

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: FESTIVALS BURNABY GRANT - SPRING INTAKE 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the disbursement of the Festivals Burnaby Grant totaling \$93,200 for the spring intake this year, as outlined in Attachment 2 of the report titled “Festivals Burnaby Grant – Spring Intake 2025”, dated May 5, 2025, of the Executive Committee of Council meeting, be approved.

REPORT

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on May 5, 2025, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council approval for Festivals Burnaby Grant Program Spring intake recommendation.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of
Council,

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Chair

Councillor P. Calendino
Vice Chair

TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (ECC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE
SUBJECT: **FESTIVALS BURNABY GRANT - SPRING INTAKE 2025**
PURPOSE: To seek Council approval for Festivals Burnaby Grant Program Spring intake recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the disbursement of the Festivals Burnaby Grant totaling \$93,200 for the spring intake this year, as outlined in Attachment 2 of the report titled “Festivals Burnaby Grant – Spring Intake 2025”, dated May 5, 2025, be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Festivals Burnaby Grant recommendations for Small/New, Medium, and Large-scale festivals are being presented for consideration of the Executive Committee of Council to recommend approval by Council. An adjudication panel reviewed the applications using the Council approved criteria and guidelines implemented in 2024. The eligible requests in this report amount to \$152,400 and the panel’s recommendation is \$93,200 in disbursements. If approved, the remaining balance for the fall 2025 intake and the small/new events continuous intake will be \$156,800.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The provision of Festivals Burnaby Grants is aligned with the following Council-adopted policies, plans and strategies: *Burnaby Economic Development Strategy* (2007); *Social Sustainability Strategy* (2011), *Healthy Community Policy* (1991), *Corporate Strategic Plan* (2017), *Parks, Recreation and Culture Interim Facility Allocation Policy* (2023) and the *Benefits Based Approach* (2024) that identifies the importance of a sense of belonging, inclusion and high quality of life.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Since 2011 the Festivals Burnaby Grants have supported special events that enhance community well-being, pride, and sense of belonging through cultural expression and diverse celebrations in public spaces. Eligible applicants are local or regional non-profit or charitable organizations producing festivals that take place in Burnaby. Applications for Medium and Large festivals are accepted through intake processes that occur

annually in the spring and fall. Small scale and new events are accepted year-round, a minimum of 3 months before the event date.

Since 2024 new Council-approved program guidelines and criteria have been implemented and the community organizers have adjusted to the changes with some flexibility during the transition. Feedback will be part of a high-level evaluation, and any recommended adjustments will be brought forward in the fall.

This report reflects the applications received recently and evaluated using the Council approved new program guidelines and criteria.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

An adjudication panel made up of staff from PRC, Finance, Public Affairs, and Engineering (Transportation) meets to review application documents and provides proposed recommendations. For the spring intake, staff from Public Affairs and PRC participated as the other representatives were not available. The eligible applications received for this report are summarized in Attachment 1.

Adjudication Panel Feedback:

Applications were evaluated using a scorecard reflecting the program criteria:

- community participation, benefit and overall impact;
- community collaboration, partnerships and engagement;
- alignment with the City's Strategic Priorities and Plans;
- capacity to implement the project; and
- the need for financial assistance.

Funding recommendations reflect alignment to the program criteria and historical funding. The large-scale category will need further discussion on funding alignment which will be brought forward in the fall with program evaluation and adjustments. High level comments from the panel are as follows:

Large Scale

Philippine Days Festival Society (Grant File # 25-L-001) requested \$ \$25,000 for The Taste of Manila Festival to be held on July 12 – 13, 2025 at Central Park. The event is expected to attract over 5,000 people, consistent with attendance in 2024 and demonstrating growth over the years from 1,500 attendees. Admission is free. The panel encourages the organizer to diversify revenue to sustain the festival and to provide more details in the budget breakdown. The panel recommended \$9,000, an increase of +11% from the previous year, aligning funding with similar large-scale festivals in the category and supporting their growth and increasing production costs.

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre (Grant File # 25-L-002) requested \$20,000 for the two-day Nikkei Matsuri Family Festival to be held on August 30 – 31, 2025 at the

Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre. The event is expected to attract approximately 10,000 attendees, consistent with previous years' actual attendance. The event is ticketed, and the organization has access to other levels of government for grants and therefore the panel recommended \$12,000 with no change from the previous year. Ticket pricing ranges from \$12 per adult and free admission for seniors over 65 years old, youth, children, and Nikkei members.

Canadian Community Action & Restorative Empowerment Society (Grant File # 25-L-003) requested \$25,000 for the Canada Bubble Tea Festival to be held on August 9 - 10, 2025 at Swangard Stadium. The event is expected to attract approximately 10,000 attendees over two days. In the final report submitted for 2024, the actual attendance was 4,700 over three days of the festival. While admission to the event is free, revenues are generated through vendor booth fees and sales of food and drink. The panel recommended \$15,000 with no change from the previous year and the two days format for the festival in 2025.

Korean Cultural Heritage Society (Grant File # 25-L-004) requested \$25,000 for the 23rd Annual Korean Cultural Heritage Festival, to be held on July 19, 2025, at Swangard Stadium. Organizers expect the event to attract approximately 32,000 attendees. The actual attendance reported in 2024 was 20,000. The Society has good sponsorships and community collaboration. The panel recommended consistent funding from 2024 at \$22,000, aligned with other large-scale festivals in the program.

CCSA Canadian Community Services Association (Grant File #25-L-005) requested \$25,000 for the annual Chinese Culture Heritage Festival & 16th Vancouver Water-Splashing Festival, scheduled for July 26-27, 2025, at Swangard Stadium. The event is expected to attract approximately 20,000 attendees. In the Final Report submitted last year, the attendance was 20,000. The panel encouraged the organization to seek more sources of revenue including other levels of government support. The panel recommended \$16,500 with no change from the previous year.

MEDIUM SCALE:

African Sports and Culture Alliance (Grant File #25-M-001) requested \$11,200 for the Annual African Sports and Culture Alliance Sports Festival, scheduled to take place on August 16–17, 2025 at Burnaby Lake Sports Complex. The festival is expected to attract approximately 500 attendees and the final report submitted last year noted attendance with over 700 people. This is a legacy applicant which is being encouraged to increase the cultural focus of the event or transition to a different funding stream under community grants. The main focus of the event is a soccer competition and complemented by some live entertainment and food vendors offering African cuisine. In 2024, the Society removed all cultural elements of the event due to budget constraints. The panel recommends \$3,000 consistent with 2024 funding. Staff will continue to

encourage the applicant to follow the program guidelines and to notify the city if significant changes are made to the proposed event.

Huaren Choir of Vancouver Society (Grant File #25-M-002) requested \$9,000 for the 9th Vancouver Mid-Autumn Festival Concert, scheduled to take place on September 12, 2025, at Michael J. Fox Theatre. The event is expected to attract approximately 550 attendees, and the final report noted a similar number from 2024. The event is a ticketed performance with limited community engagement. Ticket prices are \$30 and \$20 per person (adults, seniors/youth). The panel recommended \$4,000 with no changes from the previous year.

SMALLSCALE/ NEW:

Culture Chats BC Association (Grant File #25-SN-001) requested \$1,200 for Multicultural Art Celebration, scheduled to take place on November 16th, 2025, at the Bonsor Community Centre. The event is expected to attract approximately 200 attendees, up from 100 in 2024. The panel recognized the artistic/cultural nature of the event that serves diverse families at the grassroots level and recommended \$1,200, consistent with the previous year.

Ethiopian Community Association of British Columbia (Grant File #25-SN-002) requested \$4,000 for the Ethiopian Community Summer Festival, scheduled to take place on August 10, 2025, at Swangard Stadium. The event is expected to attract approximately 1,500 attendees. Reported attendance in 2024 was 1,700 people. The event continues to be of value to the community and the panel recommended consistent funding of \$4,000.

Pandit Jasraj School of Music Foundation (Grant File #25-SN-006) requested \$3,000 for Remembering Zakir Hussain (featuring brothers Pritam & Prithwi), scheduled to take place on October 4, 2025, at Burnaby Hall. The event is expected to attract approximately 180 attendees. Reported attendance was similar in 2024. The event is a ticketed performance with limited community engagement. The ticket price is \$35 per person. The panel recommended \$2,500 with no changes from the previous year.

Alegria Soy Cultural and Community Society (Grant File #25-SN-004) requested \$4,000 for World Party 2025 scheduled to take place on July 12th, 2025, at Edmonds Park. The event is expected to attract approximately 500 attendees. The reported attendance last year was 450 people. This grassroots community led event celebrates the cultural strengths of newcomers and established residents in a diverse and growing neighbourhood of Edmonds. The Society will be partnering with the David Suzuki Foundation again and collaborating with many community groups such as the Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Burnaby Intercultural Planning Table, SFU, Hogan's Alley

Society and African Canadian Seniors and Single Parents Association. The panel recommended \$4,000 with no changes from the previous year.

Specific details for each applicant are outlined in **Attachment 2**.

Four applications were declined as they did not meet eligibility criteria and/or program guidelines, specifically the current definition of a festival as “a reoccurring, publicly accessible special event with multiple components organized around a cultural focus having city-wide or regional appeal and accessible to Burnaby residents and visitors “. Cultural activities should be the primary purpose of the festival and not be a secondary element as entertainment.

- Stoney Creek Environment Committee’s Great Salmon Send Off special event focused on environmental stewardship activities with a few entertainment elements. In addition, the application was received less than 3 months prior to the event date.
- EAA Ethiopian Affairs in BC Orange BC Run is an active event (walk, run, stroll) with small pre-run cultural activities in a tent featuring a few Indigenous artists programmed through a partnership with the Moon Tide Reconciliation company (Indigenous business). The organization was established in 2022 and in the initial stages of building capacity and resources.
- Canadian Community Action & Restorative Empowerment Society submitted two applications as the lead applicant and the program specifies that an organization can only receive one grant from this program per year. The Society chose to go forward with their annual Bubble Tea Festival request. The partner organization, Vancouver Young Volunteer Association will be encouraged to apply for the new Canadian Cultural Festival as lead organizer and provide documentation to support their capacity to implement the festival or find an alternative lead partner.
- Student Union Association of BCIT’s Community Winterfest special event is attended by students on campus and attracts some neighbourhood residents and a school fair. The Association was awarded some funds in 2023 for the first Winterfest but did not apply in 2024 to produce this event. In addition, their financial information indicates that they have the resources.

Two community organizations provided updates, specifically:

- The Mabuhay House Society filed a late final report and missed the intake deadline but will work towards an application in the fall for the Pinoy Festival in 2026.
- The Vancouver Cantonese Opera organization were unable to use the grant awarded in 2024 as they could not find availability in any Burnaby facility to host their proposed opera event. The change was adjusted by Legislative

Services and the Finance Department in the financial records. There is no impact on the 2025 budget allocation.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Successful applicants of the Festivals Burnaby Grant program must acknowledge the City's financial assistance on all the program's communications and promotional materials, including brochures, posters, advertisements, websites, news releases, signs, etc.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City's annual Festivals Grant allocation is \$250,000 for 2025, which contributes towards eligible expenses for special event organizers including programming, marketing /promotions, and venue/equipment rental. These festivals make our community vibrant, strengthen our sense of pride and belonging and draw both local audiences and visitors.

If the recommendations in this report are approved, \$156,800 will remain for the fall intake of medium and large festivals in September, as well as for small and new festival applications that are accepted throughout the year.

2025 Festivals Burnaby Budget:	\$250,000
Balance Available:	\$250,000
Eligible Requests in this Report:	\$152,400
Panel Recommendation	\$93,200
Balance Available if Recommendation Approved:	\$156,800

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Morrison-Clark, General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Applications Summary Spring Intake 2025

Attachment 2 – Grant Summary Chart Spring Intake 2025

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Yvonne Chui, Arts Services Manager, and reviewed by Emmaline Hill, Director Culture.