



City of Kingston
Information Report to Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee
Report Number ARCP-24-007

To:	Chair and Members of the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee
From:	Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff:	Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA
Date of Meeting:	August 8, 2024
Subject:	Community Development – Neighbourhood Activation Fund

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 4. Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community

Goal: See above

Executive Summary:

This report is providing an overview of the Community Development – Neighbourhood Activation Fund (CDNAF) and how it supports community development initiatives.

CDNAF was launched in 2023 with the purpose to pilot how the City can help develop, implement and promote a range of community-based initiatives that activate under-utilized municipal-owned spaces and parks, for use by eligible neighbourhood associations, community groups and under-represented and equity seeking communities. CDNAF provides small-scale, low barrier microgrants to the community to help offset municipal fees for community groups such as the cost for road closures, park booking fees, movie screen rentals and insurance costs.

In 2023, CDNAF supported eight (8) community-based initiatives through microgrants ranging from \$500 to \$1,500 for community organized activations in neighbourhood parks, public spaces and on neighbourhood roads, fostering stronger community connections and increased civic engagement. In addition to funding, staff provided key support to residents who were coordinating these neighbourhood directed community events, helping to navigate the City's

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event booking processes and providing logistics support to build organizer capacity and ensure community members are providing safe, diverse and inclusive events within their neighbourhoods.

For 2024, staff are anticipating that through the CDNAF, fifteen (15) street level events, ten (10) small scale community events and three (3) 'pop-up' movie nights will be made possible.

The application process for CDNAF involves the submission of a basic project proposal; outlining the neighbourhood focused community benefits of the event, how the initiative aligns with the funding criteria, and how the initiative will impact or fill a measurable gap or opportunity in the community. The criteria for funding are shared with all interested community groups to ensure inclusive and equitable access to support initiatives. Applications are evaluated based on their potential impact, inclusivity and sustainability, with a focus on fostering vibrant, connected neighbourhoods through diverse and innovative initiatives.

As the program moves beyond it's initial development phase and becomes more established in 2024, staff are developing a communications plan, a more detailed evaluation and impact report, and opportunities for more alignment with internal and external community grants. Staff have initiated conversations with community-based funding partners and are exploring how CDNAF can be expanded in the future. Staff welcome the feedback of the committee on the intents and implementation of the fund moving forward.

Recommendation:

This report is for information only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Major Projects & Strategic Initiatives	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion

In early 2023, a community development function was established in the Recreation & Leisure department and a full-time Community Development Coordinator was hired. The vision for this community development function was based on three key priorities:

- Create a variety of things to do at the neighbourhood level, to encourage new and diverse connections;
- Connect and strengthen relationships between neighbours by creating more ways to connect with one another; and
- Innovate at the community level to help develop original concepts and inform future projects that are easy to complete and flexible enough to adapt to each of Kingston's unique and amazing neighbourhoods.

A full overview of the community development vision on how to activate neighbourhoods is included as Exhibit A to this report.

In April 2024, the Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA department was formed, which now connects the community development function previously housed in Recreation & Leisure Services into a larger strategic focus and creates direct alignments with the IIDEA team.

Community Development – Neighbourhood Activation Fund

As one of the tools to activate more neighbourhood opportunities in line with the community development vision, the CDNAF was created in the Spring of 2023 and soft launched as a pilot project. The intent of the CDNAF is to support smaller scale neighbourhood level initiatives that build strong community relationships, address municipal community development priorities, and fill gaps in programming and service needs. The CDNAF is comprised of three components: street level events ('Block Parties'), community-led neighbourhood events and pop-up movie nights. The funding is intended to help offset municipal fees for community groups such as the cost for road closures, park booking fees, movie screen rentals and insurance costs. The distribution of funding is coordinated by the Community Development Coordinator who also acts as a point of contact to support residents who are looking for ways to engage members of their community at the neighbourhood level.

Street Level Events - Block Parties

Block Parties are smaller gatherings of less than 200 people and the primary audience is people who live on the street/in the neighbourhood. The goal of Block Parties is to foster social cohesion, community connection and create safer communities through low-cost, easy-to-plan activities. Popular activities for a block party can include a BBQ or potluck, live music, games, sports or holiday or cultural celebrations.

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Small Scale Community Events

A smaller-scale neighbourhood-level initiative is a community-driven project designed to engage residents, promote social interaction and strengthen social ties, and enhance the neighbourhood's cultural and recreational landscape. These initiatives are typically low-cost, easy to organize and focused on bringing people together in meaningful ways. Examples include:

- Small scale music and art events: local concerts, 'open mic' nights and art exhibits that showcase the talents of neighbourhood musicians, artists and performers;
- Ethnocultural programming: activities and events that celebrate the diverse cultural backgrounds of neighbourhood residents. This can include cultural festivals, traditional dance performances and storytelling sessions that highlight different cultural heritages; and
- Neighbourhood celebrations: community gatherings such as holiday celebrations that foster a sense of community and belonging.

Pop-Up Movie Nights

Pop-up movie events supported through CDNAF help to bring diverse communities together with the goal to create welcoming spaces for individuals from ethno-cultural and equity-deserving communities to connect through film. The City's inflatable movie screen is made available to book for these events and staff provide support through the booking and licensing process.

In 2023, through \$12,000 of total funding, CDNAF supported four (4) neighbourhood street level events (block parties) and four small scale neighbourhood-level initiatives. Highlights included the Music in Compton Park event which drew large crowds for live performances, the Lakeside Players' pop-up theatre productions which entertained neighbourhood audiences across five City parks, the Food Resource Sign Pilot at the Oak Street Community Gardens and the new neighbourhood led mural project at the Rideau Heights Community Centre.

Community use of the fund to-date has generated positive impacts that benefit residents and communities, helping to build capacity, strengthen connections, and support vitality within neighbourhoods and across different communities.

In 2024, up to \$35,000 is available through the CDNAF. It is anticipated that CDNAF can support approximately fifteen (15) Block Party initiatives, ten (10) neighbourhood community-led events involving programming in spaces such as community parks and public spaces in Kingston neighbourhoods, and three pop-up movie nights in underutilized neighbourhood parks.

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CDNAF Application and Reporting Process

The application process for CDNAF involves a very basic project proposal outlining community benefits, describing how the initiative aligns with the funding criteria, and how the initiative will impact or fill a measurable gap or opportunity in the community. The guidelines and intake process for CDNAF are attached as Exhibit B of the report. The criteria for funding are shared with all interested community groups to ensure inclusive and equitable access to support initiatives. Applications are evaluated based on their potential impact, inclusivity and sustainability, with a focus on fostering vibrant, connected neighbourhoods through diverse and innovative initiatives.

Recipients of the CDNAF are asked to provide a brief report to the City and share measurable and practical examples of how the needs of the population are better met thanks to the fund.

CDNAF - Next Steps

Staff are working on a CDNAF communications plan to ensure both informal neighbourhood groups and community groups are aware of this funding opportunity. Staff will also build out the information about the grant on the City website.

In the fourth quarter of 2024, staff will summarize the impact of the fund in an impact report. Staff are looking at the right balance between low barrier access to the fund and the ability to measure additional key performance indicators (KPI's). In 2025, staff are anticipating adding a few additional KPIs to the reporting requirement for fund recipients such as participant feedback and satisfaction, new partnerships and connections created, media coverage and social media engagement, and financial sustainability.

Staff have also initiated conversations with internal departments who oversee existing City grant programs, including the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF), the City of Kingston Heritage Fund (CKHF) and the Community Investment Fund (CIF), as CDNAF is intended to complement other City funding programs that support arts, culture, and community-based events and programs. Any group receiving other City grants aren't eligible to apply for a CDNAF microgrant. Staff will be exploring opportunities for more alignment with internal grants as well as external community grants, and how to streamline municipal funding processes and programs that support community services priorities. The CDNAF is also closely aligned with the fee waiver program. Staff from Recreation & Leisure Services are currently leading a review of the fee waiver program in collaboration with staff from Arts & Culture Services, Heritage Services and Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA, and waivers associated with the CDNAF are being considered as part of this review.

Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations

The Neighbourhood Activation Fund is designed to reduce or eliminate barriers that affect excluded individuals or groups by funding community-led initiatives that celebrate diversity and

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promote inclusion. The program fosters an organizational culture of respect and acceptance. Events such as ethnocultural festivals, gatherings and programs that support community building highlight the rich diversity of Kingston's residents, encouraging a welcoming environment for all. The funding also supports initiatives that make municipal-owned spaces and parks more accessible and appealing to diverse groups, helping to attract and retain residents from various backgrounds. For example, providing grants for ethnocultural programming and accessible park facilities ensures that everyone, regardless of background or ability, feels welcome and valued in these public spaces. The CDNAF will significantly reduce barriers by supporting projects that advance IIDEA priorities, creating more inclusive, welcoming, and accessible municipal-owned spaces and parks for all residents of Kingston.

Financial Considerations

Funding to be distributed through the CDNAF in 2024 is up to \$35,000 and is included in the 2024 Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA department operating budget.

Contacts:

Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA, 613-546-4291 extension 4916

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Ben Leslie, Community Development Coordinator, Community Development & Well Being and IIDEA

Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services

Kevin Gibbs, Director, Heritage Services

Tony Gargaro, Manager, Recreation Services, Recreation & Leisure Services

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A - Community Development Framework - PowerPoint

Exhibit B - Community Development - Neighbourhood Activation Fund - Guidelines and Intake Form

City of Kingston

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

FRAMEWORK



**Community
Development**
Create, Connect, Innovate



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

It is a process whereby community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.

Community Development is the evolution and improvement of all aspects of community well-being:

- economic
- social
- environmental
- cultural



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BACKGROUND

- Established in 2023
- Informed by multiple strategies
 - Recreation and Leisure Master Plan
 - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Framework
 - Workforce Development & In-migration Strategy
 - Workplace Inclusion Charter
 - Rural Kingston Economic Strategy
 - Public Art Master Plan



HALF (52%) OF THE RESIDENTS OF KINGSTON HAD
A STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING TO THEIR
COMMUNITY

SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA 2016

RESOURCES



SOURCE: WOODBINE PARK, CANADA DAY 2022

Unlike many of the natural resources on the planet, people are renewable and should be treated as Kingston's most valuable resource.

This can include:

- Healthy Communities, families and lifestyles
- Skills building, education and training
- Employment and career planning
- Building social capital



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VISION

The Community Development vision is based on three key themes:

- **CREATE** a variety of things to do at the neighbourhood level, to encourage new and diverse connections
- **CONNECT** and strengthen relationships between neighbours by creating more ways to connect with one another
- **INNOVATE** at the community level to help develop original concepts and inform future projects that are easy to complete and flexible enough to adapt to each of Kingston's unique and amazing neighbourhoods

INNOVATE

CREATE

CONNECT



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THE MANDATE

Provide expertise and advice as a first point of contact for neighbourhood associations, community groups and underserved/equity seeking communities.

Support community members to navigate existing or new projects, initiatives, and/or programs within their neighbourhoods.

Identify additional community development opportunities with community partners and organizations.

Identify and assess community needs and provide accessible services and programs that encourage participation, increase access and reduce barriers.



Coordinate logistics, leverage resources, and advise on regulations and requirements.

SOURCE: OAK STREET COMMUNITY GARDEN

OBJECTIVES

Block Party Initiative

Council priority - Foster a Connected & Caring Community: Improve road condition & safety

- Temporary format (until website redesign)
- Promotion
- Final costs & application process
 - Easy, Accessible & Dropdown Menu format
 - Modelled after Cities of Calgary/Vancouver



Community Gardens

Council priority - Lead Environmental Stewardship & Climate Action: Support climate action & sustainability

- KILN (Kingston Indigenous Language Nest)
 - Community Garden in City Park
- Oak Street Community Garden
- Kingston East Community Centre (KECC) Development
- Program expansion

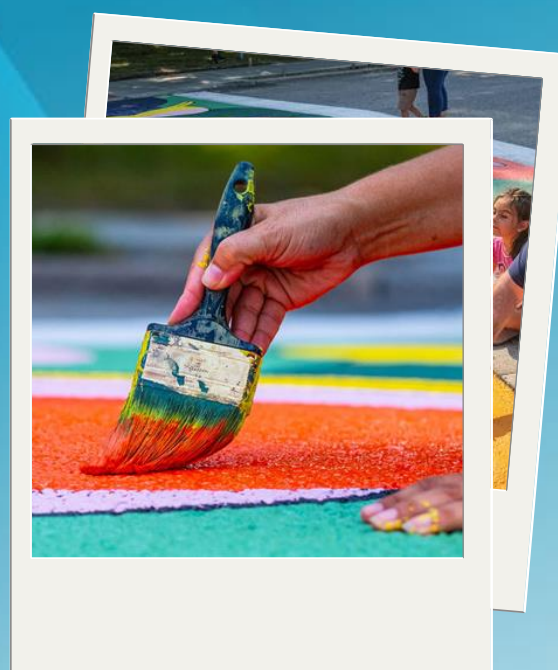


Sidewalk Art Initiative

Council priority - Drive Inclusive Economic Growth: Enhance Kingston as a tourist destination

In Collaboration with Arts & Culture Services

- Traffic Calming Locations
- Artist Collaborations
- Status & Support



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PHASE 2-NEXT STEPS

2024 & beyond

Increase partnership opportunities:

- Neighbourhood level
- Underserved community groups



1 - Identify contacts

Finalize Block Party process:

- Standardized package



2 - Simplify

Secure micro-granting opportunities:

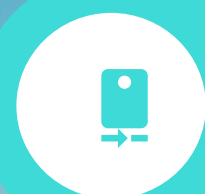
- CFKA
- Waiver of fees



3 - Funding sources

Sidewalk Art Initiative:

- Informed by Block Party Initiative



4 - Pilot Project

Future considerations:

- City of Kingston Culture Map
- Multi-faith calendar
- Land Acknowledgement - website guide



5 - Delivery



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Community Development Neighbourhood Activation Funding

Contact Information

Name of the Organization, Community Group or Neighbourhood Association:

Contact Person Name:

Phone Number:

Email:

Support Information for Community Development Funding

Please provide a short description and location of the event/program:

Please provide a short description of how this event/program will align with the Community Development funding guidelines:



Please describe how this event/program will impact and fill a measurable gap in our community (if applicable):

Please feel free to attach any relevant documents/information to support this application and confirm the following eligibility criteria:

The organization is a Non-Profit in the Province of Ontario and/or a Registered Charity with Canada Revenue Agency ? YES NO

CRA Charitable Registration # (if applicable):

The program/event will be free to attendees: YES NO

The program/event is alcohol-free: YES NO

The program/event is not a fund-raiser: YES NO

To the best of my knowledge, I, the undersigned, certify that the information in this application is true, correct, and complete. I understand that I will be notified of a decision regarding this application within 15 calendar days of submission of a full application. Then the organization has 15 calendar days to complete the booking process.

Signature:

Name (print)

Date:



Community Development Neighbourhood Activation Funding Criteria

City of Kingston's Community Development funding guidelines are a strategic tool used to achieve the City's social, economic and cultural goals. These funding guidelines represent a partnership with community-based organizations that contribute significantly to the goals concerning community capacity, equitable access, well-being, diversity, civic participation and civic cohesion.

To align with the Waiver of Fees Policy, eligible recipients would include:

- A not-for-profit or an organization that operates for the betterment of the community (e.g. neighbourhood association, service club, special interest club, and arts/culture groups)
- Classroom education/training specifically designed to improve skills of volunteers, recreation professionals, coaches and/or trainers
- Applicant must be in good financial standing with the City of Kingston and mandate aligns with the City's priorities
- Programs and services are sustainable with appropriate governance/oversight and are open to the entire community
- The program or service is being offered to the public for free or is priced below comparable market rates with a mechanism to allow subsidized access if users cannot afford

The majority of the City's cultural grants are administered by the arm's length through the [City of Kingston Arts Fund \(CKAF\)](#); however, the Community Development Department can provide financial investments in culture via the programs below.

Community Development Program Funding

The goal of Community Development Program Funding (CDPF) is to ensure all residents in the community have a sense of belonging and can meet their needs for education, healthcare, affordable food access and social and cultural expression. It is also responsible for generating positive impacts that benefit residents and communities to build capacity, strengthen connections and support vitality within neighbourhoods and across different communities.



This is achieved by also focusing on deserving/underrepresented individuals and community groups.

The Community Development program framework is based on three key themes;

- Create opportunities at the neighbourhood level
- Connect and strengthen relationships between neighbours by creating more ways to connect by encouraging new and diverse connections, and use
- Innovation at the community level

The decision to fund an applicant's request depends on the event's alignment with the [City of Kingston Strategic Priority of Fostering a Caring and Inclusive Community](#).

Funding Streams

Funding for eligible programs is available through three program funding streams:

- Multi-Year Operating
- Annual Operating
- Pilot Projects

Impact Report upon completion of the event

You may be asked to provide measurable and practical examples of how the needs of your population are better met thanks to the Community Development Funding. Consider the following questions:

- How many people came to the event?
- Did it make the impact you anticipated?
- Did the project come in on budget?

How to Apply

Applications are currently open.

Please email communitydevelopment@cityofkingston.ca for more information.

