



Celebrate Markham Action Plan

April 21, 2020



Background

- Certain event/program organizers have contacted the City for information about the City's position with respect to Celebrate Markham, specifically regarding:
 - The possibility of financial relief for organizers who have had to cancel events due to the COVID-19 disruption and who have incurred unrecoverable/non-deferrable expenses
 - The implications of altering a proposed project that was supposed to occur in-person to a virtual format
- Decisions about funding approvals/allocations to organizations for the April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 funding year have not yet been made – progress on this report to Council was put on hold when the disruption and a Provincial emergency was declared



Background continued

- At this point in time, there is insufficient data for staff to finalize a recommendation about financial relief without any tangible details on impact/exposure
- The recommended action plan requires that staff gather more information directly from event/project organizers and applicants before making recommendations to Council
- A report with final recommendations will then be drafted and submitted for Council consideration at the next possible DSC meeting



Recommended Actions

1. Staff will proactively send an update/inquiry email communication to all eligible applicants asking them to indicate the status of their proposed project among the following three possibilities:
 - a) **Cancelled** – For organizations that have had to cancel events due to COVID-19 and as a result have incurred unrecoverable/non-deferrable expenses ("sunk costs"), we would like to understand the details of those expenses, so we may begin to explore possible options.
 - b) **Postponed** – Applications can be processed as normal but recommend that any in-person projects be postponed beyond June 30, 2020. Closer to that date, proposals will be reassessed to determine if public health directives have changed.
 - Note: Any planned postponement beyond March 31, 2021 will be given consideration as part of the next Celebrate Markham funding cycle (a new application form will not be required).



Recommended Actions

1. Continued:
 - c) **Switch to virtual delivery** – Staff will request a revised budget, workplan, estimated impact (# of participants and economic impact to the community) and the proposed virtual platform.
 - Note: switching to a virtual option for a proposed project may result in a change to the amount of funding an organization would otherwise be eligible for, depending on the revised budget, workplan and estimated impact (and to remain consistent with established Celebrate Markham guidelines).
2. For applicants under the Seniors Clubs category – we recommend that those applications be processed as normal, since funding of projects in that category are for year-round programming.



Recommended Actions

3. Only those organizations who would have otherwise been eligible to be considered for the current funding cycle (April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021) will be contacted. Ineligible applications will not be contacted.
4. Organizations should be given two weeks to respond, otherwise their application will be processed as originally received. Staff will follow-up by email and phone after 1-week for organizations who have not responded
5. In order to process information in a timely manner, additional staff from other departments will need to be re-deployed to assist.
6. Staff will analyze submitted information within 1-2 weeks after receipt from organizers and formulate final recommendations for Council
7. Final Recommendations will be provided in a report to Council, pending the information received from this recommended plan of action. This report will be targeted for presentation by early-mid June, 2020