

# The end of ChocolateFest?

Burlington festival may be gone for good as city moves away from sweet branding

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BURLINGTON — Chocolate Fest, a celebration of all things chocolate that has grown into Burlington's biggest event of the year, may have baked its last cookie and dipped its last ice cream cone.

Festival organizers say the

Memorial Day weekend event — which was canceled last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic — might never rebound from the public health crisis and other factors.

Another reason organizers are considering permanently canceling ChocolateFest is that Burlington city officials have taken steps to drop the city's longtime official slogan of "Chocolate City U.S.A."

Bil Scherrer, president of the festival organizing group, said he is struggling to find much enthusiasm for bringing back the chocolate-themed celebration of food, music and fun.



**Scherrer**

last year."

The city has hired a consultant to make recommendations on whether Burlington should adopt a new slogan, considering that the local Nestle plant no longer offers public tours and that there is little other chocolate merchandising

"It's kind of hard to have a chocolate festival if you're not 'Chocolate City' any longer," he said.

He added: "ChocolateFest may have seen its

locally.

The city has called itself "Chocolate City U.S.A." since 1987, the same year that ChocolateFest made its debut.

**It was good, now it may be gone**

The festival had grown into a major regional attraction that draws big crowds each year with its carnival rides, live music, a parade, children's contests, entertainers and vendors serving a variety of sweet treats.

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**PROVIDED**

Burlington has called itself "Chocolate City U.S.A." since 1987, but a study is underway to determine if the community should rebrand itself and project a new image.