



Council Report

Report Number:	ED2025-019
Meeting Date:	August 26, 2025
Title:	Economic Development Fund Update
Description:	2025 allocation of the Economic Development Fund and update on Culture program funding
Author and Title:	Rebecca Mustard, Manager, Economic Development

Recommendations:

That Report ED2025-019, **Economic Development Fund Update**, be received;

That the A. Sheila Boyd Heritage Foundation, being an organization that is structured as a not-for-profit Foundation for the purpose of operating and maintaining the Boyd Heritage Museum, be approved for funding of \$14,143.63 from the Economic Development Fund Cultural Facilities Support Grant 2025, and where the organization continues to operate with the same structure and for the same purpose, approve its eligibility to subsequent years of the program; and

That the unallocated funds of \$91,257.28 be transferred to the General Contingency Reserve at the end of the year and be committed to funding the Programs in a subsequent year.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

The Economic Development Fund (CP2024-001) was established in 2024 to support Not-For-Profit organizations operating within the City of Kawartha Lakes for the benefit of the residents and visitors of the City in the focus areas of local economic development and culture.

The Fund provides funding for organizations to advance the strategic priorities of the municipality as detailed in the Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan, Kawartha Lakes Cultural Master Plan, Kawartha Lakes Economic Development Strategy, and other associated plans or policies.

The Fund supports the stability and sustainability of local organizations, supporting their contribution to the community while ensuring organizations retain their independence. The Fund is designed to strengthen partnerships between the City and local organizations for the betterment of the economic vibrancy of the City.

The Economic Development Fund requires Guidelines to be developed for specific funding Programs. As per the Council Policy (CP2024-001), applications are reviewed and authorized by the Director of Development Services, or designate, and reported to Council for information.

In 2025, three funding Programs were offered:

- Local Economic Development Support Grant
- Summer Tourism Experience Fund
- Cultural Facilities Operational Support Grant

This report provides information on the 2025 allocation of the Economic Development Fund and proposed changes to the Program to coordinate municipal cultural funding for improved service to cultural organizations.

Rationale:

1. Local Economic Development Support Grant

The Local Economic Development Support Grant provides operational funding to Not-For-Profit organizations within the City of Kawartha Lakes, emphasizing the significance of hyper-local, place-based initiatives. These initiatives play a pivotal role in fostering a sense of community pride, contributing to the overall economic development of the individual communities. Eligible organizations are Not-For-Profit organizations that are

delivering local economic development initiatives. Further details of eligibility are detailed in the Program Guidelines.

In 2025, Council approved a total budget of \$100,000 for this Program. The Program provides grant funding of up to 25% of operating costs (fixed costs or staffing) or \$20,000, whichever comes first. The funds are to be used towards fixed operating costs and/or fixed staffing costs incurred in 2025.

A total of nine (9) applications were received. Two (2) applications were deemed ineligible: Ampere, and, the United Way. Both organizations provide valuable opportunities in Kawartha Lakes, but do not meet the program's eligibility requirement of a clear and obvious economic development mandate.

Table 1 – Local Economic Development Support Grant

Organization Name	Community	Funding Received
Ampere	Lindsay	\$0
Bobcaygeon and Area Chamber of Commerce	Bobcaygeon	\$20,000.00
Coboconk, Norland and Area Chamber of Commerce	Coboconk	\$20,000.00
Environmental Action Bobcaygeon	Bobcaygeon	\$946.22
Fenelon Falls and Area Chamber of Commerce	Fenelon Falls	\$20,000.00
Kawartha Works Community Co-op	Fenelon Falls	\$2,000.00
Lindsay and District Chamber of Commerce	Lindsay	\$17,000.00
Lindsay Downtown BIA	Lindsay	\$20,000.00
United Way	Lindsay	\$0
Total Approved		\$99,946.22

2. Summer Tourism Experience Grant

This grant program was established during the pandemic as an Empower project to support the tourism economy by enhancing the services provided by local Chambers of Commerce in their summer visitor ambassador programs. The Chambers of Commerce have a long history of providing on-the-ground visitor information services in communities in partnership with the municipal Kawartha Lakes Tourism program.

Chambers of Commerce are eligible to receive up to \$15,000 for Summer Tourism Ambassador Staff and associated programming. The annual funding for this Program is included in the Economic Development Operating Budget.

All (4) Chambers of Commerce applied to this fund.

Table 2 – Summer Tourism Experience Grant

Organization Name	Community	Funding Received
Lindsay and District Chamber of Commerce	Lindsay	\$15,000.00
Bobcaygeon and Area Chamber of Commerce	Bobcaygeon	\$14,990.00
Coboconk, Norland and Area Chamber of Commerce	Coboconk	\$15,000.00
Fenelon Falls and Area Chamber of Commerce	Fenelon Falls	\$15,000.00
Total Approved		\$59,990.00

3. Cultural Facilities Operational Support Grant

The Cultural Facilities Operational Support Grant provides operational funding to Cultural Not-for-Profit organizations within the City of Kawartha Lakes, who offer community cultural initiatives to residents and visitors. These initiatives play a pivotal role in developing cultural, place-based activities, learning opportunities, sharing and celebrating the arts, culture and heritage assets in Kawartha Lakes. Eligible organizations are Not-For-Profit Cultural organizations that have a facility from which they offer public programming. Further eligibility details are provided in the Program Guidelines.

In 2025, Council approved a total budget of \$200,000 for this Program. The Program provides grant funding of up to 25% of operating costs (fixed costs or staffing) or \$20,000, whichever comes first. The funds are to be used towards fixed operating costs and/or fixed staffing costs incurred in 2025.

A total of nine (9) applications were received. Two (2) applications were deemed ineligible, as organizations did not meet the Guideline eligibility criteria: Ottawa Huron Tract Association that does not offer programming from a physical facility in Kawartha Lakes, and, the A. Sheila Boyd Foundation. The A. Sheila Boyd Foundation is recommended for funding as outlined in the report section below. The Flato Academy Theatre is approved for a grant of \$20,000 and will receive these funds in 2025 when

the required documentation for another City funding program has been received and resolved.

Table 3 – Cultural Facilities Operating Support Grant

Organization Name	Community	Funding Received
Flato Academy Theatre*	Lindsay	\$20,000.00
Globus Theatre	Bobcaygeon	\$20,000.00
Kawartha Settlers Village	Bobcaygeon	\$20,000.00
Kirkfield Museum Historic Society	Kirkfield	\$6,967.50
Lindsay Little Theatre	Lindsay	\$5,114.09
Manvers Historical Society	Bethany	\$2,517.50
Ottawa Huron Tract Association		\$0
The Boyd Museum**	Bobcaygeon	\$14,143.63
The Grove Theatre	Fenelon Falls	\$20,000.00
Total Approved		\$108,742.72

The A. Shield Boyd Foundation Eligibility

The Economic Development Fund Program eligibility requirements are detailed in Guidelines for each program. Foundations are not eligible. In 2024, Council approved the eligibility of the A. Sheila Boyd Foundation ('Foundation') as a Not-For-Profit foundation that offers public programming from a facility in Kawartha Lakes. This report requests that provided the structure and function of the organization remains as is, Council will approve eligibility of the A. Sheila Boyd Foundation for future Economic Development Fund Programs.

Cultural Program Funding 2026

The Community Partnership and Development Fund is facilitated by the Community Services Department and including the Culture Fund. The Culture Fund supports not-for-profit cultural groups to enhance their programs and services through marketing and promotional materials or activities, excluding advertising (MD2018-005).

As part of ongoing work to coordinate municipal cultural programming in the Economic Development Division, the Culture Fund is proposed to move from the Community Partnership and Development Fund to become a Program of the Economic Development Fund. The groups and projects currently receiving grant funding through the Culture Fund will maintain eligibility. In addition, the grant offering will be expanded to include projects that support organizational development. The increase in scope of the Culture Fund aligns with the Economic Development Strategy and Cultural Master Plan.

Program Guidelines will be developed for this Program, including updating the Program name, and launched for the 2026 funding year. Cultural organizations will remain eligible for other funding streams under the Community Development and Partnership Fund program. MD2018-005 will be updated and organizations that have received Culture funding from the program in the past will be notified of this change.

Other Alternatives Considered:

The funding approved in 2025 meets the requirements of each Program Guideline and the Council Policy, and the subsequent recommendations are coherent with Council's previous direction. No alternatives are considered.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The Economic Development Fund Programs are designed to support organizations in their operating and/or project-related programs that advance the Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan, Kawartha Lakes Cultural Plan, and/or Kawartha Lakes Economic Development Strategy, and other municipal strategies or policies.

The recommendations within this Report and the 2025 Economic Development Fund Programs implement three of the strategic priorities within the 2024-2027 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan, namely;

1. An Exceptional Quality of Life
2. A Vibrant and Growing Economy
3. Good Government

This work also implements the Economic Development Strategy 2025-2029, namely:

Strategic Priority 2: Invest to support vibrant emerging, established businesses, and cultural organizations, objective 2.3 Strengthen funding programs to stimulate innovation and sustainability of not-for-profit cultural and economic development support organizations.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The 2025 Economic Development Fund is funded through the 2025 Operating Budget. The total funding available was \$360,000 with specific amounts allocated to each program. A total of \$268,678.94 was approved.

Local Economic Development Support Grant

2025 Funding Allocation \$100,000.00

2025 Funds Approved \$99,946.22

Total Remaining \$53.78

Summer Tourism Experience Grant

2025 Funding Allocation \$60,000.00

2025 Funds Approved \$59,990.00

Total Remaining \$10.00

Cultural Facilities Operational Support Grant

2025 Funding Allocation \$200,000.00

2025 Funds Approved \$108,742.72

Total Remaining \$91,257.28

In 2026, the Community Partnership and Development Fund, Culture Fund stream will transfer to the Economic Development Fund and will be funded from the \$200,000 culture specific fund. There are no funds proposed to be transferred from the Community Partnership and Development Fund to the Economic Development Fund.

In 2026, the Economic Development Fund culture funding grant focus area will include both operating costs for eligible not-for-profits, as per the Cultural Facilities Operational Support Grant, and, programming costs.

Consultations:

Director, Community Services

Economic Development Officer- Community, Development Services

Economic Development Officer- Culture, Development Services

Executive Assistant, Community Services

Supervisor, Community Partnerships and Programs, Community Services

Treasurer

Attachments:

None

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Department Head: Leah Barrie, Director, Development Services