

Memorandum

Date: May 4, 2022
Submitted by: Finance and Technology Department – Financial Services Division
Subject: 2022 COVID-19 Response Budget Request – Provincial COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant

As the City enters the third year of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become apparent that there will be a continued need to provide financial and other resources to departments to address pandemic related costs, and the gradual resumption to pre-pandemic levels of service.

There are many situations related to the pandemic that cannot be predicted, as the City returns to normal operations, some departments need a source of funding that was not previously considered through the traditional budget process.

Through 2021 and into 2022, the response to the pandemic is quickly becoming a more normal course of business that is expected to continue well into the future, it is recommended that Covid-19 related expenses be operationalized like other expenses versus charging expenses to a set project budget. The preferred approach is to simply charge all expenses to their appropriate accounts, similar to other budgeted expenses as they arise, with funding applied at year-end to offset any deficits as a result of any extraordinary COVID-19 related costs.

The recommended process is no different than the process followed by all operational budgets; budgets are estimate based on anticipated operational needs, and are then adjusted as situations arise, keeping an eye on the bottom line. The only difference is that COVID-19 expenses can be offset by the Provincial COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant (the Grant), whereas other expenses require an adjustment to the bottom line or a further funding request of Council. The Grant was provided to allow for the continuity in delivery of services affected by the pandemic, and therefore, is being recommended to be applied with this purpose in mind for 2022, as was done in 2021.

Staff are asking Council that \$250,000 be set aside from the Grant to meet the anticipated but unknown expenses in responding to 2022 COVID-19 related expenses and the gradual resumption to pre-pandemic levels of service. The process for this funding follows a similar request for \$500,000 in funding in 2021 where staff were delegated the authority to spend up to a certain level followed by a yearend report on how the funds were actually expended.

The amount of the Grant initially provided by the Province to the City was \$4.647 million. \$1.157 million was needed to balance the 2020 budget as result of revenue losses and expenses related to COVID-19. A further \$1.990 million was required to balance the 2021 budget and offset COVID -19 related net revenue losses and response and recovery expenses. The 2022 Financial Plan included \$206,000 of anticipated COVID-19 funding from the Provincial Restart Grant. The remaining balance of uncommitted funds from Provincial Restart Grant is \$1.294 million. Approval of the additional \$250,000 as request, will result in \$1.044 million

remaining in available funding. The potential \$250,000 in expenses will be approved and tracked by the Finance Division in conjunction with the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).

The recommendation is:

THAT Council approve the utilization of up to \$250,000 of the Provincial COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant to address anticipated 2022 COVID-19 related expenses as recommended in the memo dated May 4, 2022] from the Finance and Technology Department – Financial Services Division regarding 2022 COVID-19 Response Budget Request – Provincial COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	2022 COVID-19 Response Budget Request – Provincial COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	May 10, 2022

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Paul Rockwood, General Manager of Finance and Technology - May 9, 2022 - 12:33 PM

Rosemary Lodge, Manager of Communications and Engagement - May 10, 2022 - 12:46 PM

Tim Savoie, City Manager - May 10, 2022 - 2:26 PM