



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: October 31, 2011

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**SUBJECT:** Celebrate Markham Grant Program Revision  
**PREPARED BY:** Colin Service, Manager, Planning & Standards  
Fred Rich, Senior Risk and Business Analyst

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) THAT the report “Celebrate Markham Grant Program Revision” be received;
- 2) AND THAT the Celebrate Markham Grant Program be revised to Option 3 - an annual application and review process whereby recipients can only receive a maximum of 80% of funding received from the previous year to be implemented for the 2013 annual budget;
- 3) AND THAT the funding in the amount of \$97,500 earmarked for Town run events be continued but moved to a Corporate Events account within the annual operating budget;
- 4) AND THAT the funding in the amount of \$48,500 earmarked for Seniors Grants, Markham Arts Council and Tourism Markham be continued but moved to the Recreation and Culture annual operating budgets;
- 5) AND THAT the application process be administered by the Community & Fire Services Commission with a cross departmental team with representatives from Finance, Culture, and Corporate Communications & Community Relations be formed to review applications and make recommendations for grant awards to the Budget Subcommittee effective for the 2013 annual operating budget;
- 6) AND THAT this newly formed Cross Departmental Staff Team examine additional grant programs offered within the Town (ie. Council Promotion Grants administered by Clerks Department) and determine how these grant programs can be streamlined and administered through the same staff team involved in the Celebrate Markham process;

And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to make recommendations for change to the current process for distribution of funds through the Celebrate Markham Grant Program. Changes in process will ensure total transparency and fairness for all community stakeholders.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Town of Markham recognizes the contribution of community groups and organizations in their efforts to enhance and promote the community through distribution of grants – this grant distribution program is called Celebrate Markham. A total of \$250,000 is distributed annually.

In June, 2005 Council approved the current Grants and Sponsorship Guidelines. In April, 2010 a revised application form was developed and implemented. These guidelines and application process include the following: the organization receiving the grant must be running an event or program that contributes to or enhances the community, must have a clearly defined set of goals and objectives, must explore other sources of funding, must acknowledge the Town's support and funding, make available all financial statements and must fully complete the application form. (Please see appendix A for the current application).

Completed applications are currently reviewed by the Budget Subcommittee. Historically, the funding has been distributed to previous recipients. (Please see appendix B for the 2011 Grant Recipients).

Currently, the majority of Celebrate Markham funding is allocated to Town run events or organizations strongly affiliated with the Town, as outlined in the table below:

<b>2011 Celebrate Markham Budget</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b><i>Town Events</i></b>	
Canada Day Celebration	50,000
Tony Roman Hockey Tournament	6,000
Doors Open Markham	9,500
Markham Santa Clause Parade	16,500
Milliken Mills Children's Festival	13,500
Senior's Hall of Fame	2,000
<b>Total Grants for Town Event</b>	<b>97,500</b>
<b><i>Other Grants</i></b>	
Markham Arts Council	19,000
Seniors Clubs	25,000
Tourism Markham	5,000
<b>Total Grants for Other Events</b>	<b>49,000</b>
<b><i>Grants Available for Non-Town Events</i></b>	<b>103,500</b>
<b>2011 Budget</b>	<b>250,000</b>

**Celebrate Markham Vision Statement:**

The Council of the Town of Markham recognizes the contribution of community groups and organizations in their attempt to enhance and promote the Town, and is committed to building the community by celebrating the artistic and cultural uniqueness of Markham.

**Celebrate Markham Guiding Principles:**

1. Celebrate Markham provides funding support for not-for-profit festivals and events that promote and recognize Markham as a great place to work, live and play.
2. The Town of Markham is proud to support sustainable festivals, events and programs. Celebrate Markham Grants will assist festivals, events and programs in operating to a point where they can become self sustainable.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

Concerns have been raised that the existing Celebrate Markham program does not afford opportunity for new or emerging events to receive funding. As such a variety of options have been considered for revamping the program. These options are outlined below:

***Option 1 - Status Quo:***

Current year grants are based on the prior year recipients (organizations, festivals, events, programs). Because the majority, if not all funding is allocated, there is little opportunity for new recipients to be considered.

Pros:

- Easy to administer and a known process

Cons:

- Funds are allocated to existing organizations with little opportunity to consider new recipients

***Option 2 - Annual Application: (Prior year awards have no bearing on current year awards)***

Each year organizations, festivals, events, programs will have opportunity to apply for a grant. Applications are reviewed against criteria set forth. Applications that meet the criteria and best represent the vision and guiding principles of Celebrate Markham may be awarded funds. Applications are measured against one another and are completely independent of previous year awards. As such, no organization, festival, event or program is guaranteed funding in any year.

Pros:

- Enables new organizations to receive funding – eliminates perception that the same organizations always receive funding
- Ensures that grants are awarded to organizations that will most benefit the community
- Allows flexibility of funding to be steered towards organizations that are more holistically supporting the strategic priorities of Council

Cons:

- Some organizations, festivals, events, and programs need commitment beyond one year from the Grant Program to ensure they can grow/sustain their event sufficiently

***Option 3 - Annual Application or Review With Declining Funding: (Prior year recipients can only receive a maximum of 80% in subsequent year)***

Each year organizations, festivals, events, programs will have opportunity to apply for a grant. Applications are reviewed against criteria set forth. Applications that meet the criteria and best represent the vision and guiding principles of Celebrate Markham may be awarded funds. Organizations, festivals, events and programs that were awarded funds in the previous year can only receive a maximum of 80% of funding received in previous year.

Pros:

- Enables new organizations to receive funding – eliminates perception that the same organizations always receive funding
- Ensures that grants are awarded to organizations that will most benefit the community
- Allows flexibility of funding to be steered towards organizations that are more holistically supporting the strategic priorities of Council
- Encourages organizations, festivals, events and programs to work towards financial self sufficiency

Cons:

- Some organizations, festivals, events, and programs may have difficulty continuing with declining funding

Example:

If an event applies for and receives a \$10,000 grant in the year 2010, the maximum the event can receive in the following years is:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Maximum Grant (80% of previous year)</b>
2010	10,000
2011	8,000
2012	6,400
2013	5,100
2014	4,100
2015	3,300
2016	2,600
2017	2,100

To create and foster an environment that welcomes new community based events, Option # 3 is able to accomplish this best. As such, staff recommend moving forward with Option # 3 effective 2013.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE: (external link)**

Currently \$250,000 is allocated annually to the Celebrate Markham Grant Program. However, \$97,500 of that is earmarked specifically for Town run events. As such, it is recommended that this funding be moved into the annual operating budget under a Corporate Events account. This will ensure that community groups understand this particularly funding is not accessible through the program.

As well, an additional \$49,000 of the \$250,000 is earmarked for non event related grants - \$25,000 for seniors, \$19,000 for the Markham Arts Council, and \$5,000 for Tourism Markham. It is recommended that the funding for these particular programs continue but be moved into the Recreation and Culture annual operating budgets. Similarly, this will ensure that community groups understand this particular funding is not accessible through the program.

This would leave a total of \$103,500 available for community based groups to apply to the Celebrate Markham program.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

Currently, the application process is managed by the Finance Department with grants submitted to the Budget Subcommittee for review and approval.

In many Municipalities, a cross departmental staff team is formed to review applications and make recommendations to a Committee of Council. It is recommended that the application process be administered by the Community & Fire Services Commission with a cross departmental staff team represented by Culture, Finance and Corporate Communications and Community Relations be formed to review applications and make recommendations for awards to the Budget Subcommittee.

Additionally there are other grant programs within the Town (ie. The Council Promotion Grants administered by Clerks Department). Staff recommend that this newly formed Cross Departmental Staff Team examine these additional grant programs offered within the Town and determine how these grant programs can be streamlined and administered through the same staff team involved in the Celebrate Markham process;

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Finance, Recreation, Culture, Corporate Communications & Community Relations

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

16/11/2011

X 

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Joel Lustig  
Treasuer

11/16/2011

X 

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Brenda Librecz  
Commissioner of Community & Fire Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Appendix A – Current Application](#)

[Appendix B – 2011 Grant Recipients List](#)