

Establishment of the Toronto Community Champion Award as an annual program

Date: December 4, 2023
To: Executive Committee
From: City Clerk
Wards: All

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek authority to continue the Toronto Community Champion Award program as an annual program in substantially the same manner as the 2023 awards program and to seek the necessary authorities for the City Clerk to administer the program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. City Council continue the Toronto Community Champion Award as an annual program starting in 2024.
2. City Council authorize the City Clerk to solicit and accept funds of up to \$0.500 million, from program partners, including City Divisions, Federal or Provincial agencies, community organizations, private entities and/or individuals for the Toronto Community Champion Award in a form compliant with City policies on such terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Clerk and in a form approved by the City Solicitor.
3. City Council authorize the City Clerk to enter into agreements with program partners, including City Divisions, Federal or Provincial agencies, community organizations, private entities and/or individuals, for funding up to \$0.500 million to support the Toronto Community Champion Award in a form compliant with City policies on such terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Clerk and in a form approved by the City Solicitor.
4. City Council authorize the City Clerk to collect personal information necessary to administer the program in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no immediate financial impact resulting from the adoption of the recommendations within the report.

City Clerk's Office Strategic Protocol & External Relations Unit is working on finalizing an agreement with The United Way Greater Toronto to secure funding of \$0.050 million to support the Toronto Community Champion Award 2024 program.

The program will be run with existing staff resources within City Clerk's Office and any additional resources required will be funded by the program partner.

Once funds are secured, any required adjustments to the Approved Operating Budget for City Clerks will be reported through the annual budget process and/or in-year variance reporting.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial implications as identified in the Financial Impact section.

DECISION HISTORY

In October 2017, the City Council adopted the [For Public Benefit Framework](#) – a whole-of-government policy framework intended to create a more consistent, strategic, and deliberate relationship with the community-based not-for-profit sector (“for public benefit” sector). [Agenda Item History - 2017.CD24.4 \(toronto.ca\)](#)

In July 2022, City Council authorized the City Clerk and Interim General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to accept federal funding for a COVID-19 Recovery Celebration and Commemoration Program which funded the Toronto Community Champion Award <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2017.CD24.4>

COMMENTS

The City conducted the 2023 Toronto Community Champion Award program as part of its COVID-19 recovery programming.

The City launched the Toronto Community Champion Award as part Stronger TOgether, a COVID-19 recovery program. The program featured other components including: City Hall Tower Illumination; New Year's Eve; The Burn; and Transforming Grief: Loss & Togetherness in COVID-19 Exhibition. The program was partially funded by the Government of Canada through a \$1.4 million grant under Canadian Heritage's Celebration and Commemoration Program - Reopening Fund.

The features of the award program were as follows:

- Residents nominated not-for-profit and grassroots community organizations that provided exceptional support to residents and communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic and those who continue to live with the effects.

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- A panel of respected community organization leaders reviewed nominations and selected recipients.
- Awards were presented at a public ceremony and celebration at the Toronto Reference Library on March 20, 2023.
- There were over 250 nominations, 25 award recipients and 22 honourable mentions from all city wards.

City Council should continue the awards as an annual program.

The City should continue this program on an annual basis starting in 2024. The reasons for continuation include:

- The overwhelming success of the 2023 program in recognizing the contributions of community organizations during the early days of recovery
- Requests from the community to continue the award
- Feedback from City officials in Divisions who work with community organizations about the value of the program in earning and building trust with community
- Alignment with the 2017 Council-approved “For Public Benefit Framework”, a City of Toronto guideline for working with community-based not-for-profit organizations.

City Council should provide the necessary authorities to the Clerk to administer the program.

To continue the program on an annual basis, Council should put in place the necessary authorities for staff to:

- Solicit and accept donations, grants, sponsorships and other forms of partnership and support
- Enter into agreements for the forms of support listed above
- Collect personal information from nominators necessary to administer the program.

The 2024 Toronto Community Champions Awards ceremony will take place in May 2024.

If Council adopts the recommendations, the City Clerk will work with other City Divisions and partners to implement the program, including:

- Seeking nominations from Toronto residents starting in December 2023
- Soliciting and entering into agreements with sponsors, donors and other partners
- Assembling a panel of community leaders to review nominations and select award recipients
- Organizing an awards ceremony at the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon at the Toronto Reference Library in May 2024.

Members of Council will be involved as follows:

- Members will be provided with kits of information to help promote the program including nominations
- Members will be invited to attend and take part in the award ceremony.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

John D. Elvidge
City Clerk

ATTACHMENTS
