

Council Report

Subject: Participation of St. Stephen Fire Department in May Day Event

Department: Fire Services

Date: April 22, 2026

Purpose

To seek Council direction regarding an invitation for the St. Stephen Fire Department to participate in the upcoming May Day event.

Background

The Municipality has received an invitation for the St. Stephen Fire Department to participate in the upcoming May Day event at the St. Stephen Airport.

Participation would typically involve deployment of personnel and apparatus for community engagement purposes. While the Fire Department has historically supported community events, participation is not governed by a formal policy and is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

To support this request, Fire Services has provided costing analysis related to the deployment of Tower 1, based on actual operating data collected over approximately 3.5 years.

Discussion / Analysis

1. Operational Considerations

Participation in the event would require:

- Deployment of personnel and at least one apparatus;
- Temporary diversion of resources from core emergency response functions;
- Consideration of maintaining minimum response capacity within the Municipality.

While the duration of the event is expected to be limited, any deployment outside normal operations introduces some degree of operational exposure.

2. Financial Implications

Based on analysis provided by the Fire Chief, the estimated cost of deploying Tower 1 to the airport (approximately 8.2 km round trip) is:

Estimated Event Cost: \$500 – \$550

This estimate is based on a per-kilometre cost model derived from:

- Fuel consumption;
- Historical usage data (hours and kilometres);
- Conservative estimates for maintenance and insurance.

The Fire Chief notes that calculating costs based on kilometres is more appropriate for non-emergency, non-operational use (e.g., parades, events), whereas hourly rates (approximately \$578/hour) are more appropriate for fire response or extended operational deployment.

Importantly, this cost ***does not represent*** a direct cash outlay for the event but rather reflects the incremental consumption of asset life and operating resources.

3. Asset Management Considerations

The Fire Chief has emphasized that the primary factor impacting the lifespan of specialized fire apparatus is kilometres driven, not emergency use.

Apparatus such as Tower 1 have complex systems that are negatively impacted by road conditions and routine travel. Industry experience indicates that similar apparatus in larger jurisdictions is often replaced based on mileage-related wear.

Participation in non-essential events contributes directly to long-term capital replacement pressure and should be viewed as incremental asset depreciation.

4. Community Engagement Value

Participation in the May Day event would:

- Enhance visibility of Fire Services within the community;
- Support public education and engagement;
- Contribute to broader municipal support for community events.

5. Fire Chief Commentary (Summary)

The Fire Chief advises that:

- Estimated cost for participation is \$500–\$550 based on kilometre-based costing;
- Kilometre-based costing is appropriate for non-emergency events;
- Vehicle wear is primarily driven by travel, not fire operations;
- Equipment lifespan is finite and does not distinguish between emergency and non-emergency use.

Options for Council Consideration

Option 1 – Approve Participation (Full Deployment)

Authorize Fire Department participation, including deployment of Tower 1 or similar apparatus.

Option 2 – Approve Participation (Limited / Modified) Authorize participation with restrictions such as use of smaller apparatus or limited duration.

Option 3 – Decline Participation

Decline the invitation based on asset management and operational considerations.