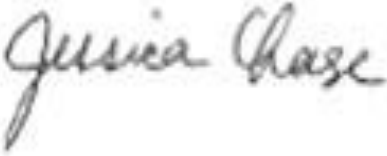




# COMMUNICATION UPDATE

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Members City Council
<b>DATE:</b>	September 17, 2024
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	City Enrichment Fund - Bridge and Appeals Process (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Jessica Chase Acting Director Government Relations and Community Engagement City Manager's Office
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

This communication update is to provide Council with the results of the City Enrichment Fund Bridge and Appeals process which was approved by Council July 12, 2024, and open to the public for applications from July 25 – August 22, 2024.

## Background

The City Enrichment Fund (CEF) program annually invests in local charities, non-profit and grassroots organizations that deliver programs and services to citizens in Hamilton across seven sector areas. At the May 13, 2024, Grants-Sub Committee meeting, staff were directed to report back with a recommended appeals process for CEF and additional funding that may be required.

At the July 3, 2024, Grants-Sub Committee meeting staff presented two processes that were designed to address shortfalls in 2024 funding levels that are largely due to the overall increase in passing applications and impacts of the new CEF funding model. Staff recommended two opportunities for additional one-time funding during the CEF transition period. To address community concerns in an equitable manner, all 2024 CEF applicants were eligible to apply to either the Bridge or Appeals processes.

The Director of Government Relations and Community Engagement received one-time delegated authority to approve and enter into funding agreements with the Bridge and

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OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Appeals applicants to ensure the timely receipt of funding support ahead of the 2025 CEF funding cycle. Applicants were notified of the Bridge and Appeals funding opportunities by direct email, grant portal updates, and with all information made available through the City Enrichment Fund webpage. Applicants were offered additional support through translation services, fillable forms, online video support, and one-on-one staff meetings.

**Bridge Funding**

The one-time Bridge process provided additional funding to returning 2024 CEF applicants that received an A rating and received a lower level of funding in 2024 compared to 2023. User friendly applications were submitted online followed by a weekly internal review and approval process. Following the submission of a Bridge application, applicants were notified of results in approximately 5-8 business days.

In total, 46 Bridge applications were submitted and approved with a total \$378,911 in funding provided. Funding for the one-time Bridge process was supported through the City Enrichment Fund Reserve and the Tax Stabilization Reserve.

**Appeals Funding**

The one-time Appeals process was open to 2024 CEF applicants that experienced unique extenuating circumstances that negatively impacted the success of the submitted application. User friendly applications were submitted during the four-week intake period, with staff assessment and approvals completed within three weeks following the August 22, 2024 application deadline.

In total, 23 Appeal applications were received and 9 Appeal applications were successful with an approved total of \$49,983 in additional funding. The distribution of appeal funds maximizes the \$50,000 available budget and provides impactful funding levels for each passing applicant. Successful appeal applicants with requests of \$5000 or below received 100% of the request, with successful appeal applicants with requests above \$5000 received 75.7%. All Appeals applicants, successful and unsuccessful, were notified of results on September 10, 2024.

Funding for the one-time Appeals process was supported through the Tax Stabilization Reserve.

**Next Steps**

At the July 3, 2024 Grants-Sub Committee meeting, staff were directed to report back on the permanency of an appeals process to the Grants Sub-Committee in advance of

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the 2025 recommendations. Staff are currently evaluating this process and preparing a recommendation for May, 2025.

Should you require any further information, please contact Andrea Carvalho, Advisor, City Enrichment Fund and Community Outreach by e-mail [Andrea.Carvalho@hamilton.ca](mailto:Andrea.Carvalho@hamilton.ca) or 905-546-2424 ext. 6797.

**APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED**

Appendix "A" – Bridge Funding approved by Acting Director September 2024

Appendix "B" – Appeals Funding approved by Acting Director September 2024