



Staff Report for Committee of the Whole Meeting

Date of Meeting: June 12, 2024

Report Number: SRCS.24.11

Department: Community Services
Division: Recreation and Culture Services

Subject: SRCS.24.11 – 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program

Purpose:

This report is to present the 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program applications, and obtain approval to reward funds to successful applicants.

Recommendations:

- a) That the Community and Cultural Grant applications listed in Appendix "A" be received; and
- b) That Community and Cultural Grants totaling \$64,564 be provided to the following community and cultural organizations, and individual artists:
 - Artists Co-Op Richmond Hill \$1,500
 - Canadian Asian Heritage Association \$3,750
 - Canadian Senior Cooperation Association \$2,000
 - Christos Damianos \$1,478
 - Dance Together \$3,750
 - Federation of Chinese Canadians in York Region \$2,500
 - Greg Chiykowski \$996
 - High Notes Avante Productions Inc. \$3,750
 - ICTC Youth Foundation \$5,000
 - Luminis Choir \$5,000
 - Markham Arts Council \$5,000
 - Oak Ridges Lions Club \$2,500
 - Odeiwin Foundation \$3,750
 - Origami Canada \$675
 - Richmond Hill Concert Band \$1,415
 - Richmond Hill Philharmonic Orchestra \$2,500
 - Rise Above GTA, \$3,750
 - Robin Hesse \$4,500
 - Salvation Army \$750
 - Sean Cisterna \$5,000
 - Shadowpath Theatre \$5,000

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Contact Person:

Donald Hearn, Director Recreation and Culture, 905-771-2503

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Tracey Steele, Commissioner of Community Services

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Background:

In February 2015, Council approved a new Community and Cultural Grant Program (the “Program”) with an annual funding allocation of \$65,000. The purpose of the Program is to provide project funding to community and cultural organizations and individual artists whose projects support a more vibrant Richmond Hill through the delivery of programs, services, or activities.

The Program has two distinct project funding streams, one for the community organizations sector and one for the cultural sector. It is designed to support incorporated not-for-profit organizations and non-incorporated collectives that operate on a not-for-profit basis as well as individual artists. The maximum grant per project is 50% of the project budget up to a maximum of \$5,000. The Project Funding Criteria are outlined in the Community and Cultural Grant Program Guidelines, attached as Appendix “B.”

During the active years of the program to date (2016 to 2019 and 2023), over 107 grants were administered equating to \$298,770 in local financial support for community and cultural organizations as well as individual artists. Based on a review of the final reports received to date, it is estimated that the funds leveraged 454 public engagement activities, 94,412 direct participants in funded projects, 3,240 volunteers engaged in funded projects, and 45,007 volunteer hours administered.

Council approved \$65,000 in the 2024 Operating Budget for the Community and Cultural Grant Program to fund projects taking place between June 2024 and June 2025.

2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program

The deadline to submit applications for the 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program was April 3, 2024. Applications were made available to the public on February 21, 2024, for a six and a half-week period and an Information Session was held on March 12, 2024. Community and cultural organizations as well as individual artists were notified through email, e-blasts, social media channels, including X (Twitter), Facebook, LinkedIn, LCD and LED signs at community centres, and through a Public Service Announcement. 38 applications were received with a combined request of \$151,128.68.

Following the direction provided in the approved 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan, staff have started to identify opportunities to improve and revitalize the program long term. This year, the program returned to a 12-month cycle, the Project Funding Criteria were made clearer and more directly aligned with the evaluation process, the application form was digitized creating more efficiency for the applicant as well as scoring for the review team. A benchmarking analysis of surrounding municipalities’ grant programs was conducted in Fall 2023, and a survey of previous applicants will be conducted in Summer 2024 in order to continue finding enhancements to the grant program, including but not limited to the re-evaluation of eligible expenses, and exploring alternative funding models to supports arts, cultural, and community organizations well into the future.

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Analysis and Recommendations

A committee comprised of staff and three citizen members reviewed applications submitted. The committee assessed the applications based on 1) the submission meeting all grant application Eligibility Requirements, 2) ability to meet one or more of the Project Funding Criteria, 3) the applicant's proposed budget meeting eligible expenses for funding, 4) the average weighted score from the review team, and 5) the applicant's previous funding status/demonstration of financial need.

Out of the combined total project request of \$151,128.68 from the 38 applications, it was determined that applications with a total value of \$131,054.68 were eligible for funding. \$64,564 in grant requests from 21 applicants are recommended for approval. A summary of the 2024 applications and recommendations is attached as Appendix "A".

Upon approval of this report and funding allocations, staff will follow up with applicants to inform them of the decisions related to their applications. Staff will then follow up again with the approved recipients throughout the period of their specific project and will ensure final project reports are submitted in a timely manner as per the expectations outlined in the application guidelines.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

The approved Community and Cultural Grant Program budget for 2024 is \$65,000 and the recommendation to award \$64,564 in grants is within the allotted budget.

Relationship to Strategic Plan:

The Community and Cultural Grant Program supports the Richmond Hill Strategic Plan Vision Statement: "A Vibrant and Inclusive City of Neighbours". It does so through the pillar of "Focusing on People" in supporting Richmond Hill's unique character and sense of community.

Climate Change Considerations:

Climate change considerations are not applicable to this staff report.

Conclusion:

This report recommends the approval of 21 applications for a total funding amount of \$64,563.50. The Richmond Hill Community and Cultural Grant Program demonstrates the City's commitment to provide project funding to community and cultural organizations and individual artists whose projects support a more vibrant Richmond Hill through the delivery of programs, services or activities.

Attachments:

Appendix A – 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Application Recommendations
Appendix B – 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program Guidelines

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCS.24.11 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program.docx
Attachments:	- SRCS.24.11 Appendix A 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Application Recommendations.pdf - SRCS.24.11 Appendix B 2024 Community and Cultural Grant Program Guidelines.pdf
Final Approval Date:	May 31, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tracey Steele - May 31, 2024 - 11:39 AM

Darlene Joslin - May 31, 2024 - 4:44 PM