



MEMORANDUM

TO: Heritage Markham Committee

FROM: Regan Hutcheson, Manager-Heritage Planning

DATE: February 10, 2021

SUBJECT: STUDIES / PROJECTS
Request for Feedback
Ontario Heritage Conference 2023 or 2024
Community Heritage Ontario

Project: Hosting a future Ontario Heritage Conference (OHC)

Request: Community Heritage Ontario has asked if Markham is interested in potentially hosting the 2023 or 2024 provincial heritage conference.

Background:

- This conference is the annual heritage conference sponsored by Community Heritage Ontario (CHO), the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) and the Ontario Association of Heritage Planners (OAHP).
- In 2018, Markham was the selected host city for 2020, but this event was cancelled after many months of organizing and planning due to COVID 19.
- The 2021 OHC has also been cancelled. It is expected that Belleville will host in 2022 (they were originally supposed to host 2021).
- London has indicated an interest to host in 2023 but no decision has been made on the host city,
- For the 2020 conference, the planning and organization was to be a collaborative effort between Heritage Section (Planning Department) and Culture and Economic Development in conjunction with other City Departments, as needed, as well as a Local Organizing Committee comprised of staff, local volunteers and Councillors.

The theme of the conference was “20/20 Vision – Clarity for a New Decade” and the three day event was scheduled for May 28-30, 2020. Extensive conference planning was undertaken including evaluation and selection of conference venues (Coptic Church, Angus Glen Banquet Facilities, and Markham Museum), the development of a comprehensive and engaging program (Opening and Gala Dinner keynote speakers, 19

Concurrent sessions with 49 confirmed speakers, local tours), Gala Dinner, Entertainment, Heritage Tradeshow, the creation of a Sponsorship and Exhibitor Program, Marketing and Advertising, Conference Hotel and Financial/Budget.

Status/ Staff Comment

- When the 2020 Local Organizing Committee was considering cancelling the rescheduled conference in June 2020, the consensus of the LOC was to support the following resolution:
 - *“That the 2020 Ontario Heritage Conference Local Organizing Committee recommends that the 2020 Conference scheduled for October 22-24, 2020 with Markham as the host community be cancelled due to the uncertainty around the COVID-19 situation and that Markham consider re-applying to host at a future date, perhaps 2023”.*
- The planning and organizing of this type of conference is a massive and time consuming venture. Based on the experience from planning the 2020 conference, although our volunteers were very helpful, much of the administration and workload involved Heritage Section staff. This type of commitment can affect workload including other Markham heritage conservation priorities and projects.
- If Heritage Markham recommends that the City submit a bid to host this event, this matter would have to be considered by Markham Council as it involves staff time, a financial commitment and city resources.

As the provincial organizations will be meeting to discuss future conference at the end of February, prior to this, the City may need to send a letter to Community Heritage Ontario indicating that the City is potentially interested in pursuing the conference for 2023 or 2024 and that we would be approaching Markham Council to seek permission.

Suggested Recommendation for Heritage Markham

THAT Heritage Markham Committee receive as information.

Background Information

The role of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) involves:

- **Promotion of the event**
 - Presentation and exhibit at prior conference
 - Promotional materials 12 months prior to the event
- **Programming**
 - Working with the conference organizations (Community Heritage Ontario, Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and Ontario Association of Heritage Professionals) to secure speakers/ content
 - Special events and tours to showcase local area, as well as organization of the Welcome Reception, Gala Dinner
- **Transportation**
 - Shuttling delegates to venues from conference centre/ hotel is the responsibility of the LOC
- **Information/ Volunteer Requests**
 - During planning phases LOC may be asked for advice and assistance on dignitaries, speakers, performers, etc.
 - Operation of the Registration Desk and supply volunteers to help at locations and generally help out.
- **Financials**
 - Budget is developed and maintained by LOC – start up funds totaling \$15,000 will be loaned by the three organizations.
 - LOC is responsible for banking and providing accounting (treasurer)
 - Conference is not a profit making venture but should not run a deficit. Any profit is split equally between the LOC and each of the organizations providing seed money. If there is a loss, it will be equally split between all organizations including the LOC
- **Sponsorship and Marketing**
 - LOC is responsible for local sponsorships; other organizations will seek additional sponsorship from ministries, etc.
- **Reporting**
 - LOC and organizations will set the conference theme/speakers

- LOC will provide regular budget updates and reports to the main committee
- LOC to provide a post conference report