



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 26-098**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services
Date of Meeting: March 24, 2026
Subject: Kingston Arts Council Service Level Agreement Renewal

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 5. Drive Inclusive Economic Growth

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

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to ask Council to approve the renewal of the annual Service Level Agreement (SLA) between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council (KAC). Since 2012, the City of Kingston has entered into an SLA with the KAC on an annual basis. These agreements include financial support transferred to the KAC to support delivery of services.

The proposed SLA includes \$201,375 in funding, which reflects a \$50,000 increase from 2025, to support the expanded administration required to implement the new City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) Framework, approved by Council at its meeting on October 30, 2025. It also includes funding to support ongoing delivery and facilitation including the selection process of the Mayor's Arts Awards. This funding was included in the 2026 Arts & Culture Services operating budget.

The 2026 SLA will also include the funding to be held in trust and distributed through the CKAF totaling \$712,790 in 2026, which includes the 2026 investment level of \$612,790 and a one-time additional investment of \$100,000, funded through the Working Fund Reserve as approved by Council in the City's budget development process.

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Recommendation:

That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute a Service Level Agreement between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council that identifies the services to be provided by the Kingston Arts Council and the associated funding to be issued by the City of Kingston for those services, in a form acceptable to the Director of Legal Services; and

That Council approve the release of \$201,375 from the Arts & Culture Services Department's 2026 operating budget to support the Kingston Arts Council and the services identified as part of a Service Level Agreement between the City of Kingston and the Kingston Arts Council in 2026; and

That Council approve the release of \$712,790 from the Arts & Culture Services Department's 2026 operating budget to be held in trust by the Kingston Arts Council and distributed through the City of Kingston Arts Fund.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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:

The existing 2025 SLA between the City of Kingston and the KAC expires on March 31, 2026 and requires Council's approval to renew; a process that happens on an annual basis since this relationship was formalized in 2012.

Background

The SLA between the City and the KAC provides key support to the KAC and outlines deliverables that align with the City's priorities and the KAC's mandate to function as a professional arts service organization that provides services and administers funding to artists, arts groups and arts organizations, in support of arts projects, programming, exhibitions and more that benefit the Kingston community. The City's support for the KAC enhances organizational capacity to secure additional funding opportunities through the Ontario Arts Council and other funding bodies.

Analysis

The KAC has submitted all required reports to the City, as per their 2025 SLA, which includes an Interim Report that was submitted in December 2025 (Exhibit A) and quarterly activity and financial reports for the CKAF. The organization has also completed and published their [2024-2025 Annual Report](#), which includes a CKAF Impact Report section.

At this time, it is being recommended that the City's SLA with the KAC be renewed again in 2026. The services to be included as part of the 2026 SLA will be as follows:

- Based on the new Framework, update and/or create new CKAF materials for applicants including guidelines for all four grant streams, application forms, budget forms, statistical forms, and impact and final reports;
- Lead the creation of assessment criteria in alignment with new Framework, recruit peer assessment members and prepare all peer assessment materials;
- Launch applications for all four grant streams, phased over 2026, beginning with Operating Grants and Festival Grants, followed by Project Grants and Creation & Development Grants for Artists;
- Oversee the application process, receive submissions, coordinate the peer assessment and adjudication process, and distribute the grants;
- Deliver professional development programming and expand outreach to increase awareness of the new CKAF Framework and grant opportunities available;
- Proactively promote the CKAF grant recipients to the public and support reporting to Council to seek approval on 2026 grant recommendations and on impact of investment;
- Provide quarterly CKAF reports to track administration and financial activity;
- Provide key support for the delivery of the Mayor's Arts Awards program, including facilitating and promoting an open community call for nominations for award recipients, chairing the Nominations Subcommittee and overseeing the selection process, functioning as the main liaison for the award recipients on behalf of the City, providing

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- key event planning support for the awards ceremony, commissioning profile videos of all award recipients, and promoting the awards ceremony and award recipients; and
- Support sector development through the provision of targeted professional development and training opportunities for professional artists, arts professionals and arts organizations, in alignment with other Arts & Culture Services strategies and priorities.

As in previous years, the SLA will include language specifically related to the management and expenditure of the funding the KAC receives. It will also outline requirements related to reporting that includes providing quarterly reports as well as a year-end report and a 2025-2026 Annual Report.

With Council’s approval to renew the City of Kingston’s SLA with the KAC, staff will meet with representatives of the KAC Board and administrative staff to review the outcomes of the 2025 SLA and to discuss any additional changes and/or additions that need to be made to finalize the 2026 SLA. Once that work has been completed, the 2026 SLA can then be executed by the Mayor and Clerk in a form that is acceptable to the Director of Legal Services.

Existing Policy/By-Law

Investing in the KAC through an SLA on an annual basis aligns with several recommendations originally identified in the Kingston Culture Plan approved by Council in September 2010. It also helps to fulfill various City-approved strategies as well as Council’s Strategic Priorities.

Financial Considerations

Funding for the KAC was included as part of the approved 2026 operating budget for the Arts & Culture Services Department. The total funding is \$201,375. That funding will be paid out in two installments that include: (1) 25% to be paid out when Council approves the renewal of the SLA between the City of Kingston and the KAC; and (2) 75% to be paid out when the 2026 SLA has been signed by both parties. The funding to support the CKAF in 2026, totaling \$712,790, will also be issued once the SLA has been signed by both parties and is required to be held in trust in a separate, interest-bearing account under the terms of the SLA.

Contacts:

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A Interim Report December 2025