



Corporate Report

NO: R019

COUNCIL DATE: February 23, 2009

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: February 16, 2009
FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture FILE: 1855-03
SUBJECT: Cultural Spaces Canada Program - Application for Funding

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. As required by the application process, approve the following projects to be included in the City's application for funding under the Canadian Heritage "Cultural Spaces Canada Program" (the "Program"):
 - a. Fire Hall #10 Renovation to an Arts-based Programming and Administration facility;
 - b. Audience Chamber Improvements at the Surrey Arts Centre Theatre - Replace Seating and Minor Upgrades;
 - c. Surrey Art Gallery Vault Expansion; and
 - d. Kensington Prairie Community Centre Renovation.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to advise Council of the funding opportunity available through Canadian Heritage's program titled "Cultural Spaces Canada Program" and to seek Council's approval to include four specific projects in the City's application for funding under this Program. The Program's objective is to improve physical conditions for artistic creativity, presentation and exhibition. It is designed to increase and improve access for Canadians to performing arts, visual arts, media arts, and to museum collections, heritage displays and exhibitions. The Program is intended to support the renovation and expansion/construction of arts and heritage facilities and the acquisition of specialized equipment for as well as preparation of feasibility studies for cultural infrastructure projects.

DISCUSSION

In the Program's application guidelines, it states that all projects submitted must be entirely completed before March 31, 2010 to be considered for funding. It also states that priority will be given to renovation, expansion and specialized equipment projects. It provides funding for up to 33% of eligible project costs for expansion/construction and up to 40% of eligible projects costs for specialized equipment purchases or feasibility studies.

Based on the criteria outlined in the program guidelines including the criterion related to project completion by March 2010, the following projects are being recommended for inclusion in the City's application:

Fire Hall #10 Renovation (Arts-based Programming facility)

The recently adopted Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan stated "the City has grown to the point where the centralized arts programming and services provided at the Surrey Arts Centre need to be augmented by additional services offered at the community level. Arts organizations expressed a strong desire for artist run spaces in several locations within the City". In response to this recommendation Surrey Council has allocated funding in the 2008 capital budget to renovate and convert the former Fire Hall #10 building to an arts facility. The total project budget is \$1.5 million.

The new building will provide programming and administrative space for the Arts Council of Surrey, the Youth Arts Council of Surrey, the Surrey Festival of Dance Society and the Royal Canadian Theatre Company along with much needed rehearsal and meeting space for emerging arts groups.

The design for this conversion is currently underway with the project expected to be completed by the fall 2009. It is recommended that the City include this project in the application under the Program, which could potentially result in a grant of \$500,000 to support completion of the project.

This facility will address the current shortfall of artist run spaces in the community of Newton and correlates well with the criteria outlined in the Program application guidelines.

Estimated total project cost = \$1.5 million

Audience Chamber Improvements at the Surrey Arts Centre Theatre – Replace Seating and Minor Upgrades

The Surrey Arts Centre Main Stage Theatre was developed in 1982. The most recent renovation and expansion to the Arts Centre took place in 2002. The primary improvements were focused on seismic upgrading, safety issues and expansion of the overall facility square footage. The audience chamber in the Main Stage Theatre accommodates 403 seats and received only minor upgrades during the 2002 renovation. The seats are 27 years old and require replacement.

In addition to the replacement of the seating, the audience chamber also requires minor upgrades to lighting, interior finishing including millwork and painting. The present look of the Main Stage theatre is not consistent with the architectural and interior design features of the main Surrey Arts Centre building as renovated in 2002. If funding were to become available the project could be completed prior to March 2010.

The facility is a well-used facility. It is important that it be maintained to support the current service levels, meet the needs of current clients and the expectations of the public attending productions and other events that are hosted in the Theatre.

It is recommended that the City submit a grant application for this project under the Program, which if successful could result in a grant approximately \$82,000. Funding to support the balance of the project budget requirements is available.

Estimated total project cost = \$250,000

Surrey Art Gallery Vault Expansion and Upgrade

As a “Class A” art museum, the Surrey Art Gallery is mandated to collect, preserve and exhibit artworks. The Gallery maintains the City’s permanent art collection as an asset held in trust for the citizens of Surrey. Many of the artworks are classified as “national treasures” by their certification as Cultural Properties. The majority of artworks acquired by the Gallery over the past 30 years have been received as gifts. The most recent and largest gift was the donation of 37 large photographic prints by Edward Burtynsky during 2008. This collection is currently valued at over \$1.6 million.

At present the storage area for the collection and other art works not on display is the “vault” in the Surrey Arts Centre. The vault meets national standards of environmental control for humidity and temperature and has restricted security access. The storage systems meet strict conservation standards to prolong and preserve the artworks it houses. This storage vault is also used to house significant or extraordinarily valuable artworks on loan, between exhibitions and often enables the Gallery to secure travelling exhibition agreements from lending institutions such as the National Gallery of Canada.

The storage capacity of the vault is no longer sufficient for the City’s needs and its dedicated heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system needing replacement. To allow the City to continue to acquire important artworks and fulfil the mandate of the Surrey Art Gallery, the storage capacity of the vault needs to be increased and its HVAC equipment updated. The vault has a 20-foot ceiling height and, as such a mezzanine level can be constructed within the existing vault to expand the storage capacity of the vault.

It is recommended that the City submit a grant application for the project under the Program, which if successful could result in a grant of \$62,000 to support construction of the project. Funding to support the balance of the project budget requirements is available.

Estimated total project cost = \$186,000

Kensington Prairie Community Centre Renovation

In 2008, the City acquired the Kensington Prairie School from the Surrey School District. Council supported the renovation of the buildings into community space to be operated by the Community and Leisure Services Division of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department to provide a “community-hub” for the growing South Surrey population. The focus of the programming from this complex will be related to early childhood development utilizing a partnership model with community-based organizations, which will maximize the resources and services available at this location. The space will also be used by the community for meeting space and arts-related needs, such as rehearsal space in the gymnasium and art instruction in the multi-purpose spaces within the buildings.

City Council has approved \$1.6 million in the five-year capital program to complete the required renovations to the buildings to satisfy occupancy requirements and allow for the adaptive reuse of the space to meet the above-referenced community needs.

Arts programming and the development of the arts community is an important component of a community’s development and health. The inclusion of arts-related activity spaces in the Kensington Prairie Community Centre will contribute to the overall success of the facility. Space for the arts community is in demand across the City and making space available at a number of locations fosters the development of the arts in all the City’s communities.

It is recommended that the City submit a grant application for the project under the Program, which if successful could result in a grant of \$533,000 to support the construction of the project. Funding to support the balance of the budget requirements is available with the City’s approved financial plan.

Estimated total project cost = \$1.6 million

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, as required by the application process, it is recommended that Council approve the following projects to be included in the City's application for funding under the Canadian Heritage "Cultural Spaces Canada Program" (the "Program"):

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