

**Region of Waterloo**

**Planning, Development, and Legislative Services**

**Cultural Services**

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**To:** Community and Health Services Committee

**Meeting Date:** June 6, 2023

**Report Title:** Major Arts and Culture Organizations 2023 Grant  
Recommendations

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**1. Recommendation**

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo approve the 2023 funding allocations of \$340,000 under the Major Arts and Culture Organizations grant program as outlined in report PDL-CUL-23-009 dated June 6, 2023.

**2. Purpose / Issue:**

To approve the awarding of the 2023 Major Arts and Culture Organizations grant program funds, in alignment with the Region's discretionary grant policy and processes, outlined in report COR-ADM-23-002, dated March 7, 2023.

**3. Strategic Plan:**

1.3 Support the arts, culture and heritage sectors to enrich the lives of residents and attract visitors to Waterloo Region.

1.3.2 Develop a robust, transparent and equitable grant funding strategy to support the arts and culture sector.

**4. Report Highlights:**

- On April 19, 2023 Regional Council voted to amend the Key Cultural Institutions eligibility criteria and add \$340,000 to the funding envelope to allocate to eligible arts and culture organizations within the community. For the 2023 operating budget, this is funded from the Tax Stabilization Reserve.
- The application process opened Friday April 21, 2023, and closed Friday May 5, 2023. The grants were publicized on the Region's website, on social media channels, and potentially-eligible grant applicants were contacted directly via email.
- The Region received 14 grant applications totalling \$607,108. Of the 14

applications, seven met the criteria of the program. Total recommended funding is \$340,000, consistent with the amended budget. The recommended grant amounts are calculated as outlined in the program guidelines.

- This pilot program provides one-time operating funding to eligible organizations to enhance their ability to produce and/or present artistic works and cultural programming. Staff have been directed to review the eligibility criteria for funding for Key Cultural Institutions grant program, to be more inclusive and equitable of organizations across area municipalities. Staff will bring recommendations to council in the fall for the 2024 grant process.

## 5. Background:

The [Major Arts and Culture Organizations Pilot Grant Program](#) was established by Council at April 19, 2023 meeting.

The new program is based on the [Key Cultural Institutions](#) Grant Program that was established in 2015 with four major differences:

1. **Operating Budget:** To be eligible organizations must have operating expenditures greater than \$250,000 (KCIs must have operating expenditures greater than \$1 million)
2. **Relationship to Public Facilities:** To be eligible organizations must have programming intrinsically linked to a public facility (KCIs must hold joint responsibility for public buildings)
3. **Simplified process:** Application requirements and the adjudication process were simplified and streamlined.
4. **Not collaborative:** The application and adjudication process is not done in conjunction with area municipalities (KCI is a collaborative application and adjudication process with participating area municipalities).

This pilot grant program aims to support the vibrancy and resiliency of Arts and Culture Organizations that present artistic and cultural programming in public facilities. This pilot program provides one-time operating funding to eligible organizations to enhance their ability to produce and/or present artistic works and cultural programming.

## Funding Recommendations

Funding for the Grand Philharmonic Choir (GPC) in the amount of \$32,130 was approved by Council on April 19, 2023 and the payment has been processed. GPC has been included in this report for information. Their application was received through this process, however, their grant is not included in the \$340,000 recommendation.

As outlined in the program guidelines, each eligible organization's annual operating revenues is divided by the sum of the operating revenues for all eligible organizations.

This number is then multiplied by this funding opportunity's budget (\$340,000) to determine each organization's funding allocation. The target grant amount is 10% of annual operating revenues.

<b>Grant Applicant</b>	<b>10% of most recent revenues</b>	<b>2023 recommended funding amount</b>
Drayton Entertainment	180,247	158,000
MT Space	69,514	61,000
Inter Arts Matrix	54,699	48,000
Fashion History Museum	36,665	32,000
Neruda Arts	31,135	28,000
Button Factory	15,226	13,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>387,486</b>	<b>340,000</b>

### **Notes on Eligibility**

Staff have reached out to ineligible organizations, directed them to other funding opportunities from the Region (Cultural Drivers of Tourism grant program and the Waterloo Region Arts Fund). These organizations will also have an opportunity to provide input into the new grant program.

## **6. Communication and Engagement with Area Municipalities and the Public**

**Area Municipalities:** area municipal staff were informed of the funding opportunity. Staff from all area municipalities have also shared information about grant programs and grant funding amounts. Staff in all area municipalities were notified about the grant applications.

**Public:** The grants were publicized on the Region's website and social media channels and previous grant applicants were contacted directly by email/phone. Staff met with representatives from art galleries to discuss the Region's practice of not providing operating funding to art galleries.

## **7. Financial Implications:**

The approved 2023 allocation for the Major Arts and Culture Organizations Pilot Grant

Program is up to \$340,000 as approved on April 19, 2023. Funding for this program is being provided from the Tax Stabilization Reserve. Staff are recommending allocating \$340,000 to eligible applicants.

#### **8. Conclusion / Next Steps:**

Staff will use the information from the applications to inform new grant program guidelines to come to Council in September, 2023. This is a pilot program while staff take the time to more comprehensively work with the community to recommend a new funding program. Staff will be bringing recommendations to council in September which will consider information gathered through this grant application process, the Cultural Drivers of Tourism grant program, the Arts and Culture survey.

#### **9. Attachments:**

Appendix A: Major Arts and Culture Organizations 2023 Funding Recommendations

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**Reviewed and Approved By:** Rod Regier, Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services