

THE MUNICIPALITY OF LAMBTON SHORES

Report DCS 34-2023

Council Meeting Date: December 19, 2023

TO: Mayor Cook and Members of Council
FROM: Ashley Farr, Director of Community Services
RE: Community Vibrancy Fund Large Projects

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report DCS 34-2023 regarding the “Community Vibrancy Fund Large Projects” be received for information.

SUMMARY

This report presents Council with information regarding the Community Vibrancy Fund Large Projects and the process for receiving and processing applications through this program.

BACKGROUND

At its September 26, 2023 meeting, Council approved the Community Vibrancy Fund Large Projects Policy.

The Community Vibrancy Fund Large Project Policy (the “Fund”) is a new funding opportunity to provide Council with a mechanism to support large community projects that cannot be funded through the Small Projects Policy due to funding restrictions. Highlights of the program include:

- There is no established maximum dollar amount that can be requested.
- Any project \$10,000 and under will be directed to the Small Projects Policy.
- The fund is available for capital projects only.
- Applicants must prepare and submit a complete business plan supporting the project at the time of application.
- The fund will grant up to one-third (1/3) of eligible project costs.
- There is no deadline to apply. Applications will be accepted throughout the year and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Sources of funding for Large Projects are determined by Council if and when the application is approved by Council.

Staff have received numerous meeting requests from local organizations that have expressed interest in the Fund and it is expected that there will be several projects that will come to Council in 2024. Because this is a new policy, staff believe it may be helpful

to suggest some information regarding the process and some recommendations for assessing these requests.

Prior to applying for the Fund, organizations must first meet with Municipal staff to discuss the project and determine its eligibility. Once eligibility has been confirmed, the organization is required to apply on the specified application form. Staff will review the form to ensure that the form and supporting documentation is complete. As part of the application process, organizations are required to present their request to Council.

At the subsequent Council meeting, staff will provide a report to Council with the request, the full application, and staff's evaluation of the application based on the established evaluation grid (attached). Council direction will be required at this time, either to approve, deny or seek more information.

When presented with applications, Council may wish to consider the following guiding principles:

- Is the project "shovel ready" – meaning, does the applicant have the required 2/3 funding on hand needed to complete the project?
- How does the project align with Council's priorities and/or other identified supported initiatives?
- If the project is for municipal property, what are the operational implications?
- What is the overall long-term impact and benefit of the project?
- Does the project align with Council's vision for Vibrancy projects?

As a reminder, Council has the sole authority to approve or deny funding requests at its discretion.

ALTERNATIVES TO CONSIDER

There are no alternatives as this report is being presented for information.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The recommendation is to receive the report regarding the Community Vibrancy Fund Large Projects for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no direct financial impact associated with receiving this report.

CONSULTATION

Steve McAuley, CAO