

Deputation

Arts, Culture & Festival Groups Subcommittee

September 5, 2024






Background and objective

- ❑ The Arts, Culture & Festivals Group Subcommittee of the Council (Subcommittee) sought feedback from Festival organizers on the Festival grant process and the allocation of Mississauga Celebration Square to various ethnic festivals in Mississauga.
- ❑ This presentation is in response to the survey conducted by the Subcommittee.




Feedback on Grant application process

- ❑ The process for the Cultural Festivals and Celebration grants is overall easy to follow. The application form and the information the City requires is intuitive.
- ❑ The City staff responsible for administering the grant process are helpful.
- ❑ Areas that can be improved upon are as follows:
 - Increase the threshold for the requirement for audited financial statements
 - Review the deadline for the submission of the grant applications
 - Review financial reporting section.




Feedback on Grant application process – requirement for audited financial statements

- ❑ Current requirement is that for any grants applied for in excess of \$19,999, an audited financial statement should be submitted.
- ❑ Depending on the size of the not for profit organization, an independent audit can be upwards of \$7,000. This represents a significant expense especially should the grant applicant not be successful in obtain a grant higher than \$20,000.
- ❑ Cost to organize a Festival have also increased including the cost of using Celebration Square.
- ❑ We recommend the threshold to be increased to \$40,000 to take into account the audit fee and the increased costs in holding festivals.



Feedback on Grant application process – deadline for submission of grant applications

- ❑ Grant applications are generally due the 2nd week in October.
- ❑ Some festivals would only finish in September.
- ❑ For some organizations, their fiscal year-end is September 30. An audit of financial statements takes on average, one month to complete.
- ❑ Our recommendation is to review the potential to submit the application in 2 stages:
 - ❑ Stage 1 – initial application for the City to assess eligibility
 - ❑ Stage 2 – submission of additional requirements depending on assessed eligibility such as audited financial statements.



Feedback on Grant application process – review financial reporting section

- ❑ In the financial reporting section (Section C), the grant application requires the details of City of Mississauga expenses such as rental cost, utility cost, garbage cans, etc.
- ❑ For PhilFest all of these are obtained through the City and we get one receipt which does not necessarily have the details.
- ❑ Our recommendation is:
 - ❑ Consider asking for summarized City of Mississauga expenses.



Feedback on application process for Mississauga Celebration Square

- ❑ Festivals such as Philfest plan their celebration around the same time each year. The Celebration Square application asks for 3 choices wrt the dates. Historically we have been given one of those dates. This year, however, we were assigned a much different date and we were not necessarily made aware of the reason other than that none of our selected dates were available.
- ❑ Our recommendations:
 - ❑ Consider transparency on the factors that the City evaluates to rank and assign “prime weekends” to festivals.
 - ❑ Consider equitable allocation of prime weekends to large ethnic communities in Mississauga.
 - ❑ When none of the selected dates are available, consider asking the Festival organizers for other dates.

Thank you!