



## ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

Page: 1  
File:  
Pending #:

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**TO: MAYOR J. LEHMAN AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

**FROM: A. DYKE, CULTURE OFFICER - DEVELOPMENT**

**NOTED: S. SCHLICHTER, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**  
**A. MILLER, RPP, GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

**RE: CULTURAL GRANTS PROGRAM REVIEW**

**DATE: MARCH 8, 2021**

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The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide members of Council with information regarding the Cultural Grants Program review currently be undertaken by the consulting firm, PROCESS (Creative Process Inc.), procured through the Economic and Creative Development department.

The City of Barrie's Cultural Master Plan (2006), "Building a Creative Future," recommended the Cultural Grants Program be reviewed in 2016. The Council-approved 2020 budget allocated funding to retain a consulting firm to complete this review. Due to the onset of the pandemic and associated temporary staffing reductions, the procurement for the consultant was completed in early January 2021.

With the the integration of culture development into Economic and Creative Development, as well as the linkages between arts, culture, innovation, entrepreneurship, and growth of the knowledge economy, the time is right to review the Cultural Grants initiative to ensure the City has a program that best fits community needs.

### Review Process

The retained firm of PROCESS will be undertaking a thorough review of the City's Cultural Grants Program, including reviewing the current program process, prior applicant feedback, stakeholder consultation and industry best practices to inform recommendations.

Based on feedback provided by current and past cultural grant recipients from the past five years, it was determined that the review will also contemplate a more inclusive and simplified application, earlier access to reporting documents and forms, budgetary and audit threshold increases, and an updated jury panel and process. These key objectives will help guide the review process and help determine how to improve the Cultural Grants Program so that the process is fair, inclusive, aligned with municipal best practices and reflects the needs of the community it serves.

The scope of the Cultural Review Process includes:

- Comprehensive review of the City of Barrie's current Cultural Grants Program;
- Review of current program objectives;
- Review of reporting requirements and success metrics;
- Case study review of similar municipalities' cultural granting programs;
- Community consultation with cultural organizations and stakeholders;
- Review of the the overall process to provide recommendations on improving inclusivity;
- Review of the project fund and operational fund categories; and
- Exploration of criteria that would promote recovery from and resilience to pandemic-like conditions.



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Page: 2  
File:  
Pending #:

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The final report will outline the comprehensive research undertaken and summarized results, provide benchmarking, and identify – in detail – the key steps for updating the program. The final report will address: program objectives, funding categories, program and eligibility criteria, application timing, and the selection and adjudication process. It will also provide reporting measures and success metrics that can be used to report back to Council and the public, in order to demonstrate value and return on investment.

Throughout March, Economic and Creative Development staff and PROCESS will be completing community and stakeholder consultations through interviews, a focus group session and an online survey. Upon its release, the survey will be shared directly with the arts and culture community and through Creative and Invest Barrie social channels.

Upon completion of the consultation and review process, a consultation workshop will be delivered back to stakeholders to validate findings and the recommendations moving forward.

For any questions any questions on the review or to provide input or feedback, please contact the Economic and Creative Development department at [creative@barrie.ca](mailto:creative@barrie.ca).