

October 25, 2012



City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor & Council

Fr: Barbara A. Manson, Tourism Development Officer on behalf of the Lake of the Woods Development Commission

Re: Street Food Vendors

Recommendation:

That as recommended by the Lake of the Woods Development Commission Council hereby approves the continuation of the Street Food Vendor Program in 2013; and

That the revised Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Street Food Vendor Program is hereby approved; and further

That the RFP include the operating dates for the 2013 season as May long weekend to September long weekend.

Background:

The pilot street food vendor project from July 1st to Sept. 3rd, 2012 was deemed to be very successful. Four food vendors participated, three (3) at the Harbourfront and one (1) at the Discovery Centre. The Participants were The Green Machine, On Deck Fries, Ye Old Chip Truck and Gropp's Catering. All of the food vendors stated if the project was offered again they would like the opportunity to participate and suggested to start earlier in the season. There were no concerns expressed with the seven day operation and hours of 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. The Northwestern Health Unit was involved actively with this program to ensure the safety of our customers.

Some of the concerns brought forward were the location of the food vendors on the sites, which has since been rectified. There were some first-time electrical set-up logistics which have been rectified and one food vendor stated each booth to be reminded to supply their own condiments. It was suggested to ensure that the vending units maintain a high standard of appearance at all times which can be addressed in the RFP.

A concern was brought forward to the City of Kenora about the presence of the food vendor at the Discovery Centre which is part of Norman Park and it was requested that the covenant be reinstated on this Park. Norman Park already has a commercial enterprise (the Dairy Queen), the covenant is lifted, and many Parks in the past have had food vendors and some still do (eg. Coney Island, Keewatin Beach, Anicinabe Park). A relocation of the food vendor at the Discovery Centre to the gravel parking area north of the Discovery Centre will be more aesthetically pleasing and provide more available electrical services.

Some of the positive impacts included the following:

- The food vendors provided a convenient, healthy and interesting service to our customers. The customers loved having the vendors present.
- The food vendors created local economic benefits (1 – 2 full time jobs for the two months for each vendor as well as the vendors purchasing their supplies locally) All food vendors reported that this was a viable operation for them.
- This service encouraged a pedestrian friendly community.
- The food vendors added a unique experience and value to the Harbourfront area and made it a vibrant and safer place to be.
- Most Tourism Centres throughout Canada have a vendor on the property for weary travelers to get a quick and convenient snack. Visitors to the Discovery Centre were very pleased to have this service available.

Food Vendors have exploded in popularity across Canada. A multiple variety of food vendors, including healthier food choices, is becoming available. The City of Vancouver currently has 103 and is expanding to 133, Toronto is expanding its food vendors, as well. Collingwood, Northumberland, Cornwall, Victoria and Aurora have all reported positive experiences with their food vendor programs. The Food Network now has a program "Eat Street" which promotes Cities and specific food vendors.

The Street Food Vendor Program is an integral part of the promotion and vibrancy of the Harbourfront area and adds a service which has been requested by our customers. The benefits to the City of Kenora economically and as a tourist attraction cannot be ignored.

Budget: Revenue generating program.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Senior Manager Human Resources
Tourism Development Officer
Special Events Coordinator
LOWDC
CUPE