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Town of Aurora
Committee of the Whole Report
No. CMS25-008

Subject: War Memorial 100th Anniversary – Budget and Work Plan

Prepared by: Michelle Johnson, Collections and Exhibitions Coordinator

Department: Community Services

Date: April 8, 2025

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS25-008 be received; and
2. That Council approve the updated project scope and budget for the Aurora War Memorial 100th Anniversary; and
3. That a new capital project with budget authority of \$214,400 be approved.

Executive Summary

In October 2025, the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial will take place. To mark this important occasion, staff are implementing a collaborative plan of action with multiple project partners. Through this report, staff are seeking Council's approval of the revised project scope and the creation of a new capital project with \$214,400 in budget authority.

- Implementation of the collaborative plan of action to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial has commenced.
- Site work and enhancements to Aurora War Memorial Peace Park are scheduled to be completed ahead of the 100th anniversary celebrations.
- Programming to mark the 100th anniversary is in development and includes a series of exhibitions, a street banner campaign, and a commemorative ceremony.

- A permanent memorial dedicated to Indigenous Soldiers will be added to Aurora War Memorial Peace Park.
- The budget presented in May 2024 has been updated from \$144,000 to \$214,400 to reflect the revised costs.

Background

Implementation of the collaborative plan of action to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial has commenced.

In May 2024, Council approved the proposed collaborative plan of action to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial. At that time, staff committed to reporting back with a project update and revised budget considerations.

Following Council approval, staff have continued to meet regularly with the Aurora Legion, King Township, and the Town of Stouffville to further develop and advance the project. All partners, including the Aurora Legion, support the recommendations made by staff in this report.

Analysis

Site work and enhancements to Aurora War Memorial Peace Park are scheduled to be completed ahead of the 100th anniversary celebrations.

In collaboration with the Parks Division, site work and enhancements will be completed at Aurora War Memorial Peace Park. These include hardscaping, addition of permanent seating, Memorial restoration, electrical upgrades, additional lighting, and replacement of wreath standards.

This work is being completed under Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02, which was supported by the Heritage Advisory Committee and approved by Council. A funding request in the amount of \$23,650 has been submitted to Veteran Affairs Canada to assist with the restoration and enhancements.

Programming to mark the 100th anniversary is in development and includes a series of exhibitions, a street banner campaign, and a commemorative ceremony.

Staff are meeting regularly with project partners from the Town of Stouffville, King Township, and the Aurora Legion to develop programming to mark the 100th

anniversary. Costs for the exhibitions, commemorative ceremony and street banners total \$53,500 and are being shared equally between Aurora, King, and Stouffville.

A series of outdoor, virtual, and travelling exhibitions will explore how the three municipalities came together to memorialize those who made the ultimate sacrifice during the First World War. Enhancements for the travelling and virtual exhibition have been identified and a funding request totaling \$57,400 has been submitted to Canada Heritage and Digital Museums Canada. This amount covers all the enhancements, as well as some components of the base exhibition scope. Enhancements include, but are not limited to, translation, editing, exhibition infrastructure (banners, display cases, interactives), and promotional materials. If grant funding is not secured, the exhibitions will move forward as originally envisioned and the project approved budget will be reduced accordingly.

In September and October 2025, the streets of Aurora, King and Stouffville will be adorned with street banners that feature individual soldiers whose names are included on the Memorial. The banners will also include images of the Aurora War Memorial throughout the past century. After the project, the soldier banners connected to Aurora will be given to the Aurora Legion for their use.

A special ceremony will take place to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial on Friday, October 3. The Aurora Legion will lead this ceremony, and it will include a re-dedication of the restored monument, speakers, and a selection of traditional music and readings.

A permanent memorial dedicated to Indigenous Soldiers will be added to Aurora War Memorial Peace Park.

Missing from Aurora War Memorial Peace Park is a memorial dedicated to Indigenous community members who served and sacrificed. The creation of this memorial was previously approved within this project scope.

A call out for Indigenous Artists to design the Memorial will be issued during the summer of 2025, the successful artist will be announced in the fall, and the Memorial will be completed in 2026. The estimated cost for this component has increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000 to ensure sufficient budget for materials, production, and associated design and artist fees. A funding request of \$25,000 will be submitted to Veteran Affairs Canada during the next intake to potentially cover 50 per cent of the cost.

The budget presented in May 2024 has been updated from \$144,000 to \$214,400 to reflect the revised costs.

The project budget presented in the original report has been verified and adjusted to reflect updated costs and project scope. A summary of this project's current proposed budget and its funding sources can be found under Table 1.

Table 2 below summarizes the scope of the project if we are able to secure grant funding and expand the scope.

Some key drivers of the budget increase from \$144,000 to \$169,000 include the cost increase for the Indigenous Soldiers Memorial.

Table 1: Aurora War Memorial 100th Anniversary Budget without Grant Funding

Project	Cost	Funding Sources		
		Aurora	King	Stouffville
Site Work and Enhancements	\$53,500	\$53,500		
Exhibitions (original scope)	\$38,000	\$12,667	\$12,667	\$12,666
Commemorative Ceremony	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Street Banners	\$12,500	\$4,167	\$4,166	\$4,167
Contract Staff	\$12,000	\$12,000		
New Indigenous Soldiers Memorial	\$50,000	\$50,000		
Total	\$169,000	\$133,334	\$17,833	\$17,833

In an effort to reduce the cost pressures of this event to the Town, and enhance some project components, staff have submitted multiple grant requests. A summary of the impact of grant requests to the budget can be found under Table 2. In the scenario that all grant applications are successful, the total project budget would increase from \$169,000 to \$214,400, to allow for grant funded exhibition enhancements.

Table 2 Aurora War Memorial 100th Anniversary Budget with Grant Funding

Project	Cost	Funding Sources			
		Aurora	King	Stouffville	Grants
Site Work and Enhancements	\$53,500	\$29,850			\$23,650
Exhibitions (original scope)	\$38,000	\$8,666	\$8,667	\$8,667	\$12,000
Exhibitions (enhancements funded by Grants)	\$45,400				\$45,400
Commemorative Ceremony	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1000	\$1000	
Street Banners	\$12,500	\$4,166	\$4,167	\$4,167	
Contract Staff	\$12,000	\$12,000			
New Indigenous Soldiers Memorial	\$50,000	\$25,000			\$25,000
Total	\$214,400	\$80,682	\$13,834	\$13,834	\$106,050

Advisory Committee Review

The alterations and restoration work required for the Aurora War Memorial have been detailed in a Heritage Permit Application HPA-2025-02. The Heritage Advisory Committee commented in support of the application at the February 3, 2025, meeting. The application was approved by Council on March 25, 2025.

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial Implications

It is recommended that Council approve the creation of a new capital project with \$214,400 in budget authority. The project will be funded from the remaining balance of the War Memorial reserve of \$4,300, a Growth & New reserve contribution of \$129,100, confirmed municipal partner contributions of \$35,600, and grant funding of \$45,400.

A portion of the project, related to exhibitions, will only proceed if the grant is successful. The Town is also perusing additional grants in support of this project. If those grants are also successful, the funding of the project will be updated to replace funding from the growth and new reserve with the grant funds.

Communications Considerations

Corporate Communications, in collaboration with Cultural Services staff, will develop and implement a communications plan to inform the community about the action plan items, leading up to the 100th anniversary of the Aurora War Memorial.

Climate Change Considerations

The recommendations in this report do not impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation.

Link to Strategic Plan

The Aurora War Memorial 100th Anniversary 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 objectives within these goal statements:

- Invest in sustainable infrastructure
- Celebrating and promoting our culture
- Strengthening the fabric of our community

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council may provide further direction.

Conclusions

This report provides an update on the implementation of the collaborative plan of action and project scope. It also details revised budget considerations as well as confirmed and potential funding sources. Staff are seeking Council's approval of the revised project scope and the creation of a new capital project with \$314,400 in budget authority.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

CMS24-015, Aurora War Memorial 100th Anniversary, May 7, 2024

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on March 20, 2025

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer