TO: Bert Meunier, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Lance Thurston, Commissioner, Department of Community Services
PREPARED BY: Mark Fluhrer, Manager, Policy and Support Services
DATE OF MEETING: February 17, 2004
SUBJECT: Communities in Bloom 2004

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:

Whereas Communities in Bloom is a national beautification program endorsed by the Governor General of Canada, committed to fostering civic pride, natural and architectural heritage conservation, environmental responsibility, beautification and community participation;

And Whereas Kingston’s participation in the Communities in Bloom program was approved by Council in December 2002 as a FOCUS Kingston community development and beautification program under the Cultural Strategic Priority Area; and

And Whereas Kingston was recognized as a national winner of the 2003 “Canadian Classic” competition, for being a vibrant community full of beauty and natural heritage with strong architectural focal points, well landscaped campuses, maintained parks and open, and many existing horticultural displays;

Therefore Be It Resolved that the Council for the Corporation of the City of Kingston confirms its commitment to the ‘Communities in Bloom’ program and its program partners for 2004;

And Further that the extent of Council’s financial contribution to the program be considered as part of the 2004 Council budget deliberations.

ORIGIN/PURPOSE:
This report serves to inform Council of the remarkable success of the Kingston community’s 2003 Communities in Bloom program, and to set the stage for an even more successful 2004 program. The 2003 annual report is attached in Appendix A.
DISCUSSION:

We Won!
The City of Kingston, twinned with the City of Oshawa, and in partnership with the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce (and many other community volunteer partners and citizens), was the **winner of the ‘Canadian Classic’ National Competition** of the 2003 Communities in Bloom program! Winning this prestigious national award is a significant accomplishment that cannot be overstated. Given that this was the Kingston community's first Communities in Bloom competition, the results are all the more remarkable. Please refer to the CIB Year End Report (Appendix ‘A’) where the City of Kingston and the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce's first collaboration is clearly outlined as a resounding success!

Many businesses, agencies, community groups, organizations and citizens came together in a common cause to build a solid workable partnership foundation and program structure. Such agency and institutional collaborations include: Queen's University, St. Lawrence College, Kingston Horticultural Society, Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, Friends of Lemoine Point, The Jewish Community Council to name a few. Such partnerships help build and foster capacity within our community to help off set the effects of ever dwindling resources, which in turn helps our community address the many challenges we face. Such a building of understanding in partnership sets a good example from which to follow on other and like community challenges.

Secondly, the building of civic pride, increased positive national profile for the City of Kingston, increased economic spin off benefits, enhanced quality of life for our residents and cultural and information exchanges amongst local groups and other municipalities (to name a few) adds to the overall effort.

**Communities in Bloom – Much More Than Planting Flowers!**

The 2003 entry into ‘Communities in Bloom’ (CIB) was a pilot initiative for the City of Kingston and the Chamber of Commerce. CIB is a non profit agency that offers a community the opportunity to foster civic pride, environmental responsibility, heritage conservation, and beautification through community participation and the challenge of friendly competition. It is not just about flowers!

This successful program began in Europe and was introduced in Canada in 1995 with initially 29 municipalities on board. There are now over 100 Canadian cities and many other cities in the USA and Europe involved. There are many information and cultural exchange opportunities (networks) created as a result of being a CIB participant. Being a national or provincial winner only enhances the opportunities and benefits of participation.

The program categories include Urban Forestry, Tidiness, Environmental Awareness, Floral Displays, Turf Programs, Heritage Conservation, and Landscaped Areas. Judges visit each community and over a one or two day period visit selected sites, people and organizations. They rate the community based on comprehensive criteria in each category. At the conclusion of the judging and awards ceremonies the community is presented with the results of their grid score. This acts as a very useful tool in addressing challenges and recognizing successes within your community.

The following benefits have been documented by other municipalities:

- Increased tourism,
• Increased marketing and promotional potential from increased quality of life, profile
• Increased economic development benefits
• Decreased vandalism
• Citizens, community groups and organizations, business, municipal and other government agencies all working together and mobilizing to a common cause
• Continuous improvement process for entire community
• Information and cultural exchanges with area and other communities

Why The City of Kingston Got Involved in ‘Communities in Bloom’:
The City of Kingston and its community partners saw the incredible opportunity to use the CIB program as a means of building community capacity, encouraging beautification, enhancing our quality of life, heightening the tourism experience locally and serving as an economic development vehicle.

In December of 2002, Council approved the City of Kingston’s participation in ‘Communities in Bloom’ as described in the Strategic Priority Area Culture FOCUS Kingston Action Plan ‘Beautification’. A partnership with the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce was forged, and in February of 2003, City Council endorsed a partnership with the City of Oshawa for entry in the 2003 Canadian Classic competition.

Winning the Canadian Classic competition has provided Kingston with extensive national media coverage. The community now enjoys an enviable position and profile within the Communities in Bloom program. This can only complement and enhance the City’s tourism initiatives.

Strong Community Demand to Continue With ‘Communities in Bloom’:
Records indicate that the 2003 CIB program accepted over $108,500 in “in-kind” contributions along with a truly remarkable 1900+ hours of volunteer and corporate human resource support. There is a strong community demand to carry on with the CIB program for 2004 and into the future, particularly in light of our achievements in 2003. For example, the Chamber of Commerce, the Kingston Horticultural Society and many other agencies have expressed their continued support to this program. The enormous value of the program from a community development and capacity building and tourism development perspective is well recognized.

There is a sincere desire amongst the community partners to build the program to a sustainable level as called for by the FOCUS Kingston project description as adopted by Council.

To be successful, the CIB program must have strong, consistent and dedicated administrative supports to coordinate activities and sustain the energy and focus of City staff and community volunteers alike. In its first year, the administration of CIB relied heavily on some limited part time staffing assistance and the Herculean efforts of a number of City staff who also were trying to juggle the demands of CIB with other aspects of their jobs. Consequently, the pressures on staff were immense, particularly in the period leading up to and during the program judging. In the post-event Assessment, City staff and community partners identified the need for more administrative.
support to be dedicated to the program, if it is to become sustainable and not adversely affect other staff commitments. It is being suggested that a dedicated Project Coordinator be appointed to the CIB program for at least three quarters of the year.

Having a dedicated project coordinator is the norm for communities that sustain a vibrant CIB program. Oshawa for example, a three time National winner, has a full time Project Coordinator who works and acts as the administrative glue to ensure continuity and quality of program delivery. The position, along with strong consistent funding and community involvement ensure project sustainability.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:
The Official Plans for the three former municipalities all contain guidelines and policies which address then need for physical and aesthetic enhancement of the municipality through development processes and civic stewardship.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN:
Council has endorsed Communities in Bloom as a strategic imitative within FOCUS Kingston Community Strategic Planning initiative for Cultural Development. Community and City participation in this remarkable program is a significant step towards enhancing the quality of life in Kingston.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:
Good financial news for the 2003 Event!
The attached 2003 CIB Year End Report outlines an overall gross expenditure budget of $128,423.89, and reports a year end surplus for the program of almost $5,000. The CIB Committee and its partners raised over $108,500 in ‘in-kind’ services (outside the Corporation of the City of Kingston) with an additional $4,830.00 raised in cash.

Revenue:
- City of Kingston  ($20,000.00)
- Donations  ($4,830.88)
  TOTAL Cash Contributions  ($24,830.88)
- Total “in-kind” proceeds  ($108,584.00)

Expenditures:
- Surplus  ($4,990.99)

(Expenditures include wages and benefits for part time staff support. This also includes ‘in-kind’ hours provided by principal volunteers representing local businesses and organizations. It does not include commitment of time by other City staff). For details see Appendix “A”.


The approved municipal cash contribution to CIB in 2003 was $20,000 as part of the FOCUS Kingston strategic initiative. In addition, the City contributed ‘in-kind’ staffing and resource requirements across a number of divisions. The year end report details these contributions.

In seeking Council’s continued support for this program, City staff and community partners have identified the need for a marginal increase in the City’s staffing commitment in order to sustain the program over time. This would equate to approximately an additional half time position. Staff is currently assessing possible options; a detailed proposal will be forthcoming to Council as part of the 2004 budget deliberations.

In-kind support and cash contributions received from community partners for the 2004 version of CIB are expected to be as strong as or even stronger than in 2003. There is strong community momentum behind this program. We are confident that with the benefit of a year’s experience, and continued commitment from our Steering and support committees, the 2004 CIB competition will be an even broader community success.

CONTACTS:
Mark Fluhrer, Manager, Policy and Support Services, 546-4291, ext. 1342;
Bob Scott, General Manager, Chamber of Commerce, 548 – 4453 ext. 1003

DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:
The 2003 version of Communities in Bloom involved many City of Kingston departments, community agencies, institutions, businesses and community groups. This will be the case once again in 2004. Some of the City Departments, agencies and area institutions involved include: Department of Community Services; Operations Department; Planning and Development Department; Corporate Services Department; Utilities Kingston; The Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Kingston; KEDCO; The Kingston Horticultural Society; Queen’s University; St. Lawrence College; Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority; Friends of Lemoine Point

NOTICE PROVISIONS: N/A
APPENDICES:
2003 Communities in Bloom Year Report

Lance Thurston
Commissioner, Department of Community Services

Bert Meunier
Chief Administrative Officer
TO: Bert Meunier, Chief Administrative Officer
FROM: Lance Thurston, Commissioner, Department of Community Services
PREPARED BY: Mark Fluhrer, Manager, Policy & Support Services
Robin Etherington, Supervisor, Policy & Support Services
DATE OF MEETING: 2004-02-17
SUBJECT: Cultural Capitals of Canada Award Program, Canadian Heritage

RECOMMENDATION:

WHEREAS Council approved the Community Strategic Plan and identified Culture as one of the City’s strategic priorities;

AND WHEREAS the City, through the Department Community Services, promotes the development of community partnerships that are beneficial to our residents;

AND WHEREAS St. Lawrence College has initiated and invited the City to be a partner in the development of the Festival on the St. Lawrence;

AND WHEREAS municipalities may apply to the Government of Canada through its Cultural Capitals of Canada Award program, for matching funds to recognize, support, promote and celebrate culture in our community;

AND WHEREAS the City of Kingston may apply in both the cultural legacy and community celebration streams of the program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council endorses an application to the Cultural Capitals of Canada Award Program in support of the continued development and implementation of the community’s cultural strategic plan and the Festival on the St. Lawrence; it being understood that Council’s financial support to these initiatives is subject to approval of the 2004 budget.

ORIGIN/PURPOSE:
The purpose of the report is to seek Council’s support to submit an application for funding under the Cultural Capitals of Canada Award Program for the City’s Cultural Strategic Planning implementation, as well as the Festival on the St. Lawrence music, heritage and arts initiative as the celebration component of the application. The two components complement each other with regard to the City’s cultural strategic plan for community capacity building and developing a regional events and festivals strategy and network. The Festival on the St. Lawrence will serve as an anchor festival involving many of our
community’s cultural groups as well as being a vibrant regional festival. As part of the cultural strategic planning process we propose to do policy and model development as well as support the Festival. The development of a community-based model for community celebration and event programming and management is a crucial part of the cultural action plans that will be implemented throughout the planning and development phase.

OPTIONS/DISCUSSION:
On May 31, 2002, Heritage Canada announced the creation of the Cultural Capitals of Canada Grant Program; a national program to recognize and celebrate the many benefits of culture in community life. The program has been extended another year. Cultural Capitals of Canada provides awards with matching contributions towards specific cultural activities and past achievements of municipalities with an ongoing commitment to culture. It also provides matching funds for special activities that celebrate the many aspects of culture, and activities that build a legacy by integrating culture into the many aspects of community planning. Each year municipalities of different sizes may apply to win awards that include contributions up to $500,000 towards eligible expenses. The City of Kingston is in the Level 2 size category (50,000 to 125,000). The application deadline is March 15, 2004.

Staff is recommending that the City apply for a Cultural Capitals of Canada Award, with a project that combines the community’s proactive cultural strategic planning with a cultural celebration that places Kingston at the centre of cultural strengthening in the region.

Community Legacy
The first component of the application is directly related to the Kingston community’s engagement in strategic planning. One result of that process is the Cultural Strategic Plan that envisions the strategic priority areas for cultural development over a ten-year period. We are entering the next stage of this process, which is the implementation of cultural action plans for each of the specific priority areas (assets and opportunities, community beautification, and community partnerships and coordination). This will be followed by the development of cultural policies and procedures to guide the City and the community.

Community Celebration
The second component of the application is a partnership with the Festival on the St. Lawrence, to celebrate music, art and heritage with an emphasis on education and community development, as well as cultural tourism across a broad region. The Festival on the St. Lawrence is an opportunity to achieve one of the sustainable visions expressed within the Community’s Cultural Strategic Plan, and as a way to bring many community partners together in celebration. It will promote Kingston as a cultural capital for the region and for Canada.

Festivals are significant cultural attractions that can generate substantial social, economic and cultural benefits for a community. The Festival on the St. Lawrence is becoming our flagship cultural event and is fostering closer cultural and economic ties between Kingston and the many communities in this region. The festival will involve key community stakeholders in a variety of ways: cultural and community organizations, cultural facilities, heritage venues, artists, arts councils, educational institutions, teachers, students, businesses, City departments and agencies, and individual citizens.

St. Lawrence College in Kingston has again secured funding from Human Resources Development Canada to further develop and implement the Festival on the St. Lawrence. The goals of the festival are:
- align cultural, educational and economic organizations in creating a common vision for culture (arts, music and heritage) in the region
- develop opportunities to stimulate economic and cultural tourism
enrich communities in the area through the development and celebration of the arts, and
create a cultural capital with national and international recognition

The Department of Community Services for the City agreed to collaborate with the Festival on the St. Lawrence, as part of the implementation of its cultural strategic plan. Because of this ongoing initiative, a prototype Festival was launched in Kingston and region from May 16 to May 31, 2003. It was tremendously successful with 1000s of visitors, nation-wide media coverage, development of partnerships throughout Kingston and region, such as Doors Open Kingston 2003 and Doors Open Brockville 2003.

The Festival has adopted the theme of music and art in heritage venues. This focus is consistent with some of the objectives contained in the City’s Cultural Strategic Plan. Based on the prototype, the Festival on the St. Lawrence will occur in 2004 throughout Kingston and the region. In 2004, the festival is partnering with St. Lawrence Islands National Park of Canada to celebrate its 100th Anniversary, as well as with the Queen’s School of Music, the Kingston Symphony, Kingston Cantabile Choirs, and the Limestone and Upper Canada School Boards. It is also working to form cooperative relationships with several other cultural groups and events.

The Festival on the St. Lawrence comprises an outstanding arts, music and heritage program that is a meaningful community celebration. Coupled with the City’s affirmative cultural action plans and policies, it will contribute to achieving the Cultural Strategic Plan’s major objectives, lay the foundations for further cultural development and enhance community capacity building between the City and the arts, heritage and business communities, thereby building a cultural legacy for many generations to come.

EXISTING POLICY/BY-LAW:
Not applicable.

LINK TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN:
The City of Kingston has adopted Culture as one of its strategic priorities, as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:
The Cultural Capitals of Canada program is based on matching funds. The City is eligible to receive dollar-for-dollar funds (cash and some in-kind) towards the identified projects - cultural strategic planning and Festival on the St. Lawrence. Staff has crafted this proposal to take advantage of projects and expenditures that are included in the proposed 2004 budget. It would be staff’s recommendation that the strategic planning initiative proceed even if Cultural Capitals grant money is not available.

If in the event that Council does not approve the Cultural strategic initiatives or the Healthy Community Fund Grant allocation to the Festival, the Cultural Capitals application would be either amended or withdrawn as appropriate.

A high level grant application budget is reproduced below.
Proposed/Projected Budget

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<tr>
<th>Expenditures</th>
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<td>Cultural Action Plan &amp; Activities*</td>
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<td><strong>Net Cost</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Notes: * These items are subject to Council approval at budget time and/or as part of the consideration of grant applications.

CONTACTS:
Mark Fluhrer, Manager, Policy & Support Services 546-4291 ext. 1342
Robin Etherington, Supervisor, Policy & Support Services 546-4291 ext. 1255
Ann Pappert, Manager, Cultural Services Division 546-4291 ext. 1341
Dr. Adrienne Shannon, Project Director & Dr. Joy Innis, Artistic Director
Festival on the St. Lawrence Music and Art Festival Initiative

DEPARTMENTS/OTHERS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:
Cultural Services Division; Planning and Development Services; Properties Division; Council Support (Records Management); Legal Services

APPENDICES: Not Applicable

Lance Thurston
Commissioner, Department of Community Services

Bett-Meunier
Chief Administrative Officer