



**RECREATION AND CULTURE SERVICES
MEMORANDUM
MAY 8, 2024**

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TO: MAYOR A. NUTTALL AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM: D. BELL, DIRECTOR OF RECREATION AND CULTURE
D. MCALPINE, GENERAL MANAGER OF COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

NOTED: M. PROWSE, CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

RE: SHAK'S WORLD'S PROPOSAL FOR CITY BUDGET SUPPORT

DATE: MAY 8, 2024

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform Council of correspondence received from Shanicka "Shak" Edwards proposing to bring the Shak's World Community Centre under the umbrella of the City budget.

On April 4, 2024, Service Barrie received an email from Shanicka "Shak" Edwards of Shak's World Association/Shak's World Community Centre with the brief proposal. A copy of the correspondence is attached as Appendix "A" to this memorandum. The correspondence was referred to Recreation and Culture Services. Recreation and Culture Services have advised Shanicka Edwards that the proposal would be forwarded to Council for its consideration.

In the April 4th email, Shanicka Edwards highlights the important role of the Shak's World Community Centre in the community and the challenges it has faced in securing the funding necessary for its operations. The correspondence also provides an example of the Orillia Youth Centre as a model of collaboration between the City of Orillia and a community organization.

The email indicates that the City of Orillia covers all overhead and staff costs annually for the youth centre. The information provided does not include the operating or any capital costs associated with the centre or the specifics of the proposed roles and responsibilities for the City of Barrie and Shak's World Association.

Background regarding Shak's World

Shak's World's mission is "To create respectful and successful athletes and community members through mentorship, sport and community engagement. While bringing awareness to youth mental and physical wellness." The Shak's World Community Centre is located at 59 Maple Avenue. The following is a description of Shak's World Community Centre from the organization's website:

"Shak's World Community Centre (SWCC) uses basketball, innovation, and mentorship as a bridge to youth employment, education, and training. SWCC's youth-led urban community development project tackle the underlying issues leading to youth addiction, homelessness, and mental health challenges. By creating a positive, inclusive and diverse environment in the Downtown Core. Through mentorship, sport and community engagement SWCC encourages a positive and stable environment for youth to take steps in defining and implementing direction in their lives. Shak's World Community Centre welcomes youth from across Simcoe County between the ages of 7 and 17 to participate in the wide variety of drop-in programming like art, dance, yoga, chess and 6-12-week basketball training programs. SWCC protects BIPOC youth of the Simcoe County Area by providing them with a safe space to gather and grow relationships necessary for social and self-development. Our team has been able to create a safe space for important community conversations around diversity and inclusion 365 days a year."

Background regarding the City's former Maple Avenue Youth Centre

The City of Barrie operated the Maple Avenue Youth Centre at 59 Maple Avenue for almost a decade until 2012. The decision to discontinue the Maple Avenue Youth Centre program and facility operations was one of the recommendations made as part of a Recreation Program and Facilities Service Review and implemented with the 2012 Budget.

The cost of operating the Maple Avenue Youth Centre was approximately \$335,000 prior to its closure in 2012 with only 2% recovered from fees. As part of the service review, it was determined that the level of subsidization required was far in excess of any other programming offered by the City at the time.

The City's Recreation and Culture Department continues to successfully operate the Youth Centre at the Peggy Hill Team Community Centre. As it is integrated within an existing Community Centre, there are economies of scale that didn't exist in the stand-alone downtown centre.

Orillia Youth Centre

Staff reached out to the Orillia Youth Centre to obtain information regarding their organizational structure and funding. The Orillia Youth Centre representative advised that the staff at the Centre are paid City of Orillia employees and the rent for the building is also paid by the municipality. The representative indicated that all costs for programming activities and events are fundraised from the community or through grants and donations. Funding is not provided by the municipality for these aspects of the Youth Centre operations.

While the Orillia Youth Centre started with some community organizations' involvement, it has evolved over time. Currently, the City of Orillia staff are responsible for the delivery of the programming and activities as well as all fundraising, grant writing and securing of donations for activities.

Considerations related to the Shak's World Community Centre Proposal

As noted earlier, the details provided in the correspondence were limited. The following are examples of some of matters that Council would need to consider as it relates the correspondence received:

- Taxpayer funding would be required to support the Shak's World Community Centre as a new City supported initiative and the amount of funding required is not specified;
- Typically, the City would follow a public procurement process if it determined that it was seeking an external party to provide services on its behalf;
- The roles and responsibilities of the City and the organization would need to be clearly understood as part of an agreement; this would typically be addressed in a public procurement document that would be open to qualified proponents;
- There may be implications related to the City's Collective Agreement with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE);
- The City may assume some responsibility/liability associated with any outstanding financial or other obligations of Shak's World Community Centre, if any; and
- The City would assume some responsibility/liability associated with the services provided by Shak's World by bringing it under the City's umbrella.

Should Council wish to explore the proposal further, given the financial implications, it would be appropriate to consider the proposal as part of the 2025 Business Plan and Budget.

Appendix "A"

Correspondence from Shanicka "Shak" Edwards of Shak's World Association/Shak's World Community Centre

-----Original Message-----

From: it.shaksworld@gmail.com

Sent: Apr 2, 2024 4:42:49 PM

To: Service.Barrie@barrie.ca

Subject: Proposal for City Budget Support: Enhancing Our Community Centre

Dear City Staff,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to you today to propose an initiative that I believe could significantly benefit our community: bringing our beloved community centre under the umbrella of the city budget.

Our community centre serves as a vital hub for residents of all ages, providing a wide range of programs, services, and resources that contribute to the well-being and cohesion of our city. However, as an independent organization, we face ongoing challenges in securing the necessary funding to sustain and expand our offerings. We have built fantastic relationships with organizations, businesses and philanthropists over the last 3.5 years and are now looking to gain what we see as an extremely important relationship with the city.

I would like to draw your attention to the Orillia Youth Centre as an exemplary model of collaboration between a community organization and the city. In Orillia, the city covers all overhead and staff costs annually for the youth center, ensuring its continued operation and accessibility to young people in the community. This partnership has proven to be mutually beneficial, allowing the centre to focus on delivering high-quality programs and services while alleviating financial pressures.

By bringing our community centre under the city budget, we can replicate this successful model and unlock numerous benefits for our residents. Here are a few key reasons why I believe this initiative is worth considering:

1. **Financial Stability:** Incorporating our community centre into the city budget would provide stable funding, safeguarding its long-term sustainability and allowing us to plan and invest in the future with confidence.

2. **Increased Accessibility:** With city support, we can enhance accessibility to our programs and services, reaching a broader segment of the population, including marginalized and underserved communities.
3. **Expanded Offerings:** With more reliable funding, we can expand our offerings and introduce new initiatives to meet the evolving needs and interests of our residents, fostering personal growth, community engagement, and social cohesion.
4. **Streamlined Operations:** Integration into the city budget would streamline administrative processes and reduce bureaucratic barriers, enabling us to focus our efforts and resources on delivering impactful programs and services.
5. **Community Partnership:** This initiative represents a tangible demonstration of the city's commitment to supporting grassroots initiatives and fostering a vibrant and inclusive community, strengthening the bond between local government and residents.

I am confident that by working together, we can create a stronger, more resilient, and more inclusive community for all. I urge you to consider initiating the conversation about bringing our community centre under the umbrella of the city budget and exploring the potential benefits of this partnership.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this proposal further and collaborate on finding innovative solutions to support our community.

Warm regards,

Yours through ball,
Shanicka "Shak" Edwards
Shak's World Association
Shak's World Community Centre
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cell: (647) 308-7425
Stay. Humble. And. Kind