

Meeting date: September 3, 2019
Department: Chief Administrative Officer
Prepared by: Greg McClinchey, Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: **Night Market Report**

RECOMMENDATION: that Council Receive the Night Market Report for information.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS

Starting in 2018, the Municipality entered into a 3 (+1) year operational partnership with the Strathroy Downtown Market in an effort to promote Market growth and longevity, and generalized community-based economic development by leveraging the Market as an economic development device in the Strathroy Downtown. That agreement is now in its second year.

In addition to an already successful 2019 Market season thus far, on August 2, 2019, the second annual Night Market took place in Strathroy's downtown. Working in partnership with Municipal staff, the Night Market attracted 60 unique vendors, performers and several buskers (a 20% year-over-year increase). Many Night Market vendors are not participants in the regular Saturday morning Market and report learning of Strathroy's Market by positive word of mouth and/or via the Municipal and Market Facebook sites.

While exact numbers are not available, by using "The Jacobs' Method" (and making certain assumptions regarding pass-through traffic) it was determined that the Night Market attracted approximately 6,000 visitors from across the Municipality and from other communities such as Sarnia, London, Camlachie, Watford, Grand Bend, Kitchener and Exeter. This includes 200 patrons who participated in a pop-up restaurant on Front Street.

From a local economic development perspective, if each person attending the Night Market spent \$25, the immediate economic spin-off associated with the event would be \$150,000.

Attendees were orderly, upbeat and positive throughout the event. Police, ambulance and the Fire Service report no calls for assistance during the event and Municipal staff confirm no issues at the traffic barriers or subsequent vandalism of note. Social media has yielded positive public feedback and face-to-face interactions have been equally positive in the days since the event.

The Market Executive Committee has asked staff to thank Council for its support of this initiative and for the Council's ongoing confidence in the long-term success of the Strathroy Market.