



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 26-046**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services  
**Resource Staff:** Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services  
**Date of Meeting:** February 3, 2026  
**Subject:** The Tragically Hip Final Concert 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: 4. Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community

Goal: 4.4 Celebrate and enable civic engagement. Goal: 4.4 Celebrate and enable civic engagement.

Theme: 5. Drive Inclusive Economic Growth

Goal: 5.5 Continue to enhance Kingston as a tourist destination.

Goal: 5.7 Foster culture, history, education, arts and recreation (CHEAR).

Goal: 5.8 Ensure the downtown remains vibrant.

**Executive Summary:**

2026 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert that was held in the band's hometown of Kingston on August 20, 2016, at the Rogers KRock Centre, as it was named back then. That historic concert as part of their Man Machine Poem Tour was broadcast live by CBC and watched in Springer Market Square by more than 25,000 people and became a defining cultural moment for Kingston and for millions of fans across the country. The City coordinated the concert streaming in Springer Market Square and Council approved \$150,000 from the Working Fund Reserve to support sound and visual production needs for this community event.

In preparation for 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, City staff and partners including Tourism Kingston and the Downtown Kingston BIA are in conversations on several potential

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programming opportunities that would occur throughout 2026 and that would require a one-time municipal budget contribution in support of these programs and activations. Staff are not able to discuss specific activation details as negotiations are ongoing but will share information on these opportunities with Council and with the public as confirmed over the course of 2026.

Staff are seeking Council's approval for up to \$350,000 in one-time funding from the Working Fund Reserve in 2026 to support the planning underway, and to advance on various opportunities. The City and partners are also in the process of applying for grants, seeking sponsorships and considering additional sources including the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) to offset the months-long programming costs which are anticipated to be \$600,000.

**Recommendation:**

**That** a total of up to \$350,000 for programming, events and activations and associated production needs to support the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert in Kingston be funded from the Working Fund Reserve; and

**That** Council delegate authority to the Director of Arts & Culture Services to enter into the necessary agreements to support the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert in Kingston programming, events and activations; and

**That** Council delegate authority to the Director of Arts & Culture Services to approve waiving of any applicable fees through the Fees and Charges By-Law, including rental fees for City venues and/or parks and public spaces, to support in-kind services and contributions to support events, programming and activations directly related to the City and partner led 2026 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the final concert of The Tragically Hip; and

**That** Council delegate authority to the Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Financial Officer or their delegates to proceed directly to non-standard procurement as identified in By-Law Number 2022-154, A By-Law to Establish a Procurement Policy for the City of Kingston, to award contracts, as necessary to support events, programming and activations directly related to the City and partner led 2026 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the final concert of The Tragically Hip; and

**That** staff report back to Council by the end of Q2 2026 on the programming, events and activations that are confirmed and that will provide opportunities for the community to come together to celebrate this anniversary.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

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**Jennifer Campbell,**  
**Commissioner, Community**  
**Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

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**Lanie Hurdle, Chief**  
**Administrative Officer**

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	
Jenna Morley, City Solicitor	Not required
Ian Semple, Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required

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**Options/Discussion:****Background**

2026 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert, that was held in the band's hometown of Kingston on August 20, 2016, at the Rogers KRock Centre, as it was named back then. That historic concert was part of their Man Machine Poem Tour which was broadcast live by CBC and watched live in Springer Market Square by more than 25,000 people and by more than 11.7 million Canadians across the country and became a defining cultural moment for Kingston.

To enable this large-scale community gathering in 2016, Council approved a motion at its meeting on July 12, 2016, directing staff to coordinate the necessary visual and sound production to support the live feed downtown. Council also approved a budget of up to \$150,000 for this effort, funded through the Working Fund Reserve, ensuring that residents could come together to share in this nationally significant event.

**Analysis**

City staff and partners, including Tourism Kingston and the Downtown Kingston BIA, are anticipating significant community interest to mark and celebrate this major anniversary through music programming, events and activations, anticipated to start in the spring of 2026 and carry on until the end of year. Planning meetings are already underway to develop and coordinate on programming. With expectations of renewed attention on Kingston during this milestone year, the City and partners are preparing opportunities for residents and visitors to engage, reflect and celebrate the band's deep connection to Kingston and their profound impact on music and culture globally.

As part of this planning, staff and partners are in conversations on several potential opportunities that require an understanding of a municipal contribution to the total programming budget, which is why staff are requesting through this report, a one-time contribution from the Working Fund Reserve to support these celebrations throughout 2026. The City and partners are also in the process of applying for grants, seeking sponsorships and considering additional sources including the Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT) to offset the year long programming costs which are anticipated to total \$600,000.

Staff cannot discuss specific activation details as negotiations are ongoing but will share more information on these opportunities with Council and the public as programming is confirmed in the coming months.

**Financial Considerations**

A total of up to \$350,000 from the Working Fund Reserve is being requested in 2026 to support programming, events and activations and associated production needs for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Tragically Hip's final concert in Kingston.

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Through potential fee waivers, including rental fees of City venues and/or park and public spaces, and fees associated with special event permits, the anticipated in-kind contribution to support the anniversary programming will be approximately \$25,000.

**Contacts:**

Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1277

**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

None

**Exhibits Attached:**

None