



Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: May 24, 2022

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**SUBJECT:** Celebrate Markham Grant Program – April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023 (2022-23) – Funding Approvals and Annual Program Review

**PREPARED BY:** Chris Rickett, Director, Economic Growth, Culture & Entrepreneurship x 6590

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT the report titled, “Celebrate Markham Grant Program – April 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023 (2022-23) - Funding Approvals and Annual Program Review” be received; and,
2. THAT Council approve the recommendations of the Interdepartmental Staff Review Committee in Attachment 2, which includes 66 Celebrate Markham applicants, totaling \$309,150; and,
3. THAT the one-time-carry forward funds totaling \$207,425 from the 2021-2022 Funding Cycle be allocated to the 2022-2023 Funding Cycle in accordance with the Community Grant Application funding envelopes as follows:
  - a. Culture Events Programs \$51,050
  - b. Major Community Events \$89,500
  - c. Seniors’ Clubs \$32,650
  - d. Sport Events \$34,225; and,
4. THAT the remaining \$154,275 from the 2021-2022 Funding Cycle be returned as a surplus to the 2022 operating budget; and,
5. THAT Celebrate Markham Interdepartmental Review Committee be assigned delegated authority to review and approve additional applications using the 2022 operating budget surplus funds in the Sports Events category in the amount of \$31,525 and any unused funds be returned to source at the end of the 2023-2024 Funding Cycle; and,
6. THAT Markham Arts Council receive a net amount of \$23,400 (Celebrate Markham Grant of \$30,000 less the final loan repayment in 2022 in the amount of \$6,600 for their annual programs and activities) conditional on receiving and approving 2021/22 audited financial statements; and,
7. THAT the unused 2020 and 2021 Canada Day funds in the amount of \$89,550 be allocated to the 2022 Canada Day event and any remaining funds be returned to the original funding source; and,
8. THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

This Staff report contains recommendations for the 2022-23 funding cycle of the Celebrate Markham Grant program, for events that take place from April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

**PURPOSE:**

To recommend Celebrate Markham Grant awards for projects and events to be held between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. Grant recommendations are included in Attachments.

**BACKGROUND:**

On October 13, 2015, Council adopted a revised Celebrate Markham Grant Program following a comprehensive program review, which included stakeholder consultations. Council approved that the Celebrate Markham Grant funding envelope be set at \$370,000 which is allocated to the following funding streams along with funding caps per applicant:

- a. Cultural Events and Programs = \$76,000 (maximum \$5,000 per applicant)
- b. Major Community Festivals = \$100,000 (maximum \$10,000 per applicant)
- c. Sports Events = \$40,000 (maximum \$10,000 per applicant but up to \$20,000 for International/World level sports events)
- d. Seniors' Clubs = \$40,000 (maximum \$3,000 per applicant)
- e. City led events = \$84,000
- f. Markham Arts Council = \$30,000

Combined, categories a, b, c and d above represent a total available funding envelope of \$256,000 allocated for Celebrate Markham community grant applications.

**Funding for 2022-23 Celebrate Markham Community Grants**

The funding available for Celebrate Markham Community Grants for the 2022-23 funding cycle includes the \$256,000 approved by Council as part of the 2022 Budget.

On July 14, 2021, Council authorized a one-time carry-forward of unused Community Grant funds from the 2021-22 funding cycle to the 2022-23 Community Grant funding envelope, with the specific direction that any remaining funds be returned to the same categories they came from.

As identified in Table A, this means there is a total funding envelop of \$463,425 available for the 2022-23 Community Grant funding cycle, with \$207,425 being carried-forward from 2021-22 to be added to the 2022-23 funding cycle.

**TABLE A**

<b>Grant Category</b>	<b>2022-23 Annual Funding</b>	<b>Carried Forward Funding</b>	<b>Total \$ for 2022-23 Funding Cycle</b>
Cultural Events & Programs	\$76,000	\$51,050	\$127,050
Major Community Festivals	\$100,000	\$89,500	\$189,500
Seniors' Clubs	\$40,000	\$32,650	\$72,650
Sport Events	\$40,000	\$34,225	\$74,225
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$256,000</b>	<b>\$207,425</b>	<b>\$463,425</b>

**Celebrate Markham Program Guidelines**

As stipulated in the Grant Program Guidelines, grant recipients must complete and submit a Project Outcome/Financial Report which includes reporting on community partnerships, participation and attendee statistics, outcomes, community impact, learning and program feedback, as well as detailed reporting on actual expenses versus projected budget and associated variance explanations within 90 days of the event completion. In addition, certain financial reporting information is required depending on the amount of the grant request (detailed below in Table B).

**TABLE B**

<b>Revised minimum reporting requirements</b>		
<b>Grant Threshold</b>		<b>Minimum Reporting Requirement</b>
<b>1.</b>	\$5,000 or less	Income statement and balance sheet prepared by the organization and signed by the Board.
<b>2.</b>	\$5,001 - \$10,000	Compilation Engagement prepared by a Licensed Public Accountant outside the organization. One document that contains financial statements for the 2 separate fiscal years (the most recent fiscal year and the previous year).
<b>3.</b>	\$10,001 & over	Audit Engagement prepared by a Licensed Public Accountant outside the organization. One document that contains financial statements for the 2 separate fiscal years (the most recent fiscal year and the previous year).

In cases where an organization has not yet fully complied with the Project Outcome/Financial Reporting requirements specified above, staff recommend that those organizations receive funding from this 2022-23 funding cycle subject to receiving and approving of the reporting requirements outlined above.

Based upon evaluation by the Interdepartmental Staff Review Committee, using Council-approved eligibility requirements and program criteria, 66 applications are being recommended for funding. Key elements of the review included:

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1. Organizational Readiness
  2. Project Merit
  3. Community Impact
  4. Partners and Inclusivity
  5. Waste Planning (Zero Waste Event)
  6. Work Plan
  7. Project Budget

The criteria used to review this applications can be found in Attachment 1 Celebrate Markham Program Criteria).

The Interdepartmental Staff Review Committee includes representation from the following City departments: Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship (Manager and Coordinator); Financial Services (Financial Planning); Recreation (Director, Senior Manager, Manager and Coordinator Sport Development); Human Resources (Diversity); and, Corporate Communications & Community Engagement (Events).

Staff have exercised flexibility, where warranted in the review and processing of applications.

### **COVID-19 Precautions and Planning**

With the lifting of pandemic restrictions across Ontario, the City is preparing for a safe paced return to in-person community events in 2022. Staff will work closely with the successful applicants to ensure that the most current Provincial/Regional Health Restrictions are followed and staff will make adjustments to funding as appropriate.

### **OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

#### **Application Review**

An overview summary of all Celebrate Markham applications within the \$463,425 total available funding envelope for community grant applications for this funding cycle is shown in Table C below, as well as Staff's recommendation to fund the 2022-2023 applications.

**TABLE C**

	<b>Applications Received</b>		<b>Applications Approved</b>		
<b>Grant Category</b>	<b># of Applications</b>	<b>Total Funding Requested</b>	<b># of Applications Approved</b>	<b>Total Funding Recommended</b>	<b>Funding Remaining</b>
Cultural Events & Programs	34	\$164,175	34	\$123,500	\$3,550
Major Community Festivals	9	\$90,000	9	\$90,000	\$99,500

	<b>Applications Received</b>		<b>Applications Approved</b>		<b>Funding Remaining</b>
<b>Grant Category</b>	<b># of Applications</b>	<b>Total Funding Requested</b>	<b># of Applications Approved</b>	<b>Total Funding Recommended</b>	
Seniors' Clubs	18	\$52,950	18	\$52,950	\$19,700
Sport Events	5	\$42,700	5	\$42,700	\$31,525
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>\$349,825</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>\$309,150</b>	<b>\$154,275</b>

An overview of the applications and the Interdepartmental Staff Review Committee recommendations is attached in Attachment 2.

The Celebrate Markham Grant program continues to gain broader awareness among community groups. The program has historically received far more applications for funding than is available in the grant program's funding envelope.

It is important to note that while the available funding almost meets the demands of the applications for the 2022-23 funding stream as a result of the 2021-22 funding being carried-forward, if the Celebrate Markham funding stays at its existing annual contribution, it is expected that demand will exceed available funding in future years.

Going forward that means reduced funding across the board to each qualifying organization and/or the possibility that weaker applications (that might otherwise be eligible) may not being recommended for funding in the future given available funding.

### **City-led Events**

Out of the total \$370,000 funding envelope for Celebrate Markham, \$84,000 is reserved for City-led events, including:

- a. Senior's Hall of Fame
- b. Canada Day Celebrations
- c. Doors Open Markham
- d. Markham Milliken Children's Festival
- e. Earth Hour
- f. Markham Santa Claus Parade
- g. Black History Month Celebrations

### **2022 Canada Day Celebrations**

The last two years the City of Markham's in person Canada Celebrations were cancelled due to the pandemic.

As part of restarting and rebuilding the City of Markham's signature Canada Day Celebration's, the event is being moved from Milne Dam to the Markham Fairgrounds in 2022. The rationale for this change is that the event has outgrown the Milne Dam site, and the City is also looking to build the event into not just a Markham attraction, but a destination event that attracts visitors from across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.

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The move to the Markham Fairgrounds means that a number of Canada Day services historically provided by City staff through staff budgets are now being delivered by the Markham Fairgrounds at a cost, which will have a budget impact for the event. Bigger picture, the goal of building the event into a destination, also requires additional investments in entertainment.

Given the short time period between now and Canada Day, and an uncertain sponsorship market from the business community due to the pandemic recovery, staff are recommending that the funding that was not used for Canada Day in 2020 and 2021 be allocated towards the 2022 event, with any unused funds being returned to source.

### **Sports Events**

Sport has suffered greatly during the last two years as COVID-19 continued to wreak havoc on sport event schedules locally, provincially, nationally and internationally. National and Provincial Sport organizations (NSO and PSO) were forced to cancel and defer major events in Ontario, until restrictions were eased and allowed for competition to resume safely.

In the fall of 2021, when the application window for Celebrate Markham was opened, many national and provincial sport organizations were not in a position to apply since there was no set timetable for sport schedules to resume due to mandates. Staff at the Markham Pan Am Centre were still processing event cancellations as late as February of this year. Without having the support of the National or Provincial Sport Organization, many sport groups and sport event organizers were not able to formally request funding through Celebrate Markham's funding, as their events had yet to be approved or scheduled.

In 2022/23, Celebrate Markham is recommending approval of \$42,700 to five sport organizations that were able to apply within the application window. There remains \$31,525 in sport funding. There were no further requests received.

As sport tourism is recognized as one of the leading sources of tourism revenue for the City of Markham and in the spirit of supporting our provincial and national sport partners who are experiencing funding shortages as events return, staff are recommending Celebrate Markham Interdepartmental Review Committee be assigned delegated authority to issue and report back on the unused funds from the 2021-2022 in the Sports Events category in the amount of \$31,525 and any unused funds be returned to source at the end of the 2023-2024 Funding Cycle.

This funding will support any additional Provincial, National and International events that have recently been booked and will be hosted prior to the next funding window. Any new requests would have to go through the formal application process, which would be reviewed and scored against the current criteria to determine eligibility.

### **Potential Event Challenges**

There are a number of potential challenges for the various community events that may require further additional staff insight and support. Given resource constraints from the

pandemic, in 2022 the City is limiting the use of public parks and facilities for community events. A number of Celebrate Markham applicants have requested the use of public facilities and City services. In these situations, City staff will assist in identifying potential other locations, but in some cases, these relocations may require additional funding support.

### **Conclusions**

Continuous improvements to the Celebrate Markham Program benefit from Council's role to confirm the program's goals and objectives, to establish the overall funding envelope and to direct funding requests to the Celebrate Markham Program. Staff's role, meanwhile, is to ensure effective and efficient administration of the Fund, according to the established process and criteria. Success of this program depends upon adhering to the revised process which has been put in place.

### **Next Steps**

Upon approval of the staff report and funding allocations, staff will follow-up with applicants to inform them of the decisions related to their applications. The next round of applications 2023-2024 will open as follows:

- Q3:
  - Sport Events
- Q4:
  - Culture Events Programs
  - Major Community Events
  - Seniors' Clubs

Staff will continue to evaluate and implement continuous improvement processes to the grant program.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A total available funding envelope of \$463,425 was allocated for Celebrate Markham community grant applications delivered between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. The amount of \$309,150 is recommended for approval in this 2022-23 Funding Cycle for Celebrate Markham community grant applications.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

This initiative aligns with the strategic focus for community engagement to promote meaningful involvement and participation of residents, businesses and organizations that result in improved citizen engagement.

### **BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Financial Services, Corporate Communications and Community Engagement, Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship, Recreation and Human Resources Departments.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

Chris Rickett  
Director, Economic Growth,  
Culture & Entrepreneurship

Arvin Prasad  
Commissioner,  
Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment 1
  - Celebrate Markham Program Guidelines
- Attachment 2
  - Celebrate Markham Summary Grant Allocations and Totals