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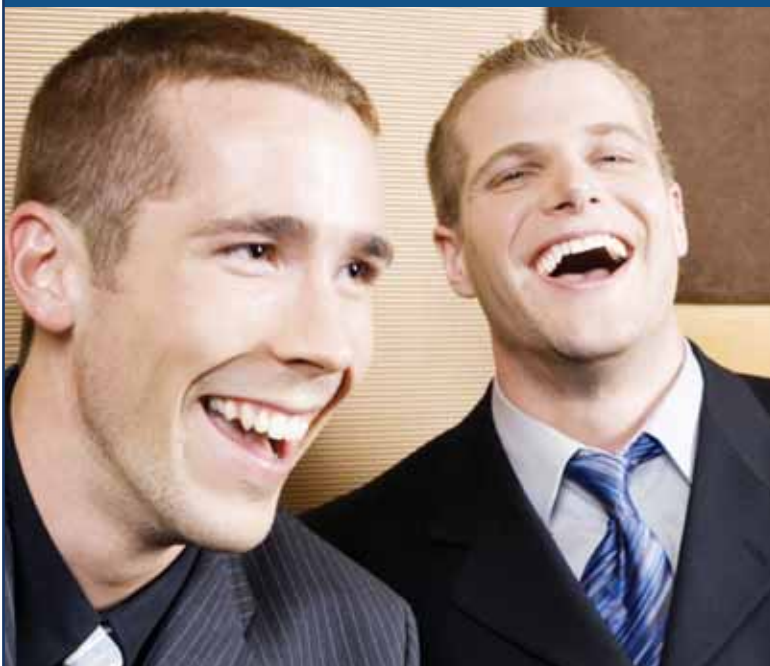
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Civic status for Pride in 2013?

'We are crossing
our fingers':
Ray Lam

PRIDE
NATHANIEL CHRISTOPHER

Vancouver Pride may be designated a civic event in time for the 2013 celebrations, says Vision Vancouver Councillor Tim Stevenson.

"I had a word with the city manager, who tells me the report won't be coming until the end of April. It's just way more complex with many departments involved," he tells *Xtra*. "I had hoped this would be earlier, but it looks like a couple more months yet."

Stevenson, who initially brought the motion to city council on Sept 18, says he's been waiting since January for the report from city staff.

"We are having to look at a much broader situation. Obviously, a whole bunch of groups are saying, 'If they get it, what about us? What about the Santa Claus Parade or the Celtic parade?' The staff had to go and burrow and decide what are they going to recommend as far as criteria and so on," Stevenson says. "I think that's why this is taking much longer than I had originally thought it was going to take."



"Obviously, a whole bunch of groups are saying, 'If they get it, what about us?'" Vancouver Councillor Tim Stevenson points out.

NATHANIEL CHRISTOPHER

Civic event designation means the city would assume greater responsibility for the costs of street closures, policing and cleanup after the Pride parade. Only the Celebration of Light, the Grey Cup Festival and Remembrance Day events now have the designation.

Stevenson's motion also seeks civic designation for the Vaisakhi and Lunar New Year parades.

"We are crossing our fingers for civic designation this year," says Vancouver Pride Society general manager Ray Lam. "We've had some good conversations with the city manager and Tim Stevenson, and we know something is going to happen this year. We don't know the exact amount it'll cover or what exactly civic status offers. It's been a very elusive topic, but it's something Pride's been talking about for several years — at least five or six years."

Lam says that the civic bill for the 2012 Pride events, including the parade, totalled \$67,000. If Pride is granted civic designation, he says they would like to use the savings to pay for a comprehensive economic-impact study to determine not only the level of financial stimulus the event generates, but how many people it attracts to the city.

"We've been working off of police estimates and they aren't accurate, but it's the best we can do without an impact study," Lam says. **X**



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