

Corporate Report

REPORT NUMBER 357-2023-Community Services-Recreation & Culture	
DATE PREPARED	November 17, 2023
	FILE
MEETING DATE	December 11, 2023
SUBJECT	2024 Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program

RECOMMENDATION

WITH RESPECT to Report 357-2023-Community Services-Recreation & Culture, we recommend that the 2024 Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program recommendations be included in the 2024 operating budget for consideration;

AND THAT the cap for Operating Grant category recommendations continue to be \$220,000 for 2025;

AND THAT Roots Community Food Centre be moved to the Sustaining Grant category beginning in 2024;

AND THAT any necessary by-laws be presented to City Council for ratification.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program (CYCFP) meets the following goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan:

Maamawe – All together:

- Project grant stream of Anti-Racism, Truth & Reconciliation provides funding for projects that help advance these priorities.

Safety and well-being:

- The Community stream of the Program draws its criteria from the Community Safety and Well-being Plan.
- The program provides funding for organizations and projects that:
 - Improve access to supports for priority populations to narrow gaps in equity
 - Connect neighbourhoods and create Indigenized spaces

- Create opportunities for equitable access to affordable recreation and cultural activities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on the recommended Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program allocations for the 2024 fiscal year.

The Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program is the Council-approved mechanism by which the City of Thunder Bay invests in and supports the operation and sustainability of non-profit community, youth and cultural organizations that:

- have a community, youth, or culture-sector focus/mandate.
- are incorporated non-profit or charitable organizations or, for project grants only, individual artists or non-incorporated collectives which operate on a non-profit basis.
- have a clearly stated purpose and function and be fully responsible for the planning and provision of its services.
- are operating from a location in the City of Thunder Bay and carry out programs in this community for the benefit of its people.
- extend services to the general public in Thunder Bay, and accommodate for needs related to race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status and disability, unless to do so would cause undue hardship.
- have an independent, active governing board composed of volunteers and a considerable volunteer component.
- demonstrate need for the requested funding and provide evidence that funds are confirmed/projected from a variety of other sources (i.e. donations/sponsorships, user fees, other government sources).

There are three types of funding available through this program:

1. Sustaining Grants
2. Operating Grants
3. Project Grants.

This report speaks to recommended funding allocations for 2024 as per Council's approved Funding Model, which details eligibility criteria, review and appeal processes.

DISCUSSION

2024 Requests and Recommendations

The total 2024 CYCFP recommended funding amount is \$3,128,400 after completion of the review and appeal process. Eighteen (18) applications are recommended for Sustaining and Operating funding in 2024 for a total of \$3,080,800. An additional \$47,600 is included in the 2024 budget for project grants that are allocated in-year. See Attachment A for a full list of requests and recommendations.

Funding is recommended in three (3) categories: Sustaining, Operating and Projects.

Sustaining Grants

Sustaining Grant recipient organizations are an integral part of the City of Thunder Bay's identity, fill a service void, positively affect quality of life, and generate an economic benefit.

The Administrative Review Team's Sustaining Grant recommendations are required to fall within the annual City budget directive amount, except where an existing Service Agreement provides for a higher increase. Increases above the budget directive are to be noted as expansions.

For Sustaining Grants, the Review Team followed the 2024 budget directive of a 0% increase with applicable exceptions for wages & benefits. In cases where increases beyond 0% were requested and justified, the Review Team applied a recommended increase to account for budget directive exceptions of existing salaries and benefits. The amount of increase recommended for these items was considered relative to the percentage of the organization's budget that the City funds. These are shown as inflationary increases in the budget submission.

In two other cases, there are recommended increases that are shown as expansions in the budget:

- RFDA – one-time expansion/emergency funding request related to increased demand, increased food costs, decreased donations and subsequent shift in food purchasing operations
- Thunder Bay Art Gallery – expansion related to facility replacement/expansion as anticipated in business plan.

A total of \$2,908,600 is recommended for the following Sustaining Grant applicants, including expansions:

Community Funding

1.	Regional Food Distribution Association	\$200,000*
2.	Thunder Bay Emergency Shelter (Shelter House)	\$330,800

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Youth Funding

3.	Boys & Girls Clubs of Thunder Bay	\$123,400
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Cultural Funding

4.	Definitely Superior Art Gallery	\$70,500
5.	Magnus Theatre Company Northwest	\$144,400
6.	Northwestern Ontario Sports Hall of Fame and Museum	\$70,500
7.	Thunder Bay Art Gallery	\$405,300*
8.	Thunder Bay Community Auditorium	\$836,900
9.	Thunder Bay Historical Museum	\$482,100
10.	Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra (TBSO)	\$244,700
Total Sustaining Grants		<u>\$2,908,600</u>

* recommendations include expansions in total – refer to Attachment A for a breakdown of base amounts and expansions.

Operating Grants

Operating Grant recipient organizations are considered by Council to have an ongoing presence in Thunder Bay and a track record of providing quality programming or services. This grant is designed to support a range of community, youth, and cultural organizations.

The Grant Review Team's Operating Grant recommendations for 2024 were not to exceed \$220,000 per the Council-approved recommendation cap for this category.

A total amount of \$172,200 in operating funding is recommended for the following eight (8) organizations:

Community Funding

1.	Community Clothing Assistance	\$25,000
2.	Lakehead Social Planning Council	\$32,600
3.	Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre (Good Food Box)	\$12,000
4.	Our Kids Count	\$16,300

Youth Funding

5.	Evergreen a United Neighbourhood	\$20,000
6.	Roots Community Food Centre*	\$37,800
7.	Female Boarder Collective	\$10,000

Cultural Funding

8.	Community Arts and Heritage Education Project	\$18,500
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Total Operating Grants **\$172,200**

*Roots Community Food Centre requested consideration for moving from the Operating to Sustaining category. The Review Team recommends this request be approved, as the organization meets the Sustaining grant criteria of length of funding, being integral to the community's food security efforts, sound financial practices and organizational capacity.

Project Grants

\$47,600 is included in the proposed 2024 budget for Project Grants to be allocated within the 2024 fiscal year.

In 2023, the Project Grant category saw an increase in applications following enhanced communications and an information session coordinated with other municipal funding opportunities. A list of approved applicants for 2023 is included in Attachment B.

The first 2024 Project Intake will be in March 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION

The total recommended amount of funding for all three categories of the Community, Youth and Cultural Funding Program for 2024 is \$3,128,400. The Funding Program budget is included in the 2024 budget submission for Council's consideration.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the Community, Youth and Cultural Funding Program review process, as approved by Council, has been followed in the making of recommendations and that the recommended financial allocations should be considered and approved within the 2024 Budget process.

It is further concluded that Roots Community Food Centre should be moved to the Sustaining Grant category beginning in 2024.

It is further concluded that the Operating Grant recommendation cap for 2025 should remain at \$220,000.

BACKGROUND

Funding Program

The Funding Model for the City of Thunder Bay's support of Community, Youth & Cultural service organizations and projects has been adopted by City Council (Report No. 2007.195 (Office of the City Clerk) – F.A.R.G. and Cultural Funding Program Review – Ad Hoc Committee No. 2). It establishes three funding categories, Sustaining,

Operating and Project Grants, and allows for multi-year funding terms for Sustaining and Operating Grants.

The program has been expanded and clarified over time, including the addition of the Youth Stream to the former Community & Cultural Streams (Report No. 2009.178 (Recreation & Culture); (Report No. 2013.175 Youth Services Plan – Youth Services Advisory Committee Recommendations, Recreation & Culture and Municipal Child Care).

On January 16, 2017, Council approved changes to the Project Grant application process and budget, implementation of a recommendation cap on Operating Grants, adoption of budget directives for Sustaining Grants, and creation of a centralized Grant Review Team for all three streams of the Program (R11/2017 – 2017 Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program and Proposed 2018 Program Changes (Recreation & Culture)).

On January 14, 2019, Council approved a pilot expansion of eligibility of the Project Grant Category in 2019-2020 to include community non-profit sport (R1/2019 – 2019 Community Youth & Cultural Funding Program. Community Services - Recreation & Culture). On March 3, 2020 Council also approved another pilot expansion of the same category to include Anti-Racism & Reconciliation projects with the first intake being October 2020.

In an effort to broaden eligibility for applicants in 2020, the program guidelines were also revised with the option for the Review Team to waive criteria stating that organizations receiving more than 80% funding from other levels of government would be ineligible for funding. This allows more opportunity for Indigenous organizations in particular to access funds for projects that may not be funded through their core funding but still considered of value/need for the community.

On April 27, 2020 City Council approved a \$235,000 COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Sustaining and Operating Grant recipients in the Community, Youth & Cultural Funding Program. COVID-19 Emergency funds were also included in the 2021 and 2022 program budget.

A three-year funding history of applicant organizations is provided in Attachment A.

Funding Model

Eligibility

All applicants are required to demonstrate and are evaluated on: financial need, governance, benefit to the community, evidence of funding from other sources and community support, in addition to other program-specific criteria.

Sustaining Grant organizations are required to have:

1. many years of demonstrated administrative competence,
2. budget practices and financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles,
3. a track record of providing quality programming and/or services,
4. attendance/participation/demographic records that support their program and/or service,
5. employment practices that comply with applicable legislative requirements, as the case may be, such as the Employment Standards Act of Ontario, the Pay Equity Act of Ontario, and the Ontario Human Rights Code,
6. a Board of Directors which will assume full responsibility for the administration of the funds or an agent acceptable to City Council,
7. at least 5 years of successfully completed operating funding from the City.

The program does not provide funding for capital purposes and the program guidelines indicate that the funding is not to be used to cover deficits. When applied, this also encompasses payments related to previous deficits, and therefore the Committee reviews the debt level and debt service costs of applicants.

Review & Recommendation Process

As outlined in the Funding Model, applications are reviewed by Grant Review Teams. The Grant Review Teams meet to determine the applicants' funding eligibility, review the applications in detail, and evaluate the applications based on the established, Council-approved criteria.

This process allows the Grant Review Teams to make informed recommendations for financial allocations that meet the requirements of the approved funding model.

The review process is also guided by the budget directions that Council has adopted for this Program, including application of the corporation's annual budget directive to Sustaining Grants, an overall recommendation cap for Operating Grants, and a pre-approved total Project Grant budget to be allocated through application intakes within the fiscal year.

Appeal Process

Applicants are notified of their recommended funding allocation, term and rationale for recommendation. Sustaining and Operating Grant applicants are given the opportunity to appeal the recommendation and provide new information that they believe might change the substance of, strengthen, or clarify the information upon which the review team's recommendation was made.

Appeals are reviewed by the Appeal Committee in accordance with the process outlined in Report No. 2010.121 Community & Cultural Funding Program Appeal Committee (Recreation & Culture).

Upon reviewing the appeals, and where the Appeal Committee feels it is justified, funding recommendations are adjusted.

REFERENCE MATERIAL ATTACHED

ATTACHMENT A – REQUEST, RECOMMENDATION & ALLOCATION SUMMARY
ATTACHMENT B – APPLICANT SUMMARY
ATTACHMENT C – PROGRAM IMPACT INFOGRAPHIC

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REPORT SIGNED AND VERIFIED BY

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Date (12/01/2023)