

Report to Council



Date: February 6, 2023
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Destination Development Grant Funding – Island Stage
Department: Sport & Event Services

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Event Development Supervisor dated February 6, 2023, with respect to the Destination Development grant funding;

AND THAT Council directs staff to apply for grant funding for the Island Stage Rejuvenation Project through the Destination Development Fund;

AND THAT Council support staff to execute all documents necessary to complete the grant, if successful;

AND FURTHER THAT, if the grant is successful, the 2023 Financial Plan be amended to include the receipt of grant funds, and \$250,000 of funds from the City's Partnership Opportunity Reserve R123.

Purpose:

To provide Council with an overview of the Destination Development Grant (DDG) program and receive Council endorsement to apply for DDG funding for the Island Stage Rejuvenation Project.

Background:

Island Stage, located in Waterfront Park, is the focal point for many of the City's outdoor events. The stage was constructed in the early 1990's and is situated on a small man-made lagoon accessible via two suspended concrete walkways. A grass covered bowl provides an informal amphitheater for viewing performances. Though one of Kelowna's premier event spaces, the facility has several constraints and functional issues that prevent it from realizing its full potential as an event hosting site. Industry professionals have commented on the lack of festival space, stage and storage space, accessibility, and aging infrastructure that make it difficult to host events.

In 2022, Council approved budget for a facility assessment and updated conceptual design for potential upgrades to the Island Stage area. Project consultation is currently underway with accessibility, safety,

and flexibility included as key factors for consideration. Outcomes of the consultation process include conceptual site design, technical recommendations, estimated construction costs, and suggested performance infrastructure.

An opportunity for provincial funding through the Province of BC's Destination Development Fund (DDF) recently became available. The DDF aims to invest in projects that foster distinct and global destinations, strengthen year-round economy, increase community vibrancy and resident support for tourism, and support sustainability, accessibility, and inclusion. Staff submitted an initial expression of interest to the DDF for the Island Stage Rejuvenation Project and the City of Kelowna was subsequently invited to proceed to stage 2 of the application process and submit a full DDF application with a maximum request of \$1M.

As part of the full grant application, a Council resolution is required to demonstrate support for the project and funding.

Discussion:

Conceptual design of Island Stage is proposed to be a phased approach to ensure fiscal responsibility by allowing appropriate time to explore funding sources including, but not limited to, taxation, grants, sponsorships, and/or fundraising.

The grant application will address phase 1 of the project which will have an immediate impact on the ability to host larger events and festivals while still maintaining the flexibility needed for community activations that add to the vibrancy of Kelowna and boost visitor experience. Objectives that would be achieved with this funding include:

- increased spectator capacity and event space;
- improved accessibility and safety features, and;
- improved space for functional operations and logistics.

If successful, the DDF, along with the City's contribution from the Partnership Opportunity Reserve, will provide the required funding to expand the festival space and have an immediate impact on hosting events at Island Stage. The construction deadline for use of received Destination Development funding, as dictated by the grant parameters, is March 2025. Further enhancements and phases will be explored through future planning and additional funding opportunities.

Conclusion:

A successful application to the Province of BC's Destination Development Fund will allow for an initial investment and improvement of Island Stage that will have an immediate impact on hosting larger, more significant events while working towards the objective to create an iconic event destination that sets the standard for all of Canada.

Internal Circulation:

Active Living & Culture
Communications
Financial Services
Parks & Buildings Planning
Partnerships & Investments

Considerations applicable to this report:

Financial/Budgetary Considerations: If the grant is successful, the 2023 Financial Plan be amended to include the receipt of grant funds, and \$250,000 of funds from the City's Partnership Opportunity Reserve R123.

External Agency/Public Comments: Consultation with adjacent property owners, residential strata, and the public will provide input to the overall conceptualization of a rejuvenation of Island Stage.

Considerations not applicable to this report:

Legal/Statutory Authority:

Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements:

Existing Policy:

Communications Comments:

Submitted by: C. Babcock, Event Development Supervisor

Approved for inclusion: J. Gabriel, Divisional Director, Active Living & Culture

cc:

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