



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: September 24, 2015

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**SUBJECT:** “Celebrate Markham Grant Program Review – Community Feedback and Implementation Report”

**PREPARED BY:** Mavis Urquhart, Manager, Policy, Planning & Project Delivery  
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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1) THAT the report titled, “Celebrate Markham Grant Program Review – Community Feedback and Implementation Report”, incorporating the comments of Council and community stakeholders, be received; and,
- 2) That the Celebrate Markham recommendations as approved in principle by Council on June 15, 2015, be revised and adopted (*amendments and new recommendations are shown in italics*);
  - i) THAT Council adopt the following Vision for the Celebrate Markham Grant Program:

Celebrate Markham is a transparent, inclusive and sustainable grant program that reflects Council’s vision for Markham as a City that enhances art & culture, active living, community engagement and social cohesion through the support of events and programs that bring the community together and *attracts visitors to the City as a vibrant destination; and,*
  - ii) *THAT revised general criteria for Celebrate Markham Grant Program eligibility (Part A) and detailed criteria for the individual funding streams (Part B), as shown on Attachments 1 and 2 to this report, which take into account Council and stakeholder feedback, be incorporated into the Celebrate Markham Grant Program application and evaluation process, subject to any minor changes, as required; and,*
  - iii) *THAT the \$370,000 budget (total amount based on council direction in June 2015) be allocated to the following funding streams along with funding caps per applicant:*
    - a. *Cultural Events & 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)*
    - d. *Seniors’ Clubs = \$40,000 (maximum \$3,000 per applicant)*
    - e. *City led events = \$84,000*
    - f. *Unallocated/Reserve - \$30,000 amount pending decisions to be made on 2iv) by Council; and*
  - iv) *THAT decisions regarding funding for the Markham Arts Council (MAC) be brought forward as part of a separate report to Council; and,*

- v) *THAT in a given funding cycle, any unallocated funds within a funding stream be re-allocated to remaining streams with qualified applications and should there be no additional qualified applications in other funding streams, the surplus funds be returned to source; and,*
- vi) *THAT the Culture Department lead and administer the Celebrate Markham Grant Program by establishing a Staff Grant Review Committee, consisting of Staff from various Departments including: Recreation; Finance; Corporate Communications & Community Engagement, Human Resources, Economic Development and Culture to review, evaluate and make recommendations on funding applications on an annual basis; and,*
- vii) *THAT the Staff Grant Review Committee provide a Celebrate Markham Grant Program update report on an annual basis; and,*
- viii) *THAT all future funding requests for related programs and events from community and cultural groups be directed to the Celebrate Markham Program to be reviewed and decided upon through the Council approved Celebrate Markham process, as approved by Council; and,*
- ix) *THAT mandatory reporting of outcomes and financials be incorporated as part of the application criteria requirements to ensure that groups receiving funding achieve their outcomes and that the granted funds are used appropriately; and,*
- x) *THAT Celebrate Markham Grant funding envelope be set at \$370,000 in 2016 and until the population reaches 370,000, after which the funding formula of \$1/capita be used to calculate the budget; and,*
- xi) *THAT the funding envelope based upon a \$1.00 per capita formula be reviewed and updated every 2 years in accordance with Region of York population statistics; and,*
- xii) *THAT as part of the transition to the new Celebrate Markham Grant Program, the application process be opened October 26, 2015, for proposed Projects to be executed in the first three (3) months of 2016 (January, February, March), and that the application process be closed 4 weeks thereafter; and,*
- xiii) *THAT also as part of the transition to the new Celebrate Markham Program, a second funding cycle be held to allocate the remaining funding, with the application process opened for 8 weeks starting October 26, 2015, for proposed Projects to be executed from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017; and,*
- xiv) *THAT commencing April 2017, the new Celebrate Markham Grant Program, as described in this report, be fully in effect with applications accepted over an 8 week period, based upon an annual April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> funding cycle,; and,*
- xv) *THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.*

**PURPOSE:**

To report back as directed by Council on the feedback received through the community consultations on the proposed changes to the Celebrate Markham Grant Program, and to recommend and implement changes to the Celebrate Grant Markham Program, to ensure a more transparent and equitable process for awarding available funding to qualified community groups.

**BACKGROUND:**

In early 2015, Markham Council directed a policy review of the Celebrate Markham Grant Program (the Program) to make it more rigorous, sustainable, and position Markham to benefit from a greater number and wider range of events and programs as the City grows.

A consultant, (StrategyCorp), was hired to assist with this work. The consultant completed their Phase 1 review of the Program and prepared recommendations based on consultations with staff and Council and a review of grant programs in other municipalities.

Based on the consultant's findings, staff reported to General Committee in June 2015 with recommendations on how to revise the Program (See Attachment 3 – Resolution and Staff Report). Council approved, in principle, the recommendations and directed staff to hold community consultations with stakeholders to ensure that the recommended direction was aligned with the needs and expectations of the community.

This report recommends key changes to the Celebrate Markham Grant Program resulting from input that has been received over the course of the review. The input has been incorporated into the revised recommendations for Council's consideration and approval and are reflected in the revised Program criteria (Attachment 1 and Attachment 2).

The next steps are for the Staff Review Team, including staff from Culture, Recreation, Finance, Economic Development, Human Resources, Corporate Communications & Community Engagement to finalize the application and evaluation process along with Program implementation with applications to be released in October 2015.

Once fully implemented, the Program will run from April 1 to March 31. Proposed timing is provided in a chart later in this report.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:****Stakeholder Meetings**

On September 8 and 9, 2015, two meetings were held with stakeholders to discuss the Celebrate Markham Grant Program changes and obtain feedback and input. Previous fund recipients, residents, ratepayer groups, committees and boards, cultural groups, businesses, BIA's, sports groups, seniors groups and potential future applicants were invited to the meetings. Along with the invitations, and to provide attendees with sufficient background, invitees received a copy of the Celebrate Markham staff report and presentation entitled "The City of Markham's Celebrate Markham Grant Program Review" which was endorsed in principle by Council on June 15, 2015. Invitees were also provided with the opportunity to review and respond to the facilitation questions developed for the stakeholder meetings in advance of the consultation sessions (see Attachment 4). These questions were also been posted for a period of over 4 weeks to gather additional feedback from residents and allow those who could not

attend the two community consultation sessions or wished to provide additional information beyond the 2 sessions.

In total, over 76 community members attended the meetings. A presentation outlining the work to date and proposed changes was provided by the Director of Culture. The consultant then facilitated group discussions using the series of questions to garner feedback (Attachment 4) which were also used for the online survey that was posted on the Markham website.

### **Recommended Changes to Proposed Grant Program**

The response to the revised Program has been very positive. This section contains:

- A. Summary and discussion of feedback received during the community consultation sessions;
- B. Community feedback to the questionnaire that was posted online (Appended as Attachment 5);
- C. Responses to issues raised by Council at General Committee.

The recommendations presented in this report reflect the above input, provided by Council and stakeholders.

#### **A. Feedback from Community Consultation Sessions**

Generally, the participants were very supportive of the revised Celebrate Markham Program and the recommended changes. The feedback received was relatively consistent with some key trends which have been highlighted and addressed below. Comments have been organized under the 6 questions that were used by the consultant to facilitate the stakeholder meetings.

#### **Question 1 - Proposed Celebrate Markham Vision**

*In your opinion, does the proposed vision of the Celebrate Markham Grant Program accurately reflect the spirit of the program?*

Generally feedback was consistently positive, however, two areas of concern were highlighted:

##### ***Tourism's role in the Vision***

There were differing views about whether the City should encourage tourism through this Program. Some saw a role for festivals and events to promote tourism in support of local businesses, restaurants, shops and the City in general. Others thought the focus should be on what benefits non-profit organizations can bring to Markham citizens. Both concepts are recognized in the current Vision as they both have a role to play in the success of the Program.

##### ***Transparency, Promoting and Communicating the Program to the public***

Increased and improved transparency was strongly supported. It was noted in one of the stakeholder sessions that although transparency is important, there should be equal focus on inclusivity and accessibility to a community Program such as this. Numerous requests were made for better promotion of the Program to ensure all community groups are made aware of the potential funding opportunities.

There were also requests for information about the grant recipients, their projects and associated awards be made readily available on the City's website.

Improved transparency and communication was identified at the outset as one of the key outcomes of the review process. **To accomplish this, staff will develop a section on the City portal which includes details about the Program timeframes, eligibility, the application process, along with annual reporting of successful grant recipients and grant amounts.**

## **Question 2 - Proposed Celebrate Markham Principles**

*Are you generally supportive of the four proposed Celebrate Markham's principles? If not, what would you change?*

### ***Glossary of Terms to guide applicants***

There were several requests to provide a glossary or definitions for various terms or concepts (such as inclusivity, diversity, cross cultural, social cohesion) used in the vision and principles to help improve applicant's understanding of Program outcomes, eligibility, etc. **This is useful feedback and staff will include a glossary of terms in the application form and an FAQ section on the website to assist applicants.**

### ***Aligning applications with City's Strategic Plans and goals***

There was general consensus that projects should align with the City's strategic plans and goals to ensure that the funds are used to achieve success and deliver outcomes reflective of City policies. Several comments were received that more City strategic plans be included, (such as the Culture Plan, Integrated Leisure Master Plan, etc.)

Since review and interpretation of all these documents would be onerous for applicants, Staff will endeavor to reflect the relevant strategic directions and goals from the various strategic documents in the application guidelines and application criteria for eligibility and funding.

## **Question 3 - Proposed Funding Streams:**

*Do you feel that the proposed funding streams (categories) outlined below are reflective of the proposed vision for the Celebrate Markham Grant Program?*

- ***Cultural Events and Programs***
- ***Major Community Events, Festivals & Sports Events***
  - i. ***Major Community Events & Festivals***
  - ii. ***Sports Events***
- ***Senior's Programs***

Overall feedback was positive and supportive of the three funding streams. There were, however, requests made for better clarification/differentiation between the Cultural Events & Programs and Major Community Events, Festivals & Sports Events. This was primarily to ensure that the larger grant awards

are reserved for the truly larger qualifying major events/festivals. Staff will review this aspect and propose refinements to better distinguish these two funding streams.

To simplify the categories for applicants and for ease of administration, Staff is recommending 4 funding streams, rather than 3, by separating the Major Community Events, Festivals & Sport Events into two separate funding streams:

1. Major Community Festivals & Events
2. Sports Events

### ***Serving various Age Groups***

Questions were raised as to why there was not a separate funding stream for youth and children, similar to seniors' clubs. Although there is no specific category for youth and children, these demographic groups are presently well served under all of the other funding streams. There is nothing to preclude applicants from applying for programs, events and festivals under the various funding streams with a focus on youth and children. In fact, there are numerous events that have previously been funded under the Celebrate Markham Grant Program which have a focus on youth and children, some examples include: RBC Milliken Children's Festival, Night It Up, Santa Claus Parade, etc. Once the Program is fully established, the City may choose to expand its support to include specific and separate funding streams for youth and children.

### **Question 4 - Proposed Funding Criteria**

#### ***Do you have any concerns with the proposed program funding criteria?***

The criteria was generally accepted by participants. Some clarifications were requested which staff will incorporate into the application form, application guidelines and the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to be posted on the website.

#### ***Funding Distribution across Funding Streams***

Participants asked whether there would be caps on each of the funding streams or categories and how the overall funding would be distributed between the streams. A proposed breakdown was provided in the June staff report based upon a total budget of \$345,000. That amount, however, was increased to \$370,000 at Council's request. The revised breakdown for \$370,000 funding envelope across the various funding streams is outlined later in this report. Participants were supportive of funding "caps" to ensure that new groups get access. They also raised concerns about ensuring that existing groups were limited to these caps to ensure that there were sufficient funds for new groups. In both meetings participants raised concerns about the large grants (\$60,000) that were given to two specific groups in the past.

#### ***Funding Sources***

Questions were raised about whether applicants can apply for more than one funding stream and if multiple funding sources would be encouraged. Although applicants can apply for more than one funding stream only one grant will be awarded to any given organization in a funding cycle in order to ensure that there are sufficient funds for all potential applicants. Also, while matching funding is not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from other sources (such as fund-raising, grants from other levels of government, foundation funding, corporate sponsors, etc.). Encouraging other sources of funding is one of the goals of this Program and having other sources of income/funding will be weighted favourably.

### ***Criteria for Board of Directors***

One of the most consistent pieces of feedback was with respect to the criteria regarding board make up. At both workshops participants repeatedly objected to the requirement that: *“75% of the organization’s Board of Directors must be residents of the City of Markham”* on the basis that it could eliminate desirable organizations with projects that could ultimately have a positive benefit to the residents of Markham and the City. However, since one of the aims of this Program is to encourage community engagement and volunteerism, as well as to provide a Markham-based perspective on positioning and execution of the event, it is recommended that there be a requirement that *the majority of the organization’s Board of Directors must be residents of the City of Markham unless significant community benefits can be demonstrated as part of the application review process;*

### ***Sports Funding Stream***

There was positive feedback regarding the inclusion of the sport events stream at both sessions. Participants at the session identified that it is challenging for community sport groups to fund the hosting of regional, provincial and national events so this fund would be beneficial to all clubs.

Staff clarified that the intent of this category is for community sports groups to apply who are bidding to host regional, provincial, national and international events with the benefit to the community being sport tourism.

As with the Pan Am Games and with the Clarkson Cup, when cities host higher levels of play there is a trickledown effect on the community. This level of play encourages and increases participation in the community at lower levels of play including increased involvement in recreational sports contributing to and inspiring healthy/active living for children of all ages.

### **Question 5 - Application review and reporting processes**

***Do you agree that the proposed application review and reporting processes for Celebrate Markham balance the needs of applicants while ensuring accountability and meeting the public’s expectations that funds be distributed in a transparent and fair manner?***

There was general consensus that the proposed structure for reviewing and reporting of funding applications is transparent, well-structured and similar to other funding programs in other levels of government. Requests were made to extend the timelines for grant recipients to submit their project outcome reports from 30 days to 60 days. Staff will incorporate this change into the application process. There were also requests that the scoring system used to evaluate applications be made clear to applicants up front. This information will be provided in the Application and Application Guidelines.

### ***Application Funding cycles and timelines***

Some attendees wanted to know if there could be two funding cycles per year to better meet the needs of the applicants with respect to timing of their events. It is recognized that during the first year of implementation timelines and the funding cycle may not be optimal for all applicants when transitioning from the previous process to the new process. However, once the new process is fully in place by 2017, it should work well. The benefit of a single funding cycle is that all applications can be considered at the same time for the limited available funds. It will also be easier to administer the Fund and track applications and awards if it is managed in this way.

The new Program would run from April 1 to March 31 rather than by the calendar year. This is to accommodate events that take place early in the calendar year. In the transition period, following launch of the revised Program, there will be two application intakes, the first to capture the events delivered/taking place in the first three months of the year (January – March) and the second to capture applications for events delivered from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, after which there will be one intake for funding cycle running April 1 to March 31 annually.

#### ***Audit Process and Costs***

The feedback received was that the financial reporting process should not be onerous given the amount of the grant awards and the size and nature of the volunteer organizations seeking grants. It was suggested that these requirements be revisited.

Staff concur that reporting should balance the needs of applicants while ensuring financial accountability. Staff intends to work with the Finance Department and undertake further research on this matter to determine more suitable requirements while ensuring accountability, transparency and appropriate use of funds.

#### **Question 6 - Celebrate Markham Budget**

***The overall Celebrate Markham budget is currently set at \$370,000 per year (pending Council Approval). Should the budget be based upon a funding formula calculated on a per capita basis (e.g. \$1.00/capita)?***

Overall the attendees and respondents were supportive of establishing a funding formula. While many would like to see additional funding support, it was recognized that this may not be possible. Concerns were raised about ensuring that the \$1 per capita remains feasible and will adequately support the Program in the long-term. Other concerns were raised as to whether population growth should be the only determining factor for funding the Program, and how population changes, or lack of population growth will impact funding for the Program. There was suggestions to update annually not every four years.

The ways and means of determining the Program budget are numerous and varied, as revealed by the consultant's research early in this review. The proposed formula provides a reasonable guideline that incorporates a growth component and can be consistently applied over time. An annual status report on the Program to Council from Staff would assist with evaluating the effectiveness and value of the Fund and the need to adjust the per capita contribution, which could be updated every 2 years in accordance with Region of York population statistics. (Originally staff had proposed an update every 4 years but has amended that recommendation to every 2 years in response to comments received at the meetings. Current regional forecasts show future population growth for Markham at an average annual rate of about 2%, although it is variable from year to year).

Finally, there was a question as to what will happen to surplus funding within each funding stream and in the overall fund if it is not distributed. Monies could be transferred between categories with surplus funds (not enough qualified applications) moving to a funding stream that has insufficient funds for all its qualified applications. Any surplus remaining after all monies have been awarded to qualified applicants must be returned and cannot be carried forward into the following year.



**B. Questionnaire**

A questionnaire containing the facilitation questions used by the consultant at the stakeholder meetings September 8 and 9 was posted on the Markham website on August 16, 2015. Stakeholders and others were invited to review the questions and encouraged to provide comments in the meeting invitation and at the meetings.

As of September 29, 2015, a total of 13 responses were received through this channel. Given the low on line response rate no conclusions can be made, other than there was strong overall support for the Program changes from those that completed the questionnaire. The comments they provided are set in Attachment5. That feedback is addressed in this staff report.

**C. Feedback and Questions from General Committee**

***Longer period for application?***

- Staff suggest extending the period for application from 6 weeks to 8 weeks to better accommodate submission of applications. As required, staff will also provide assistance with applications to groups applying for grant funding.

***Look closer at all applicants' financial position.***

- Detailed budgets will continue to be required as part of the project applications with mandatory financial reporting upon project completion. Culture staff will be working with Finance staff to determine the best balanced approach and Finance staff will assist with the review of the financials.

***Funding options going forward - budget should be maintained at the current level of \$370,000, not reduced to \$345,000.***

- Based on this feedback, \$370,000 is being recommended as the funding envelope for 2016. Allocation of funding to various streams is discussed in the next section of this report.

***Kindred Spirits Orchestra (KSO) and how to continue to fund it within this program?***

- KSO can submit a grant application under the Cultural Events and Programs or Major Community Festivals and Events stream for programs and events that meet the criteria, and, if qualified, could be funded up to the maximum cap within that stream. Celebrate Markham is not designed to fund administration/ongoing operations and as such, KSO would not be eligible to receive funding as was granted by Council in 2015.

***How many new groups are requesting funding?***

- Prior to the Celebrate Markham Grant review there was limited promotion and awareness so there were low numbers of new groups that sought out funding. Based on the turnout at the community consultations held in September, it is anticipated that there will be numerous new applicants. The revised application process will be used to evaluate new applicants based on the eligibility criteria. Should the proposed \$370,000 budget, Program criteria and funding caps be approved by Council, there should be sufficient funds to grow the program and provide funding to new groups.

***Senior Clubs application process should be streamlined for ease of users.***

- Staff will endeavour to make the application process as clear and streamlined as possible for all applicants and will be available to answer questions and provide assistance with respect to completing applications.

***The application process is important and should remain as part of the program.***

- There is no plan to eliminate the application process. The application process continues to be an integral part of the Program and is being enhanced to allow for improved evaluation of submission. The evaluation criteria will be communicated to all applicants.

***The three major City run festivals should be treated differently within the Celebrate Markham Grant. Consider multi-year support for annual funding of three original festivals (Thornhill, Unionville and Markham Village) but ensure they provide financial documents annually.***

- Staff proposes introducing multi-year support for the 3 major festivals as a future step once the new Program is fully established.

***Consider a performance measurement /evaluation of events to determine the greatest value to the largest number of Markham constituents;***

- All applications would be evaluated based upon a number of indicators, including the value of the benefits they bring to the community as identified in their funding stream.

***“City Operated Events - \$84,000” should not be moved to Corporate Communications but should be remain within the overall program under the stewardship of the Culture Department.***

- With the revised Program, the Culture Department will administer the overall process. The funding will remain a part of the Celebrate Markham Grant Program and the City led events will continue to operate under their existing structure of staff/community committees with the lead department being Corporate Communications to coordinate and run the events.

**Allocation of Funding to various Funding Streams**

Based on the revised funding envelope set at \$370,000, staff suggests that the budget be distributed as follows across the various funding streams, along with associated funding caps per applicant:

- a. Cultural Events & 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*)
- d. Seniors' Clubs = \$40,000 (*maximum \$3,000 per applicant*)
- e. City led events = \$84,000
- f. Markham Arts Council = Unallocated /reserve of \$30,000, amount pending decision on a separate report on that organization.

Funding for Markham Arts Council is contemplated in a separate report. With respect to funds remaining in a given funding stream either due to lack of applications or due to lack of qualified applications, staff recommend that within that funding cycle any undistributed funds within a given stream be re-allocated to other funding streams with qualified applications. Should there be no additional qualified applicants in other funding streams the surplus funds will be returned to source. Staff does not recommend carrying over unused funds forward into future years.

Corporate Communications and Community Engagement staff has noted that they have experienced a rise in new and past non-corporate events that have evolved into corporately managed events such as Remembrance Day, Earth Hour, Globalfest (2016) and requested that there be consideration of this in the funding model over time.

### **Markham Arts Council**

Council requested that staff report back with a status update on the progress made by Markham Arts Council following their strategic planning exercise. That status update will be provided in a separate staff report.

### **Grant Review and Approval Process**

Introduction of the new Program would require all applications to be submitted annually by a specified date. Submissions would be made to the Clerks Department as was done in the past. All applications would be reviewed by an interdepartmental Staff Review Team and a staff report, including formal recommendations for each application submitted to General Committee for their review and recommendation to Council. Council's decision is final. Grants may be awarded with certain terms and conditions. Proposed Approval process:

- Applications are received by Clerks Department before the application deadline, dated and acknowledged;
- Applications are sorted by category and circulated to members of interdepartmental staff team for review;
- Interdepartmental staff team reviews and evaluates applications developing a list of recommended applicants based upon weighted scoring, including merit of completed application within the funding stream for which the application was submitted;
- A staff report, including a formal recommendation and any conditions for each application is sent to General Committee and their recommendation is made to Council;
- Council approves the recommendations prior to issuance of any funds;
- Funds distributed 60 days prior to the event;
- List of awards posted on the municipal web site;
- Within 60 days of completion of their project, fund recipients submit outcome/financial report for their completed project which is reviewed by Culture and Finance staff;
- Interdepartmental staff team prepares a summary report annually with recommendations on fund allocations to the various funding streams for the next funding cycle and the outcomes of completed projects.

### **Transitioning to New Grant Program**

The transition to the revised Program will be “evolutionary” rather than “revolutionary”, as recommended by the consultant early in the Program review. The wide variety of existing and new groups and their mandates, their varying levels of organizational development and sophistication, as well the range of experience in managing projects and financial reporting will likely pose some challenges in the beginning. There will also be an adjustment period for staff to transition to a new corporate process for review and management of the applications. Given the proposed timeframe and the philosophy of “evolutionary versus revolutionary” the following timelines are being proposed to ensure a smooth transition and allow time for both applicants and staff to adjust to the revised process, including providing support for applicants.

The new Program would run from April 1 to March 31 rather than by the calendar year. This is to accommodate events that take place early in the calendar year. In the transition period, following launch of the revised Program, there will be two application intakes, the first to capture the events delivered/taking place in the first three months of the year (January – March) and the second to capture applications for events delivered from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, after which there will be one intake for funding cycle running April 1 to March 31 annually.

<b>PROPOSED FUNDING CYCLE &amp; APPLICATION PROCESS</b>	
<b><i>Timing</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>
<b>First Application Intake (Funding 2016-2017)</b>	
Following Council Approval	Anticipated Council Approval of Staff Report on revised Celebrate Markham Program
October 26, 2015	<b><u>Applications Open for Events to be executed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter (January, February, March) of 2016.</u></b> – New Celebrate Markham Application Form and Guidelines available on website/from Clerks Department (applications accepted for <b>4 week period</b> to accommodate transition to new Program)
November 20, 2015	<b><u>Applications Closed for Events to be executed in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016</u></b>
November 23-27, 2015	Interdepartmental staff team evaluates applications and a recommendation report is prepared for projects proposed to be delivered in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016
December 7, 2015	Report to General Committee and Council recommending applications for projects to be delivered in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016
January 2, 2016	Begin issuing funding cheques to applicants for projects to be delivered in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter of 2016 (January, February, March)
<b>Second Application Intake (Funding 2016-2017)</b>	
October 26, 2015	<b><u>Applications Open for Events to be executed from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017</u></b> – New Celebrate Markham Application Form and Guidelines available on website/from Clerks Department (applications accepted for <b>8 week period</b> to accommodate transition to new Program)
January 2, 2016	<b><u>Applications Closed for Events to be executed between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017</u></b>
January 2016	Interdepartmental staff team evaluates applications to be delivered April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017 and a recommendation report is prepared
March 2016	Report to General Committee and Council recommending applications for projects delivered from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017
April 2016	Begin issuing funding cheques to applicants for Projects to be delivered April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017
<b>New Application Process (Funding 2017-2018)</b>	
September 17, 2016	<b><u>Applications Open for Celebrate Markham Events to be delivered April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018</u></b> (applications accepted for 8 week period)
November 17, 2016	<b><u>Applications closed for Celebrate Markham all Events to be delivered April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018</u></b>
January 2017	Interdepartmental staff team meets to review 2017-2018 applications
February 2017	Report to General Committee and Council recommending applications March 2017 – March 2018
March 2017	Begin issuing funding cheques to applicants for Projects to be delivered April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018

Opportunities for improvements/refinements to the Program after the first year can be reported to Council by Staff as part of the Celebrate Markham annual status report.

### **Next Steps**

This Corporate project is an interdepartmental initiative led by the Culture Department. Staff representatives including Legal, Corporate & Community Engagement, Clerks, Recreation and Finance staff will be engaged to work together to finalize application/guidelines, process and evaluation criteria. Application review is guided by Council's vision for the Program and the City strategies and objectives.

It is proposed that various departments will have roles and responsibilities in delivery of the Program as follows:

- i. Culture Department to lead and administer the overall Celebrate Markham Program;
- ii. Corporate and Community Engagement Department staff to develop a website, communication plan and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the new Celebrate Markham Grant Program publicizing program information and project awards for the public's information;
- iii. Clerks Department staff to continue to be responsible for application intake and acknowledgement;
- iv. Finance Department staff to assist with development of the budget form for the new Celebrate Markham application form, as well as development/review of the financial reports from fund recipients;
- v. Recreation staff to support the evaluation of Senior and Sport funding applications.

### **CONCLUSIONS:**

Based upon the outcome of the two community consultation meetings, there is community support for a revised Celebrate Markham Grant Program that is more transparent, sustainable and reflects Council's vision for Markham as a City that enhances art & culture, active living, community engagement and social cohesion through the support of events and program that bring the community together and increase tourism.

The changes to the proposed Celebrate Markham Grant Program will ensure a more consistent and comprehensive review of applications and alignment with the City's goals and objectives and will fulfill the outcomes identified at the outset of the program review.

Some transitional issues can be expected as the new Program is implemented and it is anticipated that adjustments will have to be made during the course of the first year of implementation and improvements introduced going forward. These matters can be addressed and resolved over time and through experience gained working with the community and applicants.

Overall, it is anticipated that the revised Program will be beneficial to the City, its residents and the organizations being funded by helping the City achieve its corporate goals; by increasing transparency, financial sustainability; and by increasing community accessibility to Celebrate Markham grants.

Based upon feedback from Council and the Community the recommendations in this report have been revised from the original Council resolution of June 15.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

Recommend 2016 Celebrate Markham Grant funding envelope in the amount of \$370,000, using a funding formula of \$1 per capita once Markham's population reaches 370,000 according to Region of York. The budget will be adjusted every 2 years as per population statistics provided by the Region of York population statistics.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable.

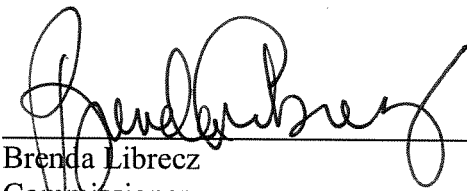
**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

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.

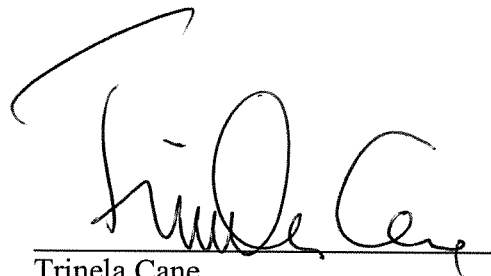
**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Corporate Communication and Community Engagement, Recreation and Finance Departments, Legal Departments and Clerks Department.

**RECOMMENDED BY:**



Brenda Librecz  
Commissioner,  
Community & Fire Services



Trinela Cane  
Commissioner,  
Corporate Services



Moe Hosseini-Ara  
Director,  
Culture

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Attachment 1 - | General Criteria (Part A)  |
| Attachment 2 - | Detailed Criteria (Part B)   |
| Attachment 3 - | June 15, 2015 Staff Report and Resolution – “Celebrate Markham Grant Program Review” |
| Attachment 4 - | Facilitation Questions from Stakeholder meetings                                     |
| Attachment 5 - | Feedback to online Questionnaire   |