



100 John West Way  
Aurora, Ontario  
L4G 6J1  
(905) 727-3123  
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora  
**Information Report**  
No. FIN24-014

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**Subject:** 2023 Grant Update

**Prepared by:** Laura Sheardown, Financial Management Advisor

**Department:** Finance

**Date:** April 2, 2024

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**In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may request that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming General Committee or Council meeting agenda for discussion.**

## **Executive Summary**

The intent of this report is to provide Council with a summary of Aurora's grant applications during 2023 and some of the grant applications currently under development.

- The Town applied for \$52.3M in grants during 2023 and has been successful in obtaining approvals for \$5.5M so far
- There are currently 10 grant opportunities under consideration for potential application submission
- Additional resources will enable the Town to apply for more grant opportunities

## **Background**

Grants are a regular source of financing for the town. Financial Management Services has the responsibility to continually monitor and seek opportunities for grants which would be of benefit to the town. Staff from other departments support Finance in this responsibility by bringing forward grant opportunities related to programs that they provide. Further, Financial Management plays a lead role in the active management of most town grant agreements, ensuring all reporting obligations are met as per their specified timelines.

Staff have the delegated authority to submit grant applications for:

- Programs that support services provided by the town
- Currently approved capital projects
- Replacement or refurbishment of current capital assets that are within four years of recommended replacement or refurbishment

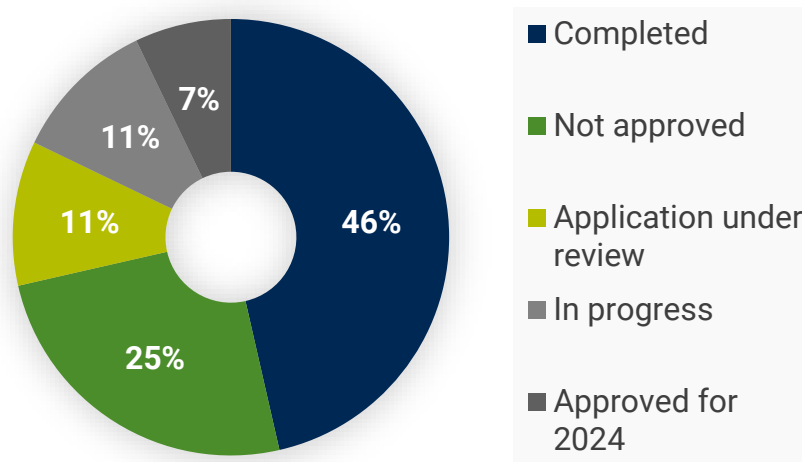
The number of municipal grant opportunities has increased over the past years and shows little sign of slowing. This increase has been experienced from all channels including the federal and provincial governments, as well as the private sector.

### Analysis

**The Town applied for \$52.3M in grants during 2023 and has been successful in obtaining approvals for \$5.5M so far**

During 2023, staff worked on 28 grant files at different stages of their lives. At a high level, 46 percent of grants applied for have been completed with final reports filed and funding received by the town; 11 percent have been approved and are in progress; 25 percent of applications submitted were not successful; 11 percent are still under review; and 7 percent are projects for 2024.

### Summary of Grant Status



Attachment #1 lists all the grant programs to which applications were submitted in 2023, including any that were approved. A status of each application is also provided.

Please note that some grant applications may take several years to conclude from beginning to end. There are many steps in the life of a grant application which may include:

- research and development of application
- grant review and hopeful approval
- execution of a grant agreement, if successful
- completion of associated work/activity
- ongoing reporting to grant provider on progress
- final receipt of grant funds

Each grant program has individual eligibility requirements and funding priorities that must be met to ensure the success of an application.

**There are currently 10 grant opportunities under consideration for potential application submission**

Staff is always searching for new grant opportunities from all sectors. Table 1 presents a summary of the current grant programs under consideration by the Town.

**Table 1**  
**Grant Applications Currently Under Consideration or Development**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Grant Description</b>
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	Funds initiatives that encourage housing development
Commemorate Canada	Eligible projects that relate to an anniversary of national significance and celebrating a 25 <sup>th</sup> , 50 <sup>th</sup> , 75 <sup>th</sup> , 100 <sup>th</sup> , etc. anniversary funding
Community Stories	Support the creation of virtual exhibits that tell historical community stories as part of the Canadian Museum of History
Community War Memorial	Provides restoration funding of war memorials
Greenbelt Foundation	Eligible projects strengthen or protect the Greenbelt's natural and agricultural systems
Greening Action Partnership Fund	Supports projects that enhance and rehabilitate natural areas creating a vibrant and sustainable York region
Housing Enabling Water Systems Fund	Offers funding for the repair, rehabilitation and expansion of core water, wastewater and

Organization	Grant Description
	stormwater projects to promote growth and enable housing
Invasive Species Action Fund	Provides financial support for a wide range of environmental initiatives, with a primary focus on environmental education and green space programs
Legacy Fund	Eligible projects include community-initiated projects to commemorate a significant local historical event or marking the 100 <sup>th</sup> or greater anniversary of such event
TD Friends of the Environment	Supports a wide range of environmental initiatives, with a primary focus on environmental education and green space programs

Staff continue to successfully leverage annual grant programs such as Canada Summer Jobs, Seniors Active Living Centres and Jumpstart.

**Additional resources will enable the Town to apply for more grant opportunities**

As the volume of available grant programs and the competition for these programs continue to grow, the amount of effort necessary to monitor, apply and manage grant agreement obligations has grown substantially. At present, these responsibilities for the most part have rested with Financial Management Services division, representing one of many responsibilities for a Financial Management Advisor. At this point, Financial Management is unable to dedicate as much time toward this responsibility as is required. Unfortunately, because of resource constraints the Town has had to forego some available grant opportunities. In consideration that operating, and capital costs have been subject to significant inflationary pressure and declining development revenues because of Bill 23, the need to maximize all grant opportunities has become very important. If the Town is to do this, it must dedicate more resources toward this responsibility. At this juncture, a full-time position dedicated to grant management is recommended.

**Advisory Committee Review**

Not applicable.

## **Legal Considerations**

None.

## **Financial Implications**

Grant funding has become a regular source of funding for some program areas and asset replacement strategies. Increasing costs and declining development revenues have placed an even greater importance on alternative funding sources such as those offered through grant programs. In support of the Town's maximization of its access to grant revenue opportunities, a new position dedicated to grant management has been included in the 2025 operating budget.

There are no direct financial implications because of this report.

## **Communications Considerations**

The Town of Aurora will use 'inform' as the level of engagement for this project. In order to inform, this report will be posted to the town's website.

## **Climate Change Considerations**

The information contained within this report does not impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

Applying for grant funding contributes to achieving the Strategic Plan guiding principle of 'Leadership in Corporate Management' and providing information reports improves transparency and accountability to the community.

## **Alternative(s) to the Recommendation**

Not applicable.

## **Conclusions**

The Town applied for funding from several different grant programs, successfully obtaining approval for \$5.5M. Staff continue to explore grant funding opportunities to

fund town operations and special projects and explore potential partnerships within the community.

To maximize its grant funding opportunities, the Town must dedicate more resources in support of grant management. It is recommended at this time that a position be fully dedicated toward grant management. The town has been historically unable to take full advantage of the grant opportunities that were available due to limited staff capacity.

## **Attachments**

Attachment #1 – Summary of Grant Applications for 2023

## **Previous Reports**

None.

## **Pre-submission Review**

Agenda Management Team review on March 14, 2024

## **Approvals**

**Approved by Rachel Wainwright-van Kessel, CPA, CMA, Director, Finance**

**Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer**

Grant Program	Project Description	Grant Value (\$)		Status
		Amount Requested	Amount Approved	
Canada Summer Jobs	Aurora - North summer position subsidy	171,430	56,420	Completed
Canada Summer Jobs	Aurora - South summer position subsidy	84,630	54,250	Completed
Canadian Parks & Recreation Association - Green Jobs Initiative 2023	Parks Summer student job subsidy	5,062	5,062	Completed
Celebrate Canada	Canada Day Celebrations 2023	72,550	45,000	Completed
Community Building Fund	SARC Pool repairs	236,400	236,400	Completed
Community Emergency Preparedness	Brush Chipper	45,600	0	Not approved
Community War Memorial	Korean War Memorial	14,250	11,245	Completed
Experience Ontario	Winter Special Event support	62,500	0	Not approved
FCM - Asset Management Grant	Asset Management Plan Improvement/further development	50,000	50,000	Completed
Federal Gas Tax (Canada Community Build Fund)	Funding calculated by formula and applied to various Asset Management projects	1,834,901	1,834,901	Completed
Good Companion Senior Centre	Seniors Centre Without Walls Expansion	4,000	4,000	Completed
Green Municipal Fund	Greener Homes Feasibility Study	174,420	tbd	Application under review
Help Age Canada	Seniors Walking Club	4,800	0	Not approved
Housing Accelerator Fund	Initiatives to accelerate housing development	46,000,000	0	Not approved
Hydro One Community Investment grant	Intergenerational Community Garden	17,500	tbd	Application under review
Inclusive Community Grant program	Intergenerational Accessible Community Garden	54,400	0	Not approved
Invasive Species Action Fund	Buckthorn Management	10,000	0	Not approved
Jayscare Foundation	Community Partners equipment provision	7,500	7,500	Approved for 2024
Jumpstart	Recreation & Healthy Active Living Leadership Course (partnership with YRDSB)	15,000	15,000	Approved for 2024
Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	Various storm water projects	753,800	753,800	Approved and in progress
New Horizons	Connect and Learn with the Aurora Seniors Centre	23,125	tbd	Application under review
Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund	Funding calculated by formula and applied to various Asset Management projects	2,335,687	2,335,687	Completed
Ontario Trillium Foundation Capital Grant through CYGHA	AFLC Arena Improvements	150,000	0	Not approved
Seniors Active Living Centres	Seniors Centre Operating Grant	57,700	51,437	Completed
Seniors Community Grant	The Newcomers Welcome to Aurora Bus Tour	14,450	14,450	Approved and in progress
Squash Canada	Learn to Play Squash Women's Beginner	1,500	4,663	Completed
Tourism Relief Fund	Special event support	52,500	52,500	Completed
Young Canada Works	Museum internship	11,310	11,310	Approved and in progress
		52,265,015	5,543,625	