

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: FESTIVALS BURNABY GRANT – JANUARY 2026

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the disbursement of the Festivals Burnaby Grant totaling up to \$7,500 for January, as outlined in Attachment 2 of the report titled “Festivals Burnaby Grant – January 2026”, of the Executive Committee of Council meeting on January 6, 2026, be approved.

REPORT

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on January 6, 2026, received and adopted the attached report seeking Council approval for the Festivals Burnaby Grant Program - January 2026 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 – JANUARY 2026**
PURPOSE: To seek Council approval for Festivals Burnaby Grant Program, January recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the disbursement of the Festivals Burnaby Grant totaling up to \$7,500 for January, as outlined in Attachment 2 of the report titled “Festivals Burnaby Grant – January 2026”, dated January 6, 2026, 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 \$10,500 and the panel’s recommendation is \$7,500 in disbursements.

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.

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 January report, staff from Public Affairs, Finance and PRC participated. 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.

Application deadlines are communicated well in advance on the City's webpage, email reminders, and media releases. Funding recommendations reflect alignment to the program criteria and historical funding. High level comments from the panel are as follows:

LARGE SCALE:

Vancouver Cantonese Opera (file #26-L-001) requested \$7,500 for the for *The Bamboo Theatre – Cantonese Opera Extravaganza* to be held on March 21, 2026 at the Michael J. Fox Theatre and a Pre-Show Workshop to be held at a Burnaby Public Library on March 7, 2026. The event is ticketed. It is expected to attract over 400 people. The panel recommends \$5,000 consistent with previous support as the organization benefits from strong box office ticket sales, grants from other levels of government and sponsorships.

SMALL/NEW SCALE:

Mali Kurdistanian Society (File #26-SN-001) requested \$3,000 for *Kurdish New Year Nawroz* to be held on March 22, 2026, at the Riverway Sports Complex Park. The festival will provide an opportunity to learn about Kurdish culture through music, dance, traditional clothing, art, and food. In 2025, the attendance was approximately 600 people and organizers anticipate 2,000 in 2026. Society continues to have limited capacity, finances, and resources. The panel recommends \$2,500 consistent with the previous year and aligns with others in this category.

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 2026, which contributes towards eligible expenses for special event organizers including programming, marketing and promotions, and venue and 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, the total award for the program in 2026 will be \$7,500 and a balance of \$242,500.

2026 Festivals Burnaby Budget:	\$250,000
Balance Available:	\$250,000
Eligible Requests in this Report:	\$10,500
Panel Recommendation	\$7,500
Balance at fiscal year-end if Recommendation Approved:	\$242,500

Respectfully submitted,

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

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 – Applications Summary January 2026
- Attachment 2 – Grant Summary Chart January 2026

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

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