

Renewing Multi Year Agreements with Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs)

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To:	Economic Development and Parks Committee
From:	Donald G. Eastwood, General Manager Economic Development, Culture & Tourism
Wards:	All
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SUMMARY

This report recommends the renewal of a multi-year agreement with each of the four Toronto-based arts and cultural organizations under the Arts and Culture - Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) category within the Community Partnership and Investment Program (CPIP).

Community arts is the bedrock of the city's cultural ecology. The LASOs are an essential component that helps build the city's cultural infrastructure through the programs and services they deliver. Through those programs and services the LASOs forge connections between artists in the community and bring together diverse groups which together build vital neighbourhoods that are the foundation of our Creative City. Since amalgamation, City Council has been providing financial support to enhance the LASOs' role in fostering community arts development. The renewed multi-year agreements will maintain the structured link between the City and each of the four LASOs, thereby ensuring stability and accountability to the relationship.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism recommends that:

1. authority be granted to renew a multi-year agreement for four years (2007 to 2010) with each of the following four local arts service organizations, (Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts, Scarborough Arts Council and UrbanArts Community Arts Council) subject to:
 - a. the satisfaction of the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, the City Solicitor and the Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer;
 - b. the compliance with City funding guidelines as established by Council Policy;
 - c. the annual funding request submitted by each organization to the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, for recommendation to the Economic Development Committee and Council for review and approval; and
 - d. the annual report and financial audit submitted by each organization to the General Manager of Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, for review, and
2. the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council at its meeting held on July 22, 23 and 24, 2003, by adoption of Clause No. 9 of Report No. 6 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, authorized the City to enter into funding agreements with Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts, Scarborough Arts Council and UrbanArts Community Arts Council (formerly Arts York). These four agreements were executed for a three-year period from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2006. They have provided a valuable structured link between the City and the local arts service organizations.

It is time to renew these agreements with the four local arts service organizations. Minor revisions to the existing agreements are required to reflect the terminology of the City's administrative reorganization. These revisions are also necessary to reflect the LASOs' expanding arts and cultural programs and services across the city.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Since amalgamation, the City of Toronto has been providing financial support to the LASOs under the LASO category through the Consolidated Grants Budget for these non-profit community-based cultural organizations. To formalize the City's partnership with the LASOs, City Council at its meeting held on July 22, 23 and 24, 2003, by adoption of Clause No. 9 of Report No. 6 of the Economic Development and Parks Committee, authorized the City to enter into funding agreements with Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts, Scarborough Arts Council and UrbanArts Community Arts Council. With the implementation of the four agreements from January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2006, the agreements have provided a valuable structured link between the City and these local arts service organizations. They ensured the LASOs' arts and cultural programs and services were aligned with Toronto's Culture Plan and the Council's service priorities.

To maintain this valuable link, the funding agreements with the four local arts service organizations need to be renewed. The renewed agreements will continue to ensure planning and service delivery that offer an increased degree of stability, accountability to Council, and sets out the City's terms and conditions for the coming years.

COMMENTS

Current Funding Situation

Currently, City Council provides financial support to enhance the LASOs that are recognized as essential to a vibrant community arts infrastructure for the City and are an important building block for healthy and cohesive communities. These organizations are hubs that provide accessible and inclusive community arts programs and services for the benefit of Torontonians. They encourage artistic growth in both emerging and established artists, contribute to the economy and local tourism, support healthy social change and help create audiences for the future.

Under the Arts and Culture - Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs) category within the Community Partnership and Investment Program (CPIP), funding is provided for these non-profit community-based arts and cultural organizations that have demonstrated consistent levels of professional standards in their operations, encouragement of artistic excellence, and accountable financial management systems and governance structures. Public funding is necessary as the organizations are not fully self-supporting through private donations and self-generated income.

Intent of the Multi Year Agreements

The intent of the agreements is to define the purpose and benefits to the City of such funding and to put in place processes that will enhance accountability to the City for the funding it provides. This report recommends that authority be granted to enter into a four-year agreement with each of the LASOs under the Arts and Culture - LASO category within CPIP. The annual request for funding amounts for each organization would be subject to review and approval by City Council. Under the terms of the agreement, each LASO would be required to submit its funding request during the City's Annual Operating Budget process, to the General Manager of Economic

Development, Culture and Tourism, for his recommendations for Council review and approval, and its annual report and financial audits for review.

The recommended multi-year agreements allow for a structured link between the City and the LASOs. It enables planning and service delivery that offer an increased degree of stability, accountability to Council, and sets out the City's terms and conditions for the coming years. Depending on the nature of the arts and culture services provided to the residents of and visitors to Toronto, specific requirements and deliverables from each LASO will be included in their respective agreements.

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SIGNATURE

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