

City of Mississauga Corporate Report



<p>Date: March 20, 2025</p> <p>To: Chair and Members of General Committee</p>	<p>Originator's files:</p>
<p>From: Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer</p>	<p>Meeting date: April 23, 2025</p>

Subject

Review of Community Recognition Program

Recommendation

1. That staff undertake a comprehensive review of the City's current Community Recognition Program and Corporate Policy – Community Recognition Program as outlined in the Corporate Report dated March 20, 2025 entitled "Review of Community Recognition Program" from the City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer.
2. That a final report be brought back to General Committee by year-end, outlining findings and recommendations for updating the program.

Executive Summary

- The Community Recognition Program includes clock tower lightings and flag raisings intended to raise awareness and encourage participation in community fundraising initiatives, public awareness campaigns, cultural, sport and entertainment programs as well as activities that foster a spirit of community and contribute to enriching the quality of life in Mississauga.
- The Community Recognition corporate policy was formally introduced in 2017 and includes criteria for Civic Centre clock tower lightings and flag raisings.
- A limited review of the policy was conducted in 2021 by staff to streamline the application process for national flag raisings as well as the intake and decision-making process for contentious requests. As national flag raisings can be more contentious than other forms of recognition, and due to the increasing interest by Council and the community to have this type of recognition, the intent of the review was to make the recognition process for national flags more seamless for Council.

- Staff are recommending a full review of the Community Recognition Program in 2025. The review would include an environmental scan, benchmarking, and stakeholder engagement. The findings, along with historical data and best practices, will be used to make recommendations to help clarify the scope, modernize the program, streamline processes, include additional recognition activities as appropriate and enhance the program's overall efficacy.
- Following the review process, a report will be brought back to General Committee by year-end for review and input.

Background

The Community Recognition Program is intended to raise awareness and encourage participation in fundraising initiatives, public awareness campaigns, cultural, sport and entertainment programs as well as activities that foster a spirit of community and contribute to enriching the quality of life in Mississauga.

In May 2015, the City of Mississauga began informally conducting recognition activities based on requests received from various community groups. The program began with only 16 requests for either proclamations or clock tower lightings over the course of six months. As the number of requests began to increase in early 2016, staff was directed to create a pilot Community Recognition program.

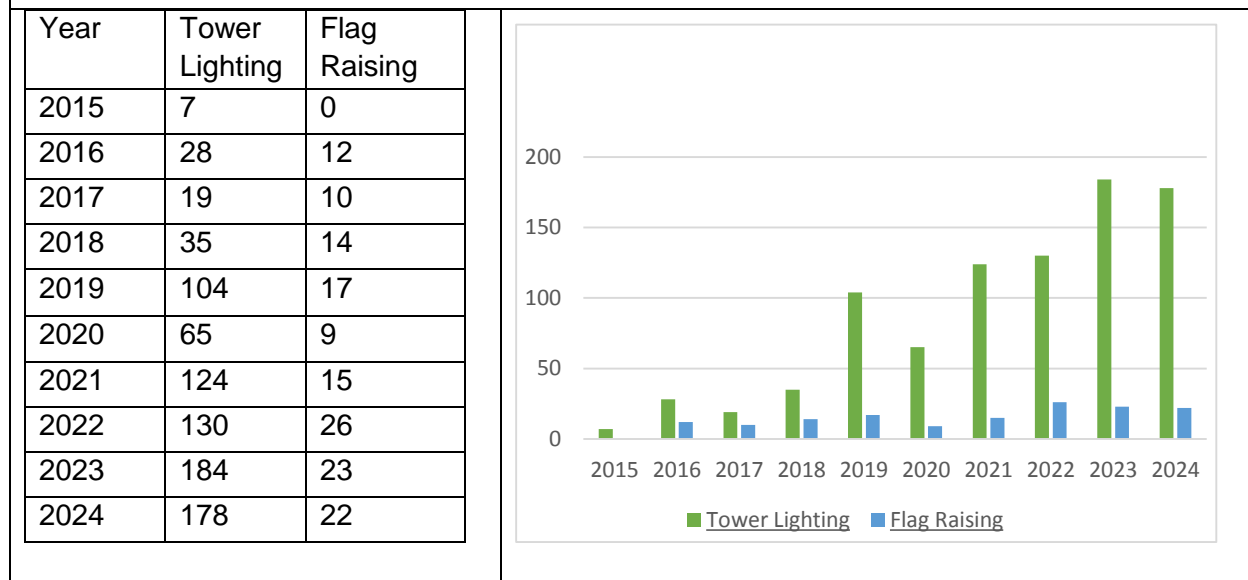
Following Council approval on May 25, 2016, the City launched the one-year Community Recognition Pilot Program involving: Civic Centre clock tower lightings and/or flag raisings on a community flagpole on Mississauga Celebration Square. This pilot became a permanent program.

Present Status

Today, the Recognition Program has proven to be very appealing to Canada's not-for-profit sector, who are able to highlight their important causes and the work being done within their organizations through a tower lighting or flag raising.

Since 2015, the program has grown 443 per cent with a cumulative total of 148 community flag raisings and 874 clock tower lightings being conducted to date. Although paused from March 17 to July 31, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it has continued to grow since resuming on August 1, 2020, as outlined in the charts below.

Figure 1: Community Recognition Program Growth – 2015 to 2024



As part of the 2021 policy review, staff looked at best practices from other municipalities and sought feedback on this topic from members of Council and the former Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee on February 10, 2021.

Following the policy review, changes were made to the application process for national flag raisings as well as to the intake and decision-making process for contentious requests. Since then, requests have continued to grow with no equivalent change in resources. The City has also experienced additional activity requests such as proclamations, expanded flag raising ceremonies and more direct requests by Council. Related primarily to flag raisings, there is an expectation for additional support for community groups to expand recognition events in the Great Hall for ceremonies and programming, set up services at site of the community flagpole with a podium, sound system, chairs, tables and tents.

Comments

The Community Recognition Program has proven to be successful. However, due to this success, the new requests and additional demands, there is need to review this program to ensure it is:

1. Operating efficiently and effectively with a clear program scope
2. Meeting the expectations of the Mayor, Council and the community
3. Aligning with best practices and protocol
4. Appropriately resourced by all business areas including Strategic Communications and Initiatives, Facilities Planning and Development, Corporate Business Services, Recreation and Culture and others.

Engagement and Consultation

The review will include an environmental scan, benchmarking, stakeholder engagement and best practices from other municipalities. Those findings, along with historical data, will be used to provide recommendations for the program's scope, processes and related policies including the potential to expand the scope of the program to include activities such as proclamations. Staff will work closely with all internal partners to facilitate engagement practices.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts resulting from the recommendations in this report.

Conclusion

As part of the City's commitment to excellence, the program review is intended to strengthen the Community Recognition policy, meet the expectations of Mayor and Council and offer clarity to staff and community groups who request recognition from the City.

Attachments

Appendix 1: GC Report – March 2021 – CR Policy Review

Appendix 2: Community Recognition Policy – 06-04-04



Geoff Wright, P.Eng, MBA, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer

Prepared by: Lindsay Francini, Supervisor, Protocol, Events & Employee Communications