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Town of Aurora
Committee of the Whole Report
No. CMS25-003

Subject: Community Partnership Grant – 2024 Year in Review

Prepared by: Lisa Warth, Manager, Recreation

Department: Community Services

Date: February 11, 2025

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS25-003 be received for information.

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the allocation of Community Partnership Grant funding for 2024.

- 41 applications were received from 37 different organizations and individuals for a total of \$228,616.00 in requests.
- A total of \$86,100 in funding was allocated to various projects.

Background

On April 25, 2023, Council approved the creation of a new grant program to support Recreation and Culture organizations and individuals that serve the Town of Aurora. This grant program is a merger of the former Recreation and Culture Grant and the Sponsorship of Community Events program. The total annual budget for this new program is \$89,600, funded through the annual operating budget. Of the \$89,600, \$13,000 is allocated to the Chamber of Commerce and \$2,000 is committed to the John West memorial scholarship, leaving \$74,600 to allocate to applications through the Community Partnership Grant.

Analysis

41 applications were received from 37 different organizations and individuals for a total of \$228,616.00 in requests.

Eligible organizations and individuals are permitted to apply to the program more than once per year and can receive up to a maximum of \$10,000 between all requests, annually (with the exception of the Chamber of Commerce who are pre-authorized under a previous agreement).

Of the 41 applications, 25 were funded or partially funded through the Community Partnership Grant program. One organization returned their funds as they were unable to execute the project.

Sixteen applications were not funded as they did not meet the eligibility criteria, either by the nature of the organization, the nature of the project, missing deadlines or information. The total amount of funding requested by these 16 applications was \$82,912. Several of these applications were from organizations that support the community in various ways such as services for persons with disabilities or services for those experiencing food insecurity, as examples. However, the fund currently only supports organizations in the realm of recreation and culture activities in the community. For future consideration, Mayor and Council may want to consider an additional funding opportunity for organizations that better the community but are outside of the genre of recreation and culture.

A total of \$86,100 in funding was allocated to various projects.

This table outlines the approved applications for 2024:

Applicant	Amount Requested	Amount Granted	Description of Project
Aurora Chamber of Commerce	\$13,000	\$13,000	Annual allocation
John West Memorial Scholarship	\$2,000	\$2,000	Annual allocation
Sport Aurora	\$1,000	\$1,000	Sport Celebration and Recognition Program

Applicant	Amount Requested	Amount Granted	Description of Project
Voices of Joy	\$5,000	\$3,150	New music and promotional costs
Aurorapalooza	\$10,000	\$5,000	Public music event
Aurora Black Community	\$10,000	\$10,000	Black History Month Gala
Canadian Federation of University Women -Aurora/Newmarket	\$5,000	\$2,500	Home and Garden Tour Fundraiser
Aurora Community Band	\$10,000	\$8,000	Concert and purchase of new instruments
Aurora Sports Hall of Fame	\$3,000	\$3,000	Heros of the Hall program
Grace Garlow	\$8,100	\$1,300	Anishinaabemowi and Ecological Knowledge program
Equipe Francobotique Aurora Team	\$5,000	\$1,000	Expenses related to Lego League event
Royal Canadian Air Cadets- 140 Aurora Squadron	\$5,000	\$5,000	Annual ceremonial review and banquet
Aurora Farmers Market & Artisan Fair	\$8,000	\$4,000	Market enhancements and entertainment
Danielle Orsati	\$500	\$500	Cousins Drive Street Party
Aurora Historical Society	\$500	\$500	Afternoon Tea Event
Shadowpath Theatre	\$8,600	\$4,000	Mural Motions event

Applicant	Amount Requested	Amount Granted	Description of Project
Aurora Farmers Market and Artisan Fair	\$4,000	\$2,000	Market enhancements and entertainment
HUAYAN Multicultural Association	\$10,000	\$5,000	Programs (Tai Chi, etc.)
St. Andrews Courtyard Market	\$10,000	\$3,500	Entertainment for weekly events at St. Andrew's courtyard
Aitak Sorahitalab	\$6,000	\$4,000	Art Exhibition
Pezhvak Performing Arts Club	\$500	\$500	Iranian Storytelling Event
Patrick Servideo	\$500	\$500	Hockey Ends Hunger Event
James Brown	\$10,000	\$3,850	Aurora Jazz Series
The Aurora Heritage Authority	\$4,004	\$2,800	Veteran Street Banners
Connectize – Bringing People Together	\$6,000	\$4,000	Hindu Festival (did not run, funds returned)
Totals	\$145,704	\$90,100	
Net Total (due to \$4000 grant being returned at end of year)	\$141,704	\$86,100	due to \$4,000 being returned

Over \$55,000 in eligible requests went unfunded due to the limited amount in the Community Partnership Fund budget. These unfunded requests were unique and impactful and would have further enhanced the events and activities that various organizations had applied for, helping them to build capacity and continue to contribute to the vibrancy of the Aurora community. Another opportunity for Mayor and Council to consider in the future is to increase the community partnership grant fund so that more projects can be funded or fully funded, thus having increased impact in the community.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial Implications

A total of \$89,600 is included annually in the Town's operating budget in support of the Community Partnership Grant program. Of this amount, \$87,600 is funded from the tax levy with the remainder coming through a \$2,000 contribution from the John West memorial scholarship award reserve.

Communications Considerations

Communications assists in promoting the Community Partnership Grant program to Town of Aurora eligible organizations. Notice is provided with our enewsletter, social media, advertisements and website.

Climate Change Considerations

The actions from this report do not impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation.

Link to Strategic Plan

The Community Partnership Grant supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives:

Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objective within these goal statements:

- Invest in sustainable infrastructure
- Celebrating and promoting our culture
- Encouraging an active and healthy lifestyle
- Strengthening the fabric of our community

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

Not applicable

Conclusions

The Community Partnership grant continues to pick up momentum as numerous applications and inquiries are received. Staff are committed to ensuring the funds in this grant are distributed in a way that continues to build capacity and enhance the Aurora community.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

CMS23-001 – Recreation and Culture Grant and Sponsorship of Community Events and Programs Policy Refresh, January 17, 2023

CMS23-013 – Community Partnership Grant – Policy Approval, April 18, 2023

CMS23-057 – Community Partnership Grant Update and Proposed Policy revision, December 5, 2023

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on January 23, 2025

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer