

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf. Your File/V/Réf.	03 06-97-0150
DATE	02 September 1997
TO/DEST.	Co-ordinator Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee
FROM/EXP.	Regional Clerk
SUBJECT/OBJET	GRANTS REQUEST OUTSIDE REGULAR GRANTS PROCESS OTTAWA-CARLETON SPORTS COMMISSION

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee recommend Council approve a grant request in the amount of \$15,000 to carry out a study examining the feasibility of establishing an Ottawa-Carleton Sports Commission in conjunction with Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority, with the funds to be provided from the Provision for Unforeseen.

PURPOSE

This report presents a project grant request (Annex A) in the amount of \$25,000 for the purpose of carrying out a study to examine the feasibility of establishing an Ottawa-Carleton Sports Commission.

The application is made by the Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the grant is to complete a study examining the feasibility of establishing an Ottawa-Carleton Sports Commission, under the auspices of Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority. The Commission's mandate would be to attract international, national and regional sports events to the region, as well as related sports activities including those in the adventure travel market, thereby contributing to local economic development.

As outlined in the RMOC Grant Request attached at Annex A, the action plan includes various activities, including researching the current regional sports resource base with the aim to compile a directory, a competitive analysis of other cities which have won the right to host major events, establishment of an inventory of potential sports and adventure tourism events that could come to the Ottawa-Carleton Region, among others.

Under the assumption that the project is feasible, recommendations would include a mandate, organizational structure, operational guidelines and funding requirements.

The timetable for the feasibility study component is expected to commence at the beginning of October with a final report completed at the end of December.

PANEL DISCUSSION

In accordance with the grants outside budget guideline, the grant proposal was reviewed by the Regional Clerk to determine initial eligibility and subsequently considered by a recommendation panel made up of representatives from the Ottawa-Carleton Economic Development Corporation, the Planning and Development Approvals Department, and the Chief Administrative Office.

The panel recognized the potential economic benefits of such a Commission, should the feasibility study support its development. The Ottawa-Carleton region needs to create a focal point for leadership in this area. The rationale to better assess, strengthen and market our Region's sport and adventure tourism resources in order to better service and expand on this growing sector, is sound. The proposed assembly of a sport resource base directory and potential market inventory/contact list will by itself, prove useful in future marketing efforts.

The proposed investigation of a mandate, organizational structure and other aspects of such a commission may require considerable liaison among multiple government jurisdictions involved in sports in Ottawa-Carleton, as well as with the private sector. However, the feasibility study could be useful in highlighting jurisdictional issues.

CONCLUSIONS - RECOMMENDATION PANEL

The request to the Region is for \$25,000 based on a total budget of \$30,000. The Panel recommends the provision of \$15,000. In light of the jurisdictional questions, the applicants could approach the over levels of government and the private sector for the balance of the funding.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

A public consultation process is not applicable for individual grant requests.

*Approved by
Mary Jo Woollam*

Attach. (1)

FINANCE DEPARTMENT COMMENT

As of September 16, 1997, the uncommitted balance in the 1997 Provision for Unforeseen account is \$103,890.

*Approved by
Kent Kirkpatrick
on behalf of the Finance Commissioner*

OTTAWA CARLETON REGIONAL CLERK'S DEPT SEP 08 1997 Received
FILE # <i>06-7-0150</i>
DOC I.D. # <i>11-2019</i>
ACTION TAKEN <i>Copy to Denise Carter</i>
<i>AB 143.1 / 10</i>

Sept. 8, 1997

Ms. Mary Jo Woollam
Regional Clerk
RMOC
111 Lisgar St.
Ottawa, ON


Dear Ms. Woollam:

Enclosed you will find a grant request, outside the grant program process, for a feasibility study for a Sports Commission. The proposal is being put forward by Bob O'Doherty in conjunction with Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority. We believe this report is to be considered at the Sept. 16 meeting of the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee.

The attraction and hosting of successful sports events is becoming an increasingly sophisticated and strategic pursuit. It is timely and important that we explore this possibility as we try to grow the tourism industry in the Capital Region and maximize success in the sport tourism sector.

Please feel free to contact myself or Bob O'Doherty if you require any further information.

Sincerely,



Leslie Miller
President, OTCA



Bob O'Doherty
President, Ottawa-Carleton 2001
Canada Games Bid Committee

RMOC GRANT REQUEST

APPLICANT

1. Bob O'Doherty in conjunction with
Ottawa Tourism and Convention Authority
Leslie Miller, President
Tel. 237-5150
2. Amount of Grant requested \$25,000
3. Summary of Project

To carry out a study examining the feasibility of establishing an Ottawa-Carleton Sports Commission, under the auspices of OTCA. Its mandate would be to attract international, national and regional sports events to the region, as well as related sports activities including those in the adventure travel market, thereby contributing to local economic development.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Introduction

Efforts to bring the 1994 Commonwealth Games, 1997 World University Games, the 1999 World Junior Hockey Championships, and 2001 Canada Summer Games to Ottawa have brought to the forefront some significant observations about the sport tourism market:

- it is a growth industry and one that has become very competitive as awareness grows about how sports events contribute to economic development, create awareness of a destination, and improve a community's quality of life
- Ottawa-Carleton has excellent untapped resources to service this market
- sport can serve as a unifying force for local communities and governments
- Ottawa is currently not well positioned to compete successfully in this competitive market.

The last observation is a result of the fact that our sports facilities are either owned by the various municipal governments or by the private sector. No strong, unified effort exists to market these sites, or the region as a whole, to the sports tourism industry. In addition, no private, municipal or regional agencies currently have the resources or

mandate to market and promote Ottawa to this sector. As a result, a void exists and any initiative in this area is usually carried out in a reactive, ad hoc fashion by volunteer community groups, with limited resources and success.

In an effort to address this situation, a grant is requested to conduct a feasibility study regarding the possible establishment of an Ottawa-Carleton Sport Commission under the auspices of OTCA. In a classical sense, a Sports Commission is an organization whose primary purpose is to attract sports events and related activities to a community. Sports events can range from international games like the Olympics, to national championships, to regional tournaments. Since these events usually a large number of participants and travel, they form a subsector of the tourism industry and have a significant economic impact from both the competitors and those accompanying them. In addition, media coverage raises the profile of the hosting city and encourages visitation.

Existing Sports Commissions take many shapes and forms. They started to gain momentum in the late 1980's to meet the need of the burgeoning sport tourism industry, and now total over 200 in the U.S. and 40 internationally. The National Association of Sports Commissions, headquartered in the U.S., currently has 130 members in Canada and the U.S. (This organization services members by improving communications and networking among sports commissions, sports governing bodies, events right holders and event sponsors.)

We would also like to examine the potential of events related to the adventure tourism market. According to the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), adventure travel is the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry in North America. It appeals to travellers who are looking for authentic outdoors experiences; these can be "hard" (white water rafting) or "soft" (birdwatching). Adventure travel is especially attractive to North America's largest population segment, the "babyboomers".

Adventure travel is of particular interest to OTCA since the Capital Region contains all the assets to attract this market - hiking and biking trails, skiing, hot air ballooning, and rivers, to name a few. The number of companies offering adventure travel is also starting to grow, and most are OTCA members. However more research and targeted marketing is needed to attract events within this segment (e.g. international snowmobile or extreme mountain biking competitions) before we can begin to take advantage of its potential. This function could form an essential component of the mandate of a Sports Commission.

The proposed feasibility is timely in terms of an important initiative of the Canadian Tourism Commission. A three year program has been established to assist communities

to design, plan and implement strategies to build an effective sports tourism infrastructure. The purpose is to increase the quality and quantity of sports events hosted in Canada, and the resulting economic benefits. The program has been designed to take advantage of the fact that sports events are destined to become a major source of increased tourism activity throughout the world over the next several years, and to help Canada become a player. The CTC has contracted with a private sector firm to manage the program, which involves assisting smaller cities to organize appropriate resources and infrastructure. (Gatineau is one of the 26 cities approved to pay a fee and take part in the program.) OTCA has met with representatives of the CTC program, and Ottawa has been asked to host the inaugural Canadian Sports Tourism conference in February 1988. OTCA would also plan to take advantage of databases and web sites developed under this program but would have to pay to do so.

One of the proposed legacies of the 2001 Canada Summer Games bid was the creation of the aforementioned sports commission concept. All local governments agreed that this initiative would service an important need in the regional marketplace. This was a clear indication that sport can serve as a unifying force for local governments and communities.

2. Aims and goals of the project

- To carry out a study examining the feasibility of establishing an Ottawa-Carleton Sports Commission to attract a variety of sports and adventure travel events to the Capital Region.
- Under the assumption that the project is feasible, recommendations will include a mandate, organizational structure, operational guidelines and funding requirements.

3. Action plan

The project manager will be Bob O'Doherty, who recently led the Ottawa-Carleton bid for the 2001 Canada Summer Games. Major activities will include:

- researching the current sports resource base in the region including existing facilities, organizations and events. This data will be compiled into a directory which will remain as a useful resource document for local governments and other agencies.
- a competitive analysis of what has worked well for other cities which have won the right to host major events. This would include a focus group of participants involved in local bid attempts, both successful and failed, to attract sports and other events (e.g. Francophone Games, World Junior Hockey Championships,

Expo 2005, Canada Summer Games) and would look at Ottawa's strengths and weaknesses.

- establishing an inventory of potential sports and adventure tourism events that could come to the Ottawa-Carleton region. Key contacts would include national sports associations and clubs, which are largely headquartered here in Ottawa.
- researching Sports Commission (or similar organizations) in Canada and the U.S.; key contacts would include existing members of NASC.
- identifying all the potential components of/opportunities within the sports tourism market and how they can best be marketed in line with Ottawa's strengths.

4. How the project relates to OTCA objectives

OTCA's mandate is to attract tourists and conventions to the region, thereby acting as a significant engine of economic growth. (In 1997, 5.5 million visitors to Ottawa are forecast to spend \$668 million.) Sports tourism has become a growth industry, as cities have become aware of the significant economic impact and media attention that these events can bring to their community. OTCA would like to explore this sector as a means of contributing to the growth and economic impact of tourism. Specifically, one of the major focuses of Ottawa Tourism is to fill the off-peak periods of the year, and sports tourism is an excellent means of doing so.

5. Innovative aspects

The concept of a Sports Commission does not currently exist in the Ottawa-Carleton region, and when bids are made it usually has involved "reinventing the wheel" each time. We expect to determine, via the feasibility study, that the concept is an important means of growing both the tourism industry and awareness of Ottawa using a cohesive, focussed and proactive approach.

6. Project timetable

The feasibility study would commence at the beginning of October with a final report completed at the end of December.

7. **Budget breakdown**

Expenses

Administration	\$ 3,000
Travel	\$ 3,000
Fees	\$24,000
(60 @ \$400/day)	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$30,000

Revenues

RMOC grant	\$25,000
OTCA donated services	\$ 5,000
TOTAL REVENUE	\$30,000

8. **Economic Impacts to the Ottawa Carleton community**

The tourism and sports sectors both have a significant impact on the local economy in terms of revenues, taxes and jobs. The feasibility study will include projections as to what potential effect the creation of a Sports Commission will have on the short and long-term growth of the tourism market and economic activity in the Ottawa-Carleton Region.