



The Corporation of the Town of Milton

Report To: Council

From: Steve Palmer, Director, Recreation and Culture

Date: April 15, 2024

Report No: COMS-002-24

Subject: Milton Small Grant Program - Pilot Program Update

Recommendation: THAT the Milton Small Grant Program be approved for annual continuance;

AND THAT the annual allotment from the Milton Community Fund be maintained at \$75,000;

AND THAT the Director, Recreation and Culture be authorized to make minor amendments to the Milton Small Grant Program guidelines.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Milton Small Grant Program (MSGP) was introduced in Spring 2022 as a two (2) year pilot to encourage and enhance support for small scale citizen-led activities.
- MSGP encourages events and activities that support relationship building among community members and provide opportunities for connection, knowledge sharing, cultural exchange and community-building.
- The program is currently funded annually through an allocation of up to \$75,000 from the Milton Community Fund (MCF).
- The maximum annual grant is \$2,500 per applicant.
- To date, 42 Milton recipients (residents and organizations) have been supported.



REPORT

Background

In response to our growing and increasingly diverse community, staff recommended the introduction of a funding stream to encourage and enhance support for small scale citizen-led activities.

The Milton Small Grant Program (MSGP) was introduced in Spring 2022 as a two (2) year pilot program for Milton residents and not-for-profit organizations planning small scale, citizen-led activities/events that enhance the well-being of Milton residents.

To date, there has been 42 recipients and \$56,118 allocated to support local events and activities (Schedule A). The balance of available funding is returned each year to the MCF and re-distributed through the annual allocation process.

The MSGP offers a flexible option for residents / organizations to consider relative to their objectives, with a less demanding application and shorter processing time completed within the same calendar year as compared to the MCF.

Discussion

The MSGP is intended to support not-for-profit organizations, individuals and groups whose events and activities are aligned with the goals of the Town of Milton's strategic action plan and supports relationship building among community members; providing opportunities for connection, knowledge sharing, cultural exchange and community-building.

Program Continuance

In response to an increase in applications submitted each year and availability of funds, staff recommend continuance of the MSGP with a funding upset limit of \$75,000. Proposed changes to the MSGP annual budget would come to Council for approval and annual unspent funds will be returned to the MCF for reallocation. Staff will continue to provide an annual allocation summary for Council's awareness.

MSGP Renaming

While the increase in submitted applications for 2023 suggests growing local awareness of the MSGP, a significant number (47) were declined compared to 2022 (8). Most were related to for-profit/business activities or social service activities, potentially indicating a lack of

Discussion

clarity regarding the purpose of the MSGP. To assist with this, the program has been renamed the 'Milton Community Connections Grant' and further education will be provided to ensure the fund's purpose is clearly stated to prevent the submission of unnecessary applications, and unnecessary administration time.

Program Guidelines

Based on learnings during the pilot phase, minor updates have been made to the funding guidelines (Schedule B) to mimic the Milton Community Fund guidelines (COMS-008-15). Staff propose that they only come to Council for approval if substantive changes are being recommended. This would be based on the following criteria:

- Change to the eligibility for application;
- New category of funding; or
- Focus on the guidelines to support a new strategic program objective.

It is recommended that any other minor adjustments be made through the authority of staff who will review the program annually to ensure it meets the needs of applicants the program is intended to support.

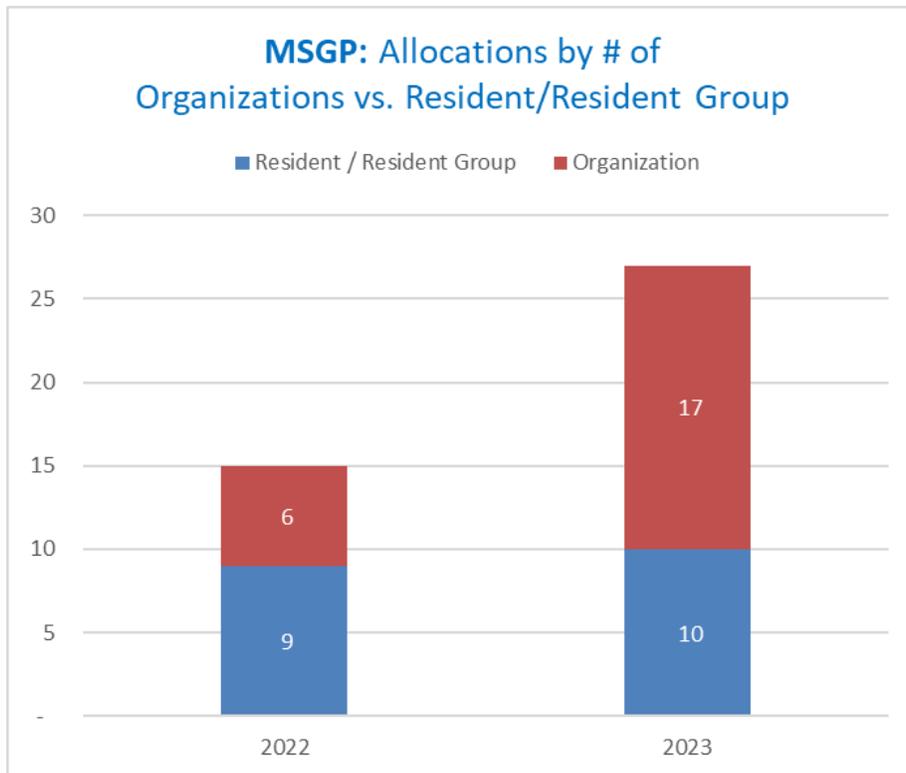
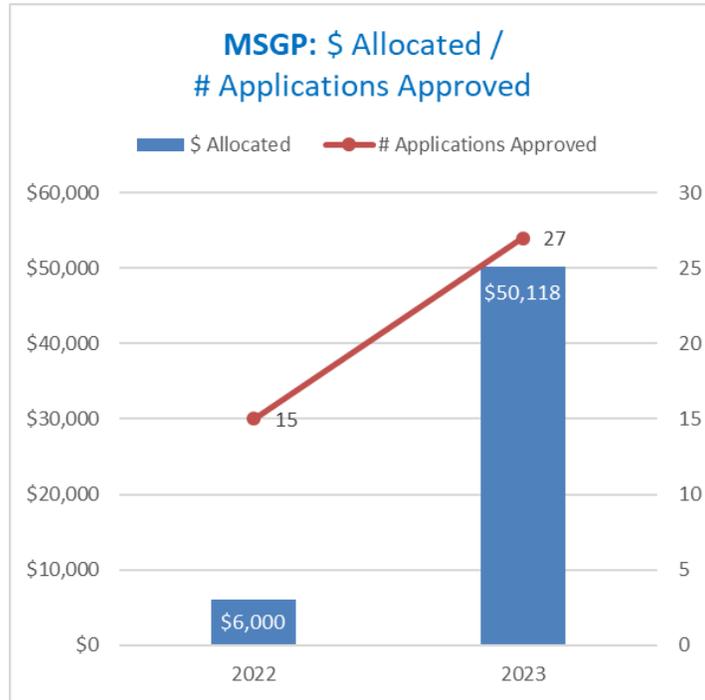
Financial Impact

When the MSGP was introduced (COMS-011-21), it was determined that funding would be provided from within the approved budget for the MCF, with any unused portion being redirected back to the broader MCF each November.

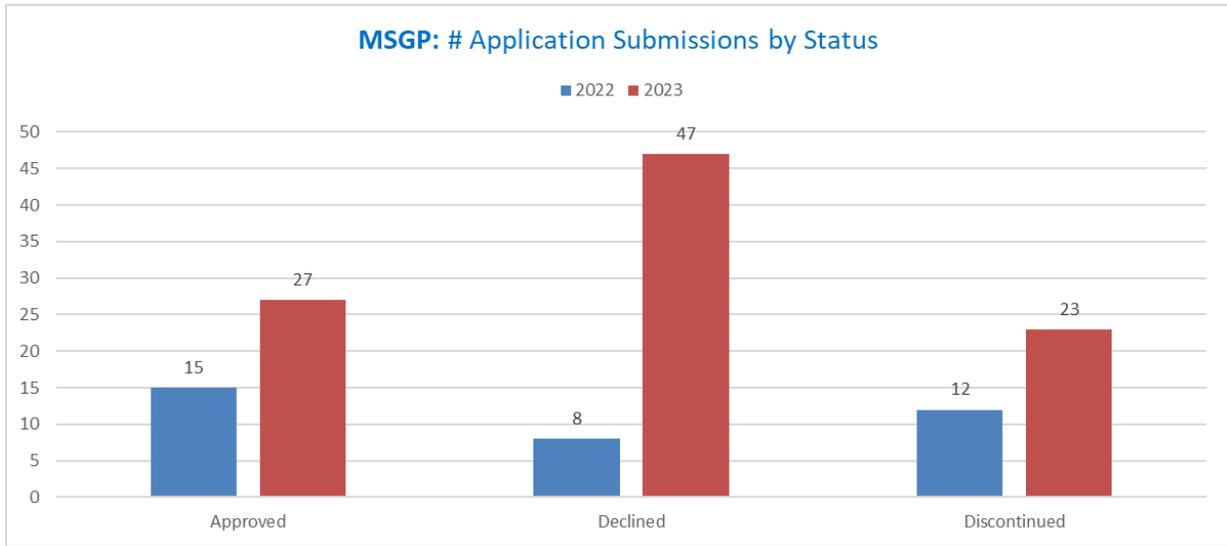
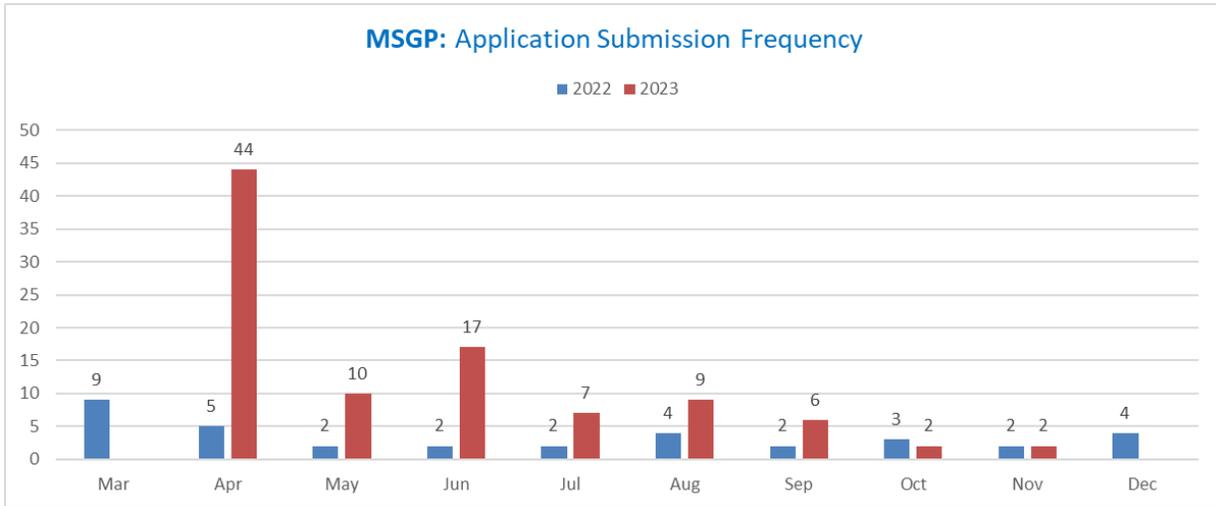
The 2024 budget provides \$500,000 for the MCF, with funding from the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Association revenue that the Town receives each year. Should the MSGP be approved to continue, the upset limit (currently set at \$75,000) will continue to be funded entirely from the approved budget for the MCF. As a result, there will be no impact to the Town's reserve balances or operating budget.

With a per application limit of \$2,500, it is estimated that MSGP can support up to 30 events and activities per year, noting that the number could potentially increase as not all applications will require or be approved for the full \$2,500 limit.

Allocations:



Applications:



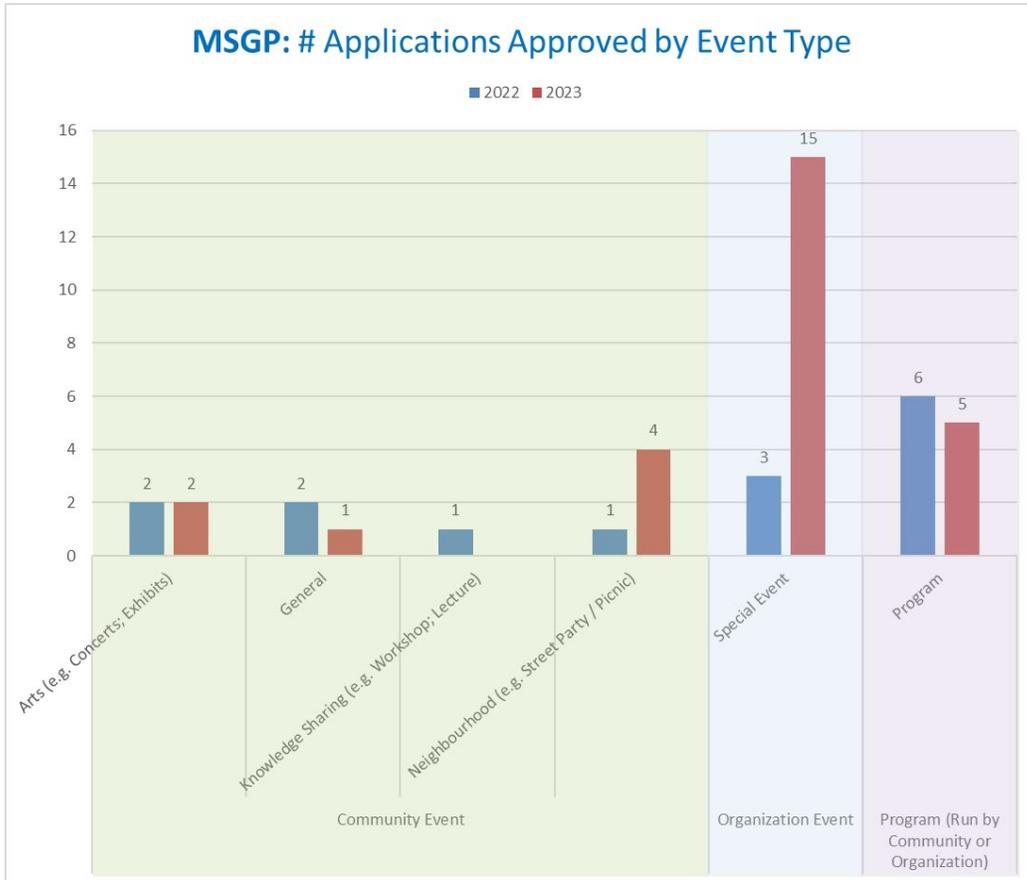
MSGP: # Application Submissions by Status and \$ Allocated

Application Status*	2022		2023		Total \$ Allocated	Total # Applications
	\$ Allocated	# Applications	\$ Allocated	# Applications		
Approved	\$6,000	15	\$50,118	27	\$56,118	42
Declined	\$0	8	\$0	47	\$0	55
Discontinued	\$0	12	\$0	23	\$0	35
Grand Total	\$6,000	35	\$50,118	97	\$56,118	132

* Legend:

- **Approved:** Applications that have been approved and paid, or approved and pending final approval.
- **Declined:** Applications that were declined due to not meeting fund Guidelines.
- **Discontinued:** Applications that were abandoned by applicants that did not answer inquiries for follow-up information.

Events / Activities:



MSGP: # Applications Approved by Event Type

Event Type	2022	2023	Grand Total
Arts (e.g. Concerts; Exhibits)	2	2	4
General	2	1	3
Knowledge Sharing (e.g. Workshop; Lecture)	1	0	1
Neighbourhood (e.g. Street Party / Picnic)	1	4	5
Special Event	3	15	18
Program	6	5	11

Background

Milton residents and nonprofit organizations planning small scale, citizen-led activities that will enhance the well-being of Milton residents, can apply for the Milton Community Connections Grant.

The Milton Community Connections Grant aims to advance the [Culture Plan's](#) mission, which speaks to the role of the Town in collaborating and investing in Milton's diverse people and places in order to elevate local capacity, talent, experiences and relationships. Consideration will be given to residents and organizations that provide recreation, artistic and cultural programs and services for the benefit of the Milton community.

The total funding available for cash grants from the 2024 Milton Community Connections Grant is \$75,000 with a maximum recipient allocation of \$2,500. The program is funded via the [Milton Community Fund](#), which receives funding from the [Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation \(OLG\)](#)'s Mohawk location for the benefit of the community.



Funding Opportunities

Events / Activities that would be eligible for funding include:

- Take place in, or directly benefit the Milton community.
- Are entirely free and accessible for the Milton public to participate in and attend.
- Are publicly accessible and not held on a property associated with an applicant's personal business.
- Provide for community building, opportunity for connection, knowledge sharing and relationship building; which (in alignment with the [Culture Plan](#)) can include:
 - i. Activities that promote raising cultural awareness;
 - ii. Arts and Culture: Workshops, lectures, walking tours, concerts, talent shows, storytelling events, cooking demonstrations, games nights, public art projects / installations, movies in the park;
 - iii. Learn-to-play sports sessions;
 - iv. Neighbourhood street / block parties, picnics;
 - v. Recreation-oriented health & wellness activities;
 - vi. Recreation and Culture focused events / activities that include support for vulnerable or isolated community members; **or**
 - vii. Special Events.

Note: examples listed above are not a complete list; all opportunities that meet and align with the program's purpose, are welcome to be submitted for funding consideration.

Application Steps

Upon review of these program guidelines and eligibility criteria, perspective applicants will follow the steps outlined below:

1. Applicant submits an application form (60 business days prior to the event / activity) via the following webpage: <https://www.milton.ca/en/arts-and-recreation/community-investment.aspx>.
 - Applications are accepted **throughout** the year.
 - This grant is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - Should annual program funding be depleted prior to the end of the calendar year, the application window will be closed from that point and for the remainder of the year.
2. Applications are reviewed by Town staff to assess eligibility / alignment with the program's requirements.
 - Funding may be allocated in any amount as deemed appropriate up to a maximum of \$2,500.
 - All decisions are **final**.

3. Applicants will be notified of application status within 15-business days of submission.
4. Applicants that receive a Pending Approval, run the event / activity.
 - **For Town of Milton property reservation:** Applicant secures reservation via the [Facility Booking Office](mailto:facilitybooking@milton.ca) (facilitybooking@milton.ca; 905-875-5418).
 - **For neighbourhood street / block parties:** Applicant secures permit via the [Street Party Petition Form](#) (permit is free; however, insurance will be required to process the form).
5. Applicants that receive a Pending Approval, submit a Post-Event Summary Form (including all receipts) **within ten (10) business days after the event / activity (and by December 31)**, which are reviewed by Town staff to verify program adherence.
6. Once a Post-Event Summary Form is cleared, the associated grant payment will be remitted.
 - Individuals / organizations unable to accept funding from the OLG, can contact Town staff for more details, as there are alternate funding sources available.
 - Grant recipients can be subject to an audit conducted by the Town of Milton.

Eligibility and Requirements (Applicant)

1. Be a Milton resident / resident group or a Milton-based nonprofit organization, in good financial standing with the Town of Milton.
 - **Resident / Resident Group:**
 - i. The applicant must be 18 years of age or older;
 - ii. A maximum approval of one (1) application, per Milton residential address, per year (proof of address may be requested);
 - Neighbourhood street / block parties: A maximum approval of one (1) application, per Milton street section, per year
 - iii. Resident applications cannot involve organization(s) partnering, presenting, sponsoring the event / activity
 - **Nonprofit Organization:**
 - i. Operate under the authority of an active volunteer board / executive / organizing committee with at least five (5) members, with a minimum of four (4) members not related by blood or marriage;
 - ii. Have a minimum of 75% of its membership / registrants comprised of Milton residents / ratepayers. Recognizing that a broader population base is sometimes required for an organization to be successful, applicants may be exempted from this standard if the organization meets one (1) of the following criteria:
 - Provides an emerging or unique service
 - Services a population with special needs
 - Caters to a high performance/elite level of activity
 - Showcases community events which draw a significant audience base
 - iii. Have a maximum approval of one (1) application, per organization, per year
 - iv. Have a central organization email address and demonstrated online presence proving ease of accessibility to the Milton public.

- v. NOT be:
 - A business / for-profit organization; or an associated nonprofit organization supporting businesses / for-profit organizations;
 - An academics / tutoring-related organization;
 - A foundation that raises funds for nonprofit organizations, or another level of government and their associated groups or agencies;
 - An organization considered to be within the social service sector;
 - An organization whose activities could be deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code;
 - An organization whose purpose is related to political activity.
2. Have completed any previous Town of Milton grant requirements.
3. Have not received any other Town of Milton grant within the same calendar year.
4. Provide proof of General Liability Insurance coverage for any approved allocations or associated events, with a limit of not less than \$5 million proof of insurance, listing the Corporation of the Town of Milton, 150 Mary St., Milton., ON L9T 6Z5 as an additional insured; indication that cross liability is included under the General Liability Policy; and 30 days written notice of cancellation or material change in coverage.
5. Follow all municipal, provincial and federal legislation and by-laws related to the event / activity.
6. Acquire clearance for all inspections / permits / licenses / approvals related to the event / activity.

Eligibility and Requirements (Event / Activity)

The following elements are **eligible** for funding:

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Contract fees (e.g. artists, service people, security, etc.) ✓ Equipment ✓ Food and / or beverages (non-alcoholic) ✓ Music | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Operating costs (e.g. liability insurance, road closures, etc.) ✓ Promotion ✓ Rental Fees ✓ Supplies |
|---|---|

The following elements are **not eligible** for funding:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Academics / tutoring-related activities ✗ Activities deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code ✗ Activities whose purpose is to promote religious doctrine or are being led by a person whose mandate includes the promotion of religious doctrine ✗ Duplication of funding received from another funding organization or level of government ✗ Events that have received funding for three (3) years prior ✗ Flow-through funding (redistribution of funds to others, for example bursaries / scholarships) ✗ Fundraising events or drives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Neighbourhood clean-ups ✗ Political and / or advocacy activities ✗ Purchase of items to be “owned” by someone after the event / activity (e.g. prizes, medals, merchandise, swag) (excludes nonprofit organizations, as long as the items are appropriately associated with the event / activity) ✗ Purchase of any alcohol beverages, tobacco, or cannabis products ✗ Purchase / rental of fireworks and propane tanks ✗ Requests to reimburse individuals for time invested ✗ Social services related activities (e.g. food security, counselling, therapy, mental health focused themes) |
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For questions, please contact:

- **Contact:** Community Services Department
- **Web:** <https://www.milton.ca/en/arts-and-recreation/community-investment.aspx>
- **Phone:** 905-878-7252, ext. 2539
- **E-mail:** MiltonCommunityConnectionsGrant@milton.ca