

INQUIRY RESPONSE DATE: March 6, 2025

SUBJECT: Arts, Operating and Major Grant Programs

INQUIRY DATE

February 25, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBER

Councillor Barnhart

INQUIRY

Please provide information on whether Administration will be bringing back a report to Council regarding the Arts, Operating and Major Grant Programs and if so, will the report include the following: addressing lessons learned, improvements made and/or recommendations for improvements, performance measurement, and any proposed adjustments to the application process.

RESPONDING DEPARTMENT

Community Services

RESPONSE

Administration will bring forward a report on the Major and Operating Grant Programs towards the end of the current three-year cycle, as outlined in the Council-approved policy. While there were challenges in the first year of the program, Administration recommends completing the full three-year cycle before considering any substantial changes to the program or policy. This approach ensures that lessons learned are effectively incorporated, processes are refined, and the grant programs continue to align with Council's policy.

For 2025, we are implementing adjustments to make applications easier to complete for applicants. The website is being updated to provide clearer information on available grants, eligibility criteria, application processes, and expected timelines for intakes, decisions, and funding.

Additionally, we are introducing a matrix that all applicants will receive after submitting their Expression of Interest for Major and Operating Grants. This tool will help guide them in preparing their final grant applications. The final application will also include additional questions to account for potential funding adjustments, ensuring greater clarity on possible outcomes of the Major and Operating Grant program.

We are confident that with increased familiarity combined with minor steps we are taking to work further with applicants, will see demonstrable improvements in the coming year(s).