



REPORT

Recreation Programs, Culture and Tourism

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Katlyn Jones, Museum Curator and Tourism Coordinator and Amanda Ferraro, Director of Community Services

DATE: March 25, 2024

REPORT: RC-01/24

FILE NO.

SUBJECT: My Main Street Community Activator Program Grant Application

BACKGROUND:

With the completion of the Downtown Culvert Project and the findings of the Downtown Revitalization Project (UDRP), the Township is positioned to begin acting on these findings. It was found that the highest priority for residents and business owners is the redevelopment of Lower Brock Street in a manner that incorporates a Town Square to accommodate events, festivals, and provide a community hub for residents and visitors, while connecting the Upper and Lower sections of Brock Street, increasing economic activity.

As a result of the Culvert Project, properties within Lower Brock Street were removed from the floodplain and now able to be redeveloped. This includes Township owned properties. While permanent redevelopment will take time, this grant proposal allows the Township to continue towards developing a Town Square in the parkette and parking lot next to the previous Coffee Time location, where festivals and events can take place on land that is currently owned by the Township. This Town Square will be inclusive of all abilities and ages, offering a much-needed area for families and children to meet and play, particularly those who live in apartments above the downtown commercial buildings. The objective of the proposal is that the acquisitions procured could transition into a permanent Town Square when the redevelopment occurs.

DISCUSSION:

The My Main Street Community Activator Application is due March 31st, 2024.

Project Title: Creating an Inclusive Uxbridge Town Square

With a focus on 'placemaking', we will develop the first stage of a Town Square in the parkette / parking lot to the west of the old Coffee Time. To enrich the area, we will add streetscaping, play areas, gathering tables, art murals, planters, bike racks, a portable stage, seating, trees, lighting, security, and more. We will engage a part-time resource to help manage and maintain the location. We also plan to request assets to support events at the site. The aim is to enhance the visual appeal, and to provide an accessible and inclusive place to gather that will nurture a sense of community by programming the space. This will in turn support tourism and economic development by providing a central location for wayfinding information and event promotions.

Please note that infrastructure improvements and some capital expenses (i.e. vehicles) are not eligible for this grant opportunity. Also, any current streetscape furniture located within the current Brock St. Parkette can be moved into another location within the downtown.

Funding request will include:

1. Town Square situated in the middle of downtown. This space will be designed by a landscape company who will price out the items and elements to be included. This company will also be the source for implementation support. The proposed Town Square will be equipped with accessible tables, Muskoka chairs configured to promote conversation, patio lighting and planters / barricades and security cameras to create a safe space, bike racks, portable art murals, wayfinding signage to promote trails and historic locations in Uxbridge, an activity hub with equipment geared towards children and open space for programming. This space will be the central location to augment existing events (Local Food Month, Holiday Trail, Santa Claus Parade, Remembrance Day Parade, Springtide Music Festival, Book Drunkard Festival) and host new events (National Truth and Reconciliation Day and Summer Social) planned for 2024.
2. A portable stage/trailer. This will be equipped with temporary accessible staging, sound system, lights, and other items needed for pop up events downtown.
3. Way-finding signage to promote events, parking, cycling, trail and walking routes, as well as in-town tourism information kiosks, such as the library, which is now open on Sundays, offering access to public washrooms all week long. Assets to help promote events downtown through sign or poster holders are also included.

Advisory Support includes:

1. Development Services/ Planning – advising on permits and size and configuration of pop-up Town square and amenities.
2. Facilities Booking Clerk – advising on items to consider when offering municipal space for public events, including permitting, insurance requirements etc.
3. Public Works (Township and Regional) – advising on banner stands, lighting, sidewalk configurations, parking configurations, permitting, and other site, sidewalk, or road use considerations.
4. Fire Department – advising on public safety aspects of configuration
5. Communication/Tourism/Clerks – advising on promotion, branding and website information, communication considerations.
6. Parks Staff – advice on horticultural, planter and streetscaping elements.
7. Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee - input for this project based on Downtown Revitalization Project.
8. Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee- Planning of information kiosks (with land acknowledgement) and Truth and Reconciliation event.
9. Accessibility Committee- Input on Town Square plans, accessibility features and inclusion of accessibility and inclusion considerations in the event planning guide.
10. Age-Friendly Committee- Town Square plans including conversational seating at tables and benches as per Age Friendly Report recommendations. Use of Town Square location to encourage an accessible meeting location, drop-off / pick-up spot for seniors or other groups using the downtown.
11. Santa Claus Parade Committee – confirming how the pop-up Town Square location can be used for accessible or priority inclusive seating (bleachers) and location for an MC for the Parade.
12. Trail Committee- Information kiosks plans
13. Active Transportation Committee- Information kiosk plan and information and valet bike parking system as per Active Transportation Action Plan.
14. Invest Durham- Project inclusions and economic impact analysis/tracking, and signage considerations to move shoppers around downtown.

15. Tourism – event coordination and cross-promotional opportunities

16. BIA – Input on banners, parking signage/maps, beautification wayfinding requirements and possible event collaboration (e.g. Holiday Trail).

17. Art and Visual Enhancement Committee- Information kiosk and mural plans

18. Historical Society / MAC/ Heritage Uxbridge - Support and plans to add historical posters to grace windows of empty storefronts and plaques where appropriate.

19. Funding from the Downtown Revitalization budget can be allocated up to \$50,000 to support grant ask.

Project budget: maximum funding up to \$250,000. There is no requirement for any contributory or matching Township funding for this project. Proposed Project budget: maximum of \$250,000.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

- Cultivate and support creative and innovative business opportunities that are tourism-based.
- Continue to strengthen existing partnerships with government at all levels, as well as business/industry, community organizations and volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Report RC-01/24 of Katlyn Jones, Museum Curator and Tourism Coordinator and Amanda Ferraro, Director of Community Services be received for information;

AND THAT Funding from the Downtown Revitalization budget be allocated up to \$50,000 to support the grant ask.

AND THAT Council approve staff to put forth an application for the 'My Main Street Community Activator Grant' for a maximum funding amount of \$250,000.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Katlyn Jones, Museum Curator and Tourism Coordinator and

Amanda Ferraro, Director of Community Services