

## Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

**To:** Chair and Members  
Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

**From:** Lynne Livingstone  
City Manager

**Subject:** Access to City of London Funding for Social and Economic Recovery – London Community Recovery Network

**Date:** March 8, 2022

## Recommendation

That, on the recommendation of the City Manager, the following actions be taken with respect to access to City of London funding for social and economic recovery – London Community Recovery Network:

- a) The proposed formal process for accessing community recovery funding, **BE ENDORSED**; and,
- b) The amount of \$100,000 over two years (2022-2023) from funding set aside by City Council to support social and economic recovery **BE APPROVED** for allocation to the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development to create the LCRN Readiness Fund in support of small-scale recovery efforts in the community; and,
- c) The report entitled Access to City of London Funding for Social and Economic Recovery – London Community Recovery Network **BE RECEIVED**.

## Executive Summary

Early in the pandemic, London City Council established the London Community Recovery Network (LCRN) in partnership with leaders from London's public, private, non-profit, and institutional sectors and those representing communities that have experienced disproportionate impacts from COVID-19. The purpose of the LCRN is to work to drive a strong and inclusive recovery for London.

Between fall 2020 and spring 2021, Council approved a total of \$10 million to be set aside to support social and economic recovery measures. Through the course of the LCRN's work, several submissions have been presented to City Council where City funding was requested to support community recovery initiatives. To date, Council has approved a total allocation of \$3.6 million towards several business cases in support of these measures.

The process used to date to receive submissions has been ad hoc. Civic Administration is proposing refinements to this process to support greater alignment of submissions with the LCRN Framework and to provide greater clarity for the community to access the funding set aside by London City Council.

The report also recommends allocating up to \$100,000 over two years (2022-2023) to create the LCRN Readiness Fund. This funding would support small scale recovery initiatives that align directly to the LCRN Framework. This funding is proposed to allow Civic Administration to move swiftly and thoughtfully to support community initiatives.

## Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

The London Community Recovery Framework includes strong alignment with all key areas of focus under the City of London Strategic Plan:

Strengthening our Community:

- Londoners have access to the supports they need to be successful
- Londoners have access to the services and supports that promote well-being, health, and safety in their neighbourhoods and across the city

Building a Sustainable City

- London has a strong and healthy environment
- Londoners can move around the city safely and easily in a manner that meets their needs

Growing our Economy:

- London will develop a top-quality workforce
- London is a leader in Ontario for attracting new jobs and investments
- London creates a supportive environment where entrepreneurs, businesses and talent can thrive

Creating a Safe City for Women and Girls

- London has enhanced the potential for women and girls to live safe lives

Leading in Public Service

- The City of London is trusted, open, and accountable in service of our community
- Londoners experience exceptional and valued customer service

In addition, the London Community Recovery Framework aligns with the City of London's commitment to Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression by intentionally seeking input from equity-deserving groups and by ensuring that contributions toward shared measures are inclusive and equitable for all Londoners.

## Analysis

### 1.0 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- London Community Recovery Framework – October 19, 2021, SPPC
- London Community Recovery Network – Community Led Ideas – Business Cases – May 18, 2021, SPPC
- London Community Recovery Network – Immediate Ideas for Action to Support London's COVID-19 Community Recovery – December 16, 2020, SPPC
- 2020 Mid-Year Operating Budget Monitoring Report & COVID-19 Financial Impacts - September 20, 2020, SPPC
- First Report of the London Community Recovery Network – July 14, 2020, SPPC
- Covid-19 Financial Impacts – Update – June 23, 2020, SPPC
- Second Report from the Mayor's Economic and Social Impact and Recovery Task Forces – May 8, 2020
- Covid-19 Financial Impacts and Additional Measures for Community Relief – April 28, 2020, SPPC
- Homeless Prevention COVID-19 Response and Funding Overview, Community and Protective Services Committee, April 28, 2020, Consent Item # 2.3
- Property Tax Deferral Options – April 14, 2020, CSC
- First Report from the Mayor's Economic and Social Impact and Recovery Task Forces – April 9, 2020

## **2.0 Background**

In its first phase of work from September 2020 to December 2020, LCRN members identified 70 ideas for action to drive an immediate community response to the impacts of the pandemic in our community. In its second phase of work from March 2021 to the present, LCRN members adopted a whole-of-community approach with an eye to a 1–3-year horizon. The result of this work was the creation of the London Community Recovery Framework (LCRN Framework), which provides a common vision and shared measures to guide and align community recovery and renewal efforts. The LCRN Framework was unanimously endorsed by LCRN members, including City Council on October 26, 2021. On September 29, 2020, Council approved an allocation of \$5 million from the 2020 projected year end surplus to be placed in the Economic Development Reserve Fund to support social and economic recovery measures. On May 4, 2021, Council approved an additional allocation of \$5 million to support social and economic recovery measures.

In February 2021, Council approved \$1.9 million from this funding to support initiatives brought forward by City service areas. In May 2021, Council approved an additional \$1.3 million to support five ideas brought forward by the community. Over the past few months, two additional community business cases were approved for a total of \$357,000, for a total Council approved allocation of \$3.6 million, leaving \$6.4 million still available to be allocated to support social and economic recovery measures.

Since this funding was established, Civic Administration has followed an ad hoc process to manage requests to access the funding earmarked for this purpose in the Economic Development Reserve Fund. This process is not well understood outside of the organization. The proposed process will:

- Provide a clear and simple process that can be communicated to LCRN members to remove uncertainty to access City recovery funding.
- Incorporate an internal staff review element to community proposals that will ensure alignment with the LCRN Framework before a proposal appears before Council.

In addition, the proposal below includes a recommendation to establish a small fund to be administered by the City of London Community Recovery Working Group (CRWG) to consider small scale community recovery initiatives or supports that both align with the LCRN Framework and are too small to justify a business case delivered through the Council process.

## **3.0 Discussion**

### **3.1 Formal Process for Accessing Community Recovery Funding**

Currently, LCRN members are accessing community recovery funding through an ad hoc process. The City of London Community Recovery Working Group (CRWG) is looking to refine and clarify the process to support LCRN members over the three-year term of the initiative. The CRWG includes representatives from all Service Areas and has served as the primary staff support for the LCRN. A simple five step process to submit a proposal for Council consideration is proposed:

1. If a proponent decides to pursue City funding, they will submit a precis of the idea through a form on [GetInvolved.london.ca](https://www.getinvolved.london.ca).
2. Members of the CRWG will review the precis and provide comments back to the proponent. Comments may speak to alignment with the LCRN Framework, or any restrictions of the use of municipal funding.
3. Feedback from the CRWG will be provided to the proponent along with the standardized business case template to be completed if the proponent wishes to move forward.

4. The CRWG will work with the proponent to provide advice to complete the standardized business case template. Concurrently, the CRWG will complete a cover report for SPPC to accompany the business case. The cover report will include information on how the case aligns with the LCRN Framework as well as the broader context for London's community recovery.
5. The proponent submits the business case which is paired with the CRWG cover report and submitted to the next SPPC meeting for consideration by Council.

### **3.2 LCRN Readiness Fund**

Civic Administration has worked with the community through the LCRN process since July 2020. Throughout the course of this work, several cases have emerged where small-scale funding that can be thoughtfully and quickly distributed could help unlock community recovery. Civic Administration is proposing an LCRN Readiness Fund to address these potential opportunities. The funding would overcome the time constraints of a committee report and relieve Council from approving small scale requests that align strongly with the LCRN Framework.

Civic Administration is proposing that Council approve a process to allocate up to \$100,000 over two years (2022-2023) to create an LCRN Readiness Fund. This funding would be allocated to the Economic Partnerships business unit under the Planning and Economic Development Service Area to hold on behalf of the City of London CRWG. This fund would be available to allocate up to \$5,000 per project to support projects that:

- Require seed money to test ideas in advance of a more formal ask to City or other orders of government; OR
- May leverage further investment from the community or other orders of government for small scale initiatives; OR
- Require small investment to scale up, expand, or enhance a recovery idea;

Requests for funding from the LCRN Readiness Fund must:

- Be in alignment with the London Community Recovery Framework vision/focus areas/shared indicators; AND
- Not be prohibited under the Municipal Act or other pertinent legislation or regulations on the use of municipal dollars.

Requests for funding may come from City service areas if other sources of funding have been exhausted. Requests for funding would be recommended by the CRWG and approved by the Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development.

The allocation of this funding would be reported out twice annually: during the Council report following the LCRN Mid-Year Showcase and Discussion Forum in the spring; and, the annual LCRN update late in the year.

If the CRWG is not comfortable approving a request for access to the LCRN Readiness Fund, the proponent may approach Council through the formal process outlined above.

### **4.0 Financial Considerations**

Between fall 2020 and spring 2021, Council approved a total of \$10 million to be set aside to support social and economic recovery measures. To date, the total Council approved allocation is \$3.6 million, leaving \$6.4 million still available to be allocated.

The proposed process for accessing community recovery funding simply formalizes the process that has been followed thus far to receive Council approval of the \$3.6 million allocated to date.

The source of funding for the \$100,000 commitment for the LCRN Readiness Fund is the funding set aside by Council for social and economic recovery within the Economic Development Reserve Fund.

## **Conclusion**

This purpose of this report was to provide clarity to the community regarding how organizations may seek access to the Council approved funding for social and economic recovery maintained in the Economic Development Reserve Fund. Two processes were outlined.

First is the formal process for accessing community recovery funding through a request to SPPC including a business case, prepared with support from the City of London Community Recovery Working Group.

The second process is through a proposed LCRN Readiness Fund that would support small-scale recovery and renewal efforts that align with the LCRN Framework. The LCRN Readiness Fund would allocate up to \$5,000 per project to support projects that require seed money to test ideas in advance of a more formal funding ask or may leverage further investment from the community or other orders of government or may require a small investment to scale up, expand, or enhance a recovery idea. This report includes a recommendation that Council approves an allocation of up to \$100,000 over two years (2022-2023) to create an LCRN Readiness Fund.

**Prepared and submitted by:**            **Adam Thompson, Manager,  
Government and External Relations**

**Recommended by:**                        **Lynne Livingstone, City Manager**

cc.    Members of the London Community Recovery Network  
      City of London Senior Leadership Team  
      London Community Recovery Working Group