.D.3 Engage with nearby residents to Consider options for reopening Coronation Park to events. for appropriately sized community events.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	2.D.4 Explore opportunities to partner with Bronte Provincial Park to host community events.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	2.D.5 Evaluate the current Event Venue Inventory (Appendix A) against the Event Space Location Criteria (Appendix E) to identify specific needs and recommend updates to existing park and facility infrastructure.	Medium	3-5 years	Staff
E. Develop a Purpose-Built Outdoor Venue to Host Events	2.E.1 Explore the feasibility of a purpose-built outdoor venue to host large community events (as recommended in the Parks, Recreation and Library Master Plan).	Medium	3-5 years	High
F. Increase and Enhance Event Programming to Respond to Growth	2.F.1 Engage relevant Town of Oakville departments and stakeholders during event planning (e.g. Accessibility Advisory Committee).	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.F.2 Further engage businesses and community groups in delivering experiences.	High	1-2 years	Staff

Initiatives	Action Items	Priority	Timeline	Cost
	2.F.3 Support the development of new community-led events that respond to resident demand.	Medium	Ongoing	Staff
	2.F.4 Create a Success Evaluation Framework for direct-led events to understand if they continue to support a vibrant and livable community for all.	Medium	Ongoing	Staff
	2.F.5 Evolve the Community Event Grant Program to align with emerging priorities (e.g., arts and culture, food, family, season) and to support inclusive community-led programming that reflects Oakville's diversity.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
G. Enhance Event Marketing	2.G.1 Consider allocating additional financial resources to support event marketing efforts.	Medium	1-2 years	Low
	2.G.2 Improve marketing coordination between Town of Oakville staff and Visit Oakville.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
	2.G.3 Develop an Event Marketing Guide that organizers can use to help them leverage available channels to promote their events.	Medium	1-2 years	Low
	2.G.4 Explore the feasibility of a consolidated events calendar for promotion of all community and town led events.	Medium	1-2 years	Staff
H. Continue to Support Event Safety as the Size and Number of Events Increase	2.H.1 Ensure that all existing and future Town of Oakville event staff receive regular event safety training.	High	1-2 years	Medium
	2.H.2 Incorporate risk assessments and mitigation strategies into Town of Oakville-run event delivery, inclusive of hostile vehicle mitigation measures, crowd safety measures and emergency response protocols.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.H.3 Develop, share, and utilize templates for risk assessments, emergency management, and response plans that can be used by external organizations.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.H.4 Review the Terms of Reference for the Town of Oakville's Special Events Advisory Table (SEAT) including consideration for emergency services partners.	High	1-2 years	Staff
	2.H.5 Continue updating the Town of Oakville's Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and take steps to respond to the changing climate and its impacts on events.	Medium	Ongoing	Staff
I. Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan	2.I.1 Develop a Sport Tourism Hosting Strategy and Attraction Plan.	Medium	3-5 years	Medium

## Performance Measures

Focus Area for Growth	KPI	Measurement Tool
1. Social	1.1 At least 80% of residents are satisfied with community events.	Resident survey
	1.2 85% great rating with quality of event experiences.	Resident survey
	1.3 Event programming is inclusive and has broad appeal.	Program plans
	1.4 85% of event attendees report feeling welcome at events.	Resident survey
	1.5 The local community reports positive social impacts related to events.	Resident survey
	1.6 Event participants are demographically diverse.	Surveys
	1.7 Events are dispersed across the community.	Event plans
2. Economic	2.1 Events are achieving cost recovery targets.	Event budgets
	2.2 15% annual increase in event-related revenues.	Event budgets
	2.3 Annual increase in resource allocation for Town of Oakville-delivered events in line with inflation and rising event costs.	Event budgets Event plans/audits Annual reports Town of Oakville Annual Budget
	2.4 10% annual increase in the number of external organizations delivering events.	Event calendar
	2.5 Event organizers report positive impacts of having a single point of contact within the Town of Oakville's administration for events.	Event organizer survey
3. Environmental	3.1 Events do not negatively impact natural areas.	Event audit
	3.2 Events do not negatively impact venues and related infrastructure.	Event audit
	3.3 All event producers implement extreme weather risk assessments and emergency response plans.	Event audit
	3.4 Increase in attendees using multi-modal transportation options to get to and from events.	Attendee surveys

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