

2. **ANNUAL SUPPORT FOR THE UPTOWN MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL**

Memo of the Arts, Culture and Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee dated April 1, 2025.

To request that Council ask staff to explore available resources to support La Société Francophone de Victoria in hosting the Uptown Multicultural Festival annually.



File: 1420-30 ACCW

Memo

C May 12/25

To: Angila Bains, Director of Legislative and Protective Services/Corporate Officer
From: Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk
Date: April 1, 2025
Subject: Annual Support for the Uptown Multicultural Festival

At the February 26, 2025, Arts, Culture and Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee meeting, the committee discussed ways to support the Uptown Multicultural Festival on an annual basis. This discussion resulted in the following motion:

“That the Arts, Culture and Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee recommends that Council request staff to explore available resources to support La Société Francophone de Victoria in hosting the Uptown Multicultural Festival annually.”

CARRIED

An excerpt of the February 26, 2025 minutes are attached for information.

Colton Whittaker

Colton Whittaker
Committee Clerk

LA SOCIETE FRANCOPHONE DE VICTORIA

The representatives gave a presentation on the Uptown Multicultural Festival and the following was noted:

- The presentation to Council in November 2024 was encouraging, and a motion was made to bring this presentation to the committee.
- The vision is strong, and a lot of work went into organizing this festival, with involvement from both Victoria and Saanich.
- The event celebrates and strengthens diversity and culture, featuring traditional performers, dancers, and cuisines from various cultures (e.g., Greek, Mexican, Indian, Asian). Cultural goods, crafts, and various products were also available.
- Exhibits and vendors offered educational opportunities on cultural practices and 25 different cultures participated in the event.
- The event was a free family gathering, with community engagement from Saanich, including Saanich Police and Fire Department. Community services were showcased to highlight available resources.
- The festival had a significant potential economic impact, benefiting businesses with extended hours and higher sales. The event also created temporary jobs and fostered connections among businesses.
- Similar events in other cities have seen notable economic impact.
- The Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) of Victoria played a key role.
- The event helped form lasting alliances in the city.
- The Uptown Shopping Centre, as a business location, provided valuable support, covering logistical costs (tables, garbage, etc.).
- By 2027, a new venue will be needed due to upcoming construction at the Uptown Shopping Centre.
- This event could see growth with Saanich's support.

The following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussions:

- This event aligns with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy (DEI).
- The festival has potential to grow further, and the goal is for it to be as successful as the Victoria Folk Fest.
- Uptown Multicultural Festival is seeking financial commitments from Saanich, with a long-term vision for the event.
- Uptown has committed for two more years, after which a transition to a new location and financial support is needed to maintain momentum.
- Recreation centers could be a potential venue option.
- The event is currently one day, but there is potential for extension.
- Scheduling the festival in July could give businesses time to prepare and encourage greater participation in their individual programs in the fall.
- The event could align with the "Music in the Park" festival and other community associations supported by Saanich.
- Council could explore ways to support cultural events like this.
- A clear commitment from Saanich could encourage the growth and success.
- This presentation could be made to the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC).
- The event's budget is \$30,000 and community grants for the event total \$7,500.

MOVED P. Quinn and Seconded by J. Hesser: “That the Arts, Culture and Community Wellbeing Advisory Committee recommends that Council request staff to explore available resources to support La Société Francophone de Victoria in hosting the Uptown Multicultural Festival annually.”

RESULTS: Carried 7 TO 0

IN FAVOUR: Carroll, Westhaver, Hesser, Kay, Newell, Quinn, Serhan

OPPOSED: None