



Committee of the Whole Report For the Meeting of March 1, 2018

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** February 19, 2018
From: Jocelyn Jenkyns, Acting City Manager
Subject: Festival Investment Grant 2018 Allocations

RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve the Festival Investment Grant allocations as recommended in Appendix 1 and 2 for total cash grants of \$222,380 and in-kind grants of up to \$107,000 including the \$15,000 in kind contribution for Car Free Day already approved by Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Festivals and celebrations add to Victoria's vitality, vibrancy and diversity. The City's annual grant and in-kind support nurtures the development of high quality accessible events and creates significant economic activity in the city.

The federal "Building Communities through Arts and Heritage" (BCAH) grant program requires applicants to confirm local support (cash and/or in-kind) for their festivals or celebrations to qualify for federal funding, therefore this report is presented well in advance of the 2018 festival season.

There are 36 applications for Festival Investment Grants (FIG) with a total request for funding of \$440,825. City funding budgeted for this grant program is \$222,380. 33 of the applications meet the criteria and are recommended for approval. Three applications either did not meet the FIG criteria. 26 of the recommended festivals have applied for funding through the BCAH program.

All applications are reviewed based on the approved FIG policy, which includes:

- Program criteria, including a free component
- Artistic and cultural merit of the event
- Economic impact
- Community support
- Organizational effectiveness

A comprehensive list of requests and recommendations is detailed in Appendix I.

The economic impact of these events can be measured by spending activity generated by festival goers in local restaurants and businesses, overnight stays in hotels by visitors and visiting

performers, festival employment, and increased tourism for popular annual festivals.

The six largest events are estimated to generate a total economic impact of over \$8 million with attendance for all recommended events estimated to exceed 700,000. The total operating budgets of the recommended events is projected to be over \$7.8 million in direct spending. This reflects a positive impact through employment (231 full and part-time positions), event production sales and rentals, and the purchase of goods and services. Corporate investment by local, regional and national corporations total more than \$4.2 million (2.6 million cash and 1.6 million in-kind).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval on the Festival Investment Grants recommendations for 2018.

BACKGROUND

The Festival Investment Grant program was established to create and sustain a healthy community, vibrant downtown core and enhance economic development. Over the past nineteen years, the City has supported festivals through the Festival Investment Grant Program. Additional in-kind support is provided based on need and the availability of departmental resources.

In-kind support can include City services such as policing, traffic control equipment, festival equipment labour, venue fees waived, sound operator and security in Centennial Square and displaced lost parking revenue. See appendix 2 for a detailed breakdown of recommended in-kind grants.

The Festival Investment Grant program was created to meet the following objectives:

- Increase the quality of life for our citizens
- Enable a vibrant downtown core
- Support economic development
- Offer exposure to new art forms

To qualify for funding, festivals and celebrations must meet the criteria outlined in the 2011 Council approved Festival Investment Grant Policy and Guidelines. See appendix 3 attached.

The federal "Building Communities through Arts and Heritage" (BCAH) grant program has expanded to include 3 separate intake periods. The department of Heritage no longer requires municipalities to confirm municipal support by year end. Council will now be able to consider requests within the context of the budget process and review allocations following budget approval.

Grant applications, policy, guidelines and reporting documentation can be found on the City website. The grant program is showcased online as well as through the City Vibe web application and print versions made available throughout the year. Moving forward the City will continue to enhance content available on the City website and through City social media. Three to four weeks prior to the Festival Investment Grant deadline reminders are sent to previous recipients outlining the timeline for reporting. Final reporting must be received before the annual application deadline of October 31st in order to be considered.

ISSUES & ANALYSIS

Festival organizers are increasingly faced with funding and sponsorship challenges. Many organizations have experienced reductions in corporate sponsorship, decreases in provincial gaming grants and increased production costs making it difficult for organizers to successfully sustain and grow events.

Event organizers leverage their municipal support through provincial and federal funding bodies and secure credibility with corporate and community sponsors.

Last year, the City of Victoria awarded \$169,000 in grants and \$115,500 in in-kind support to 32 festivals and celebrations (up from 27 the previous year). This year there were 36 cash grant requests totalling \$440,825. Of these, 8 are new applicants indicating both growth and vibrancy in the festival scene. Three applications either did not meet the funding criteria, resulting in recommendations to fund 33 festivals and celebrations for a total of \$222,380 cash and up to \$107,000 in in-kind support. The 33 recommended Festivals and celebrations include:

Seed Festival Grants - new festivals in first five years of operation (12)

- Victoria Aboriginal Cultural Festival
- World Accordion and Tango Festival
- Downtown Victoria Buskers Festival
- Car Free Day YYJ
- Caravan Victoria Festival
- Garden City Grooves
- Out Stages
- Peek Fest
- Pretty Good Not Bad
- Trans Day of Remembrance
- Victoria Festival of Authors
- Wonderment Series

Established Festival Grants (18)

- Vancouver Island Blues Bash
- Dragon Boat Festival
- Victoria Film Festival
- Victoria Flamenco Festival
- Free B Festival
- French Fest
- Victoria Fringe Fest
- 155th Victoria Highland Games and Celtic Festival/Tartan Parade
- India Mela
- Integrate Arts Festival
- TC Victoria International JazzFest
- Kaleidoscope Theatre's Family Theatre Festival
- One Wave Festival
- Pacific Baroque Festival
- Victoria Pride Week
- Victoria's Ska Fest
- SKAMpede
- Uno Fest

Signature Festival Grants (3)

- TD Art Gallery Paint-In
- Island Farms Victoria Day Parade/Island Farms Santa Parade
- Victoria Symphony in the Summer

Three applications did not meet the criteria for FIG support:

- x2 Dragon Boat Festival
- FernFest
- Think18

With many requests for funds, staff recommendations consider evaluation criteria and support for as many eligible events as possible. Six new applicants for 2018 are recommended for support including:

- World Accordion and Tango Festival
- Garden City Grooves
- Peek Fest
- Trans Day of Remembrance
- Victoria Festival of Authors
- Wonderment Series 2018

OPTIONS & IMPACTS

Option 1 (Recommended)

That Council approve the Festival Investment Grant allocations as recommended in Appendix I and 2 for total cash grants of \$222,380 and in-kind grants of up to \$107,000 .

Option 2

Council directs staff to revise the recommendations in Appendix 1 & 2 and bring back new recommendations for Council's consideration at a later date. Delaying or denying some or all of the recommended allocations may prevent applicants from leveraging grant funding from senior levels of government and/or sponsors.

Impacts to Financial Plan

Council approved a \$50,000 increase in the Festival Investment Grant Budget for 2018. The current budget is \$222,380 and will be increased by inflation annually as directed by Council.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The recommendation aligns with the following objectives in the Official Community Plan:

Section 14: Economy

14 (f) That the function of the Urban Core as the primary regional centre of employment, learning, arts, culture, entertainment, recreation and specialty retail is maintained and enhanced with high quality facilities, services and events

Section 16: Arts and Culture

16.6 Encourage broad access to arts and culture facilities, events and activities for people of all ages, incomes, backgrounds and lifestyles.

16.7 Encourage education, training and informal learning opportunities in the arts, design and culture.

16.19 Establish and maintain partnerships with professional artists and arts and cultural organizations to program the use of public space.

16.20 Continue to permit festivals, celebrations and special events in public spaces, such as streets, parking lots, plazas, civic squares and other

open space.

16.21 Increase the use of parks for festivals, celebrations and special events

16.22 Continue to support and enable local, non-profit groups to host festivals, celebrations and special events through services, incentives and regulations.

CONCLUSIONS


The Festival Investment Grant Program assists the creation of a more vibrant downtown through the traditional festival season, enhancing tourism, local business success and the local economy. The program also broadens the festival season to the shoulder months to attract residents and visitors to the downtown year round thereby supporting economic development in traditionally slower economic activity periods.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeff Day
Cultural Services Coordinator

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:


Date: March 9, 2018

List of Attachments

- Appendix 1 – Detailed list of FIG allocations
- Appendix 2 – FIG City service allocation details
- Appendix 3 – 2011 Festival Investment Grant policy and guidelines