

Transfer of funds from Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund (XR1219) and allocation to the Toronto Arts Council for "2017 Arts in the Parks"

Date: October 25, 2017

To: Budget Committee and Executive Committee

From: General Manager, Economic Development and Culture

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek City Council approval to transfer funds in the amount of \$0.200 million from the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund (XR1219) to the 2017 Economic Development and Culture operating budget in order to allocate it to the Toronto Arts Council (TAC).

The allocation of funding will be directed in the amount of \$0.100 million towards the 2017 TAC operating program to pay for park permit fees; and \$0.100 million towards the TAC grants program to support artists selected to perform in City of Toronto parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Economic Development and Culture recommends that:

1. City Council approve an increase to the 2017 Approved Operating Budget of the Economic Development and Culture Division in the amount of \$0.200 million gross, and \$0 net, fully funded by a transfer from the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund (XR1219); and be allocated as follows:

\$0.100 million to 2017 Toronto Arts Council operating program; and

\$0.100 million to 2017 Toronto Arts Council grant program.

2. City Council direct the General Manager of Economic Development and Culture to report back to Council in 2018 on the community impact of the Arts in the Parks program delivered by the Toronto Arts Council and its partners.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

If approved, funds in the amount of \$0.200 million from the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund (XR1219) will be transferred to the 2017 Economic Development and Culture operating budget, for a net \$0 impact. Of that amount, \$0.100 million will be allocated to the 2017 TAC operating program and the other \$0.100 million will be allocated to the TAC grant program.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on October 5, 6, and 7, 2016, City Council approved the transfer of funds from Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund (XR1219) and Allocation to the Toronto Arts Council for the inaugural Arts in the Parks:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX17.17>

At its meeting on March 31 and April 1, 2016, City Council adopted item MM17.16 which authorized the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to enter into a license agreement with the Toronto Arts Council for the use of parks by various artists to be selected by Toronto Arts Council for the Arts in the Parks pilot program from May 1, 2016 until September 30, 2016.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.MM17.16>

At its meeting of August 25, 26, 27 and 28, 2014, City Council adopted EX44.24, which established the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund's administration policy and stated that General Manager of the Economic Development and Culture shall have primary responsibility for the Reserve Fund (Appendix 2).

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.EX44.24>

At its meeting on July 8, 9, 10 and 11, 2014, City Council adopted PG34.6, which approved the collection of Construction Hoarding Sign Fees commencing January 1, 2015. The report further directed that the revenues from the monthly fee to be directed to a reserve fund, that will be drawn upon by Arts and Culture Services, Economic Development and Culture Division in the year following collection of the fees, to be directed to a program developed by General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, in consultation with the Toronto Arts Council.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.PG34.6>

COMMENTS

In 2014, the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee was established by City Council with the purpose of making the arts more accessible in public places, particularly in areas underserved by the arts community. The collection of the fees began January 1, 2015. Following the establishment of the fee, the Toronto Arts Council (TAC) was brought on board as the City's partner to establish a program that could bring animation and cultural activation to Toronto's public realm. Toronto has more than 1,500 parks with numerous open spaces and 600 km of trails. The parks system covers 8,000 hectares, or roughly 13% of the city's land area. It was recognized that the arts could transform these public spaces into meeting places for communities, improve neighbourhood engagement in parks and allow for Toronto's diverse artists to perform in places they have not been previously active.

Launched in the spring of 2016, Arts in the Parks was a successful pilot program. 2017 is the second year of the program which offers free outdoor programming that brings arts events to parks across Toronto, with underserved areas being a priority. Arts in the Parks encourages community building, the enjoyment of local parks, and arts experiences for all ages. It is produced through collaboration with TAC, the Toronto Arts Foundation (TAF), Park People and the City of Toronto. The TAC covers the costs of the grants program from its grants budget and additional permit fees and implementation costs from its operations budget. TAF covers all marketing and promotion costs.

The 2017 Arts in the Parks program presented 344 free events in 54 parks across the City, in over 30 wards including 27 parks outside the downtown core. Events included performances, dance, music, theatre, film, community-engaged work, and temporary installations by arts groups. Total attendance was estimated at 150,000.

In 2017, total Arts in the Parks program costs are estimated at over \$900,000 including:

- Animating Toronto Parks (Arts in the Parks) grants program: \$496,200 (TAC grants)
- Additional permit and noise exemption costs for downtown parks, plus staff time to manage permits/accounting/agreements/grants program: \$100,000 (TAC operations); and
- Marketing & promotion campaign, including volunteer program: \$300,000 (Toronto Arts Foundation sponsorship revenues)

The transfer of \$0.100 million from the Construction Hoarding Sign Fee Reserve Fund to EDC, and then allocated to TAC's operating budget will pay for Parks, Forestry and Recreation permit fees that were required to implement the program in 2017 and the 0.5 FTE TAC staff time required to administer the program. The further allocation of \$0.100 million will go to the TAC grants program to pay artists.

The program meets the criteria established for the use of the reserve fund and contributes significantly to ensuring access and opportunity for cultural participation to all citizens regardless of age, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, geography, or socioeconomic status.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Mike Williams
General Manager, Economic Development and Culture