




INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Grants Sub-Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 13, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	City Enrichment Fund – Appeal Process Update (GRA23003(a)) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Mimi John, Grants & Strategic Partnerships Coordinator (905) 546-2424 Ext. 4524
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SIGNATURE:	

COUNCIL DIRECTION

At the May 24, 2023 Council meeting, Council approved a one-time appeal process for all applicants of the 2023 City Enrichment Fund (CEF) with direction to staff to report back to the Grants Sub-Committee:

- That any 2023 City Enrichment Fund (CEF) applicant organization adversely impacted and hindering operational capacity due to recommended funding request amount, report to City of Hamilton, grants staff by June 2, 2023 indicating implications hindering successfully carrying out programming according to appeal requirements;
- That staff be directed to report back on appeals process with an overview of all submitted applicant appeals, in the form of an information report, upon concluding the appeals process to the Grants Sub-Committee by mid-June 2023;

INFORMATION

Staff have developed and implemented an appeal process for the 2023 City Enrichment Fund (CEF) based on Council direction (GRA23003) to support communities and

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OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

organizations that are adversely impacted and/or experiencing hindered operational capacity due to the recommended and approved funding amount. This information report contains an overview of the appeal process, the required criteria outlining eligibility, and an overview of the information collected through appeal submissions.

At the May 24, 2023 Council meeting, Council approved all grant recommendations included in [Appendix A to GRA23003](#) in addition to a one-time appeal process for all 2023 CEF applicants. Following the Council meeting, an online application portal through the City of Hamilton's website was launched in accordance with Council direction outlined in Report GRA23003. The online portal is linked here for reference (<https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/community-funding-grant-programs/appeal-process-2023-city-enrichment-fund>)

The online portal, made available through the City of Hamilton's website, outlined the following:

- The appeal process is open to all 2023 CEF grant applicants. Applicants must demonstrate need and clearly articulate the adverse impacts hindering operational capacity with the original recommended amount.
- Appeals may only be requested by the original applicant named in the application and be made only on the basis of impact to programming on recommended grant amount as per the approved funding rationale.

Appeals must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- The appeal can be submitted for 2023 CEF applicants.
- The organization must showcase significant impact and/or financial hardship affecting the programming (i.e. not able to carry-out programming with current grant funding amount)
- Are seeking appeal funding indicating implications hindering successfully carrying out programming due to the initial approved recommended amount
- The appeal referenced must be in alignment with the original 2023 CEF application request
- Priority status may be given to organizations with limited alternative funding sources, where the City of Hamilton is the primary funder of the program.

Appeal Process:

- Any organization adversely impacted and/or experiencing hindered operational capacity due to the recommended funding request amount may file an appeal by the June 2, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. deadline
- The appeal process is open to all 2023 CEF grant applicants, who can complete and submit the 2023 CEF Appeals Form. Applicants must demonstrate need and clearly articulate the adverse impacts hindering operational capacity with the original recommended amount
- The Grants Sub-Committee will review the list of appeals and identify additional funding amounts.
- CEF staff will notify the applicant with the result of the appeal
- All appeal decisions are final and cannot be contested

Staff communicated the one-time appeals process to all 2023 CEF applicants through the online granting platform, Survey Monkey Apply, on May 24, 2023 and supported community, grant requests, and media inquiries regarding the appeal process.

Communication methods also included updates to the City of Hamilton online webpage, e-mail, extensive outreach via CEF staff networks, and Council communication and reminder e-mails. The following chart provides context on communications relating to the appeals process, inclusive of communication dates and the progress on application intake:

Date	Communication Type	Result/Total Appeals
May 24, 2023	Council Communication (2023 City Enrichment Fund applicant appeals process launched, due date identified, June 2, 2023)	Appeals Launch – immediately following Council Meeting
May 25, 2023	City Enrichment Fund (CEF) Messaging to all 2023 applicants via online platform (Survey Monkey Apply)	Appeals received: 2

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May 29, 2023	Individual inquiries / appeal submissions	Appeals received: 19
May 30, 2023	Individual inquiries / appeal submissions	Appeals received: 22
May 31, 2023	Council Communication (2023 City Enrichment Fund applicant appeals process reminder, due date highlighted, June 2, 2023)	Appeals received: 31
June 1, 2023	Messaging to all 2023 City Enrichment Fund (CEF) applicants via online platform / program area e-mail communication	Appeals received: 59
June 2, 2023	Appeal process closed – 5:00pm	Total appeals received: 73

As per Council's request, the appeal process was intentionally developed to ensure a simplistic, user friendly experience. An online fillable form was developed and provided to applicants for ease of access. The appeal form takes approximately 5-6 minutes to complete according to the form estimator. The appeals form asked the following questions:

- Are you formally appealing the recommended grant amount?
- Is the City of Hamilton your sole granting source?
- Reference Number
- Organization Name
- Program/Event Name (that you are appealing)
- Please specify the total dollar value needed to fulfil your existing 2023 City Enrichment Fund program, inclusive of the recommended amount
- Briefly explain the significant impact and/or financial hardship affecting the programming (i.e. not able to carry-out programming with current recommended grant amount)

By June 2, 2023 at 5:00pm, 73 appeals had been received totalling \$673,742 worth of applicant appeal amounts through the appeal in-take process. The resulting appeals are referenced in Appendix A – GRA23003(a).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As an annual funding program, City Enrichment Fund (CEF) staff are directed to bring forward a funding formula and rationale that does not exceed the approved and allocated overall budget amount. During the 2023 budget process Council approved of \$6,575,410 (8% enhancement included which was approved through the 2023 budget deliberations).

At the May 16, Grants Sub-Committee, staff recommended that all City Enrichment Fund applicants who received a passing score be recommended for funding. The recommendations were intended to ensure an equitable, accountable and transparent rationale. This marked the first time in the fund's history that all eligible applications were recommended for funding, rather than in previous years when grant envelopes had run out prior to funding all organizations which scored a passing grade. For context, 313 applicants were recommended for funding within the original recommendation report.

At the May 18, Audit, Finance & Administration Committee meeting, Committee proposed an amendment to the original report that included the appeal process. At the May 24, 2023 Council meeting, Council also approved a one-time appeal process for all applicants of the 2023 City Enrichment Fund:

- Any organization adversely impacted and/or experiencing hindered operational capacity due to the recommended funding request amount may file an appeal by the June 2, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. deadline
- The appeal process was open to all 2023 CEF grant applicants. Applicants must demonstrate need and clearly articulate the adverse impacts hindering operational capacity with the original recommended amount
- The Grants Sub-Committee will review the appeal, and City Enrichment Fund staff will notify the applicant with the result of the appeal. All appeal decisions are final and cannot be contested.

For more information about the City Enrichment Fund appeals process and eligibility, please visit: <https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/community-funding-grant-programs/appeal-process-2023-city-enrichment-fund>

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix A – GRA23003(a): 2023 City Enrichment Fund – 2023 Appeal List