



Press Release

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PORT COQUITLAM'S NEW CULTURAL GRANTING PROGRAM LAUNCHED

Port Coquitlam, BC, December 10, 2004... The City of Port Coquitlam launches its new Community Cultural Development Investment Program and announces \$18,500 in investments to community cultural development initiatives.

The City of Port Coquitlam believes that the cultural fabric of a community is a sound economic investment and has established this as a priority in building a complete community. The City values the contributions made by artists, cultural groups and community organizations that engage the public through arts, cultural and heritage initiatives. It appreciates that a healthy and sustainable city is a creative city and that a supportive environment for the development of arts and cultural activity can help define Port Coquitlam as a unique place to live and grow.

To this end the City has recently initiated the Community Cultural Development Investment Program. This program is intended to replace the former Arts Fund. The new program was developed following an extensive review of best practices from existing municipal cultural granting programs across the country, as well as through a community consultation process.

The purpose of the new program is not only to demonstrate municipal leadership and to encourage cultural activities that enhance the quality of life for residence but also to stimulate the on-going development of community groups and support excellence in community cultural programming. The program also establishes a system of accountability for civic investments through a required reporting mechanism. The program has three distinct categories each with its own criteria and investment processes.

The **Organization Category** encourages well-established organizations to seek investments towards their on-going operating expenses through a detailed proposal process. City Council has the opportunity to place cultural groups onto the program, which offers multi-year commitments, conditional on a review every third year. This category is not intended to be competitive but to provide an opportunity for groups to continue their organizational development process in part as a result of feedback received during the proposal review process. It is anticipated that systematically over time and as funding permits all eligible organizations will receive Organization Investments from the City. Proposals will be received once annually in this category.

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The **Project Category** offers investments for special, one-time only activities that will benefit the community or for regular programming of organizations that are not yet in receipt of an Organization Investment. And finally, the Development Category offers successful candidates assistance in creating new, innovative initiatives, specifically those that involve the community as active participants, in facilitating organizational development or in seeding newly formed organizations. This category also considers applications from individual artists who are proposing ideas that will engage the community. Applications in these two categories are received twice per year.

This fall the City received and reviewed the first applications to the Program. A community-based Review Panel, assigned through the Council-approved Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee, review all fall submissions to the Program and provided recommendations to the Parks and Recreation Committee of Council, who approved the investments.

A total of \$18,500 was invested as a result of the fall 2004 adjudications, as well as \$9,500 in awards given earlier in the year through the former Arts Fund for a total of \$28,000. In addition, starting in 2005, the Terry Fox Theatre Advisory Group (TAG) has been awarded an annual investment of \$20,000 in the Organization category.

TAG represents the first group to be placed in this category. At a recent gala reception hosted at the theatre, Mayor Scott Young was pleased to announce this investment in TAG on behalf of the City. Earlier this fall TAG assumed responsibility for operating the Terry Fox Theatre through an agreement with School District 43.

In addition to the Terry Fox Theatre Advisory Group investment three Project category investments were made to the Port Coquitlam Heritage and Culture Society (\$2,500) towards an historical wedding project; to Stage 43 Theatrical Society (\$1,000) for assistance in hosting the Fraser Zone Theatrical Festival; to Arts Connect Tri-City Arts Council (\$2,500) for on-going community cultural activities, such as their Youth Art Show displayed during May Day.

In the Development category two investments were made during the fall adjudication. Crossroads Hospice Society received \$3,000 towards the creation of a mural as a reflection on the end of life to foster hope and interconnectedness. Coastal Sound Music Academy was approved for a Development Investment of \$7,500 to continue their outreach programming within Port Coquitlam.

For 2005 a total of \$30,000 is available for successful investment applications in the Project and Development categories. Spring application deadlines and packages will be available in January through the Parks and Recreation Department's Arts and Culture Program Coordinator, Susan Hull, who can be reached at 604-927-7906 or hulls@portcoquitlam.ca.

For additional information, contact:

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