



Application to the City of Calgary Council Innovation Fund

Date: February 14, 2017

Name of Project: Walk21 Community Microgrants

Sponsor: Councillors Farrell, Carra, Pincott

Affected Business Unit(s) and / or Departments:

All Departments.

Amount of Funds Requested: \$172,500

Project Description:

The Walk21 Community Microgrants program will encourage communities to deliver 150 different walking improvements at the local level over two years. 150 ideas will celebrate Canada's milestone birthday and more importantly will benefit a wide range of communities, businesses, and social organizations city-wide. This program will provide a way to showcase Calgary during the Walk21 Conference and engage communities in creating safer and more walkable streets according to the direction of Calgary's Pedestrian Strategy, Step Forward.

Project Benefits – Why is this Project Needed, and Why Now?

The process for community-led walking initiatives on public property is not well defined and is often prohibitively complicated. Approval processes vary across the corporation, are sometimes duplicated and do not apply well to small projects. The City of Calgary should encourage residents to bring forward creative solutions and yet our processes can sometimes stifle innovation.

The Walk21 Community Microgrants program is intended to fill a gap and build towards a principals-based way to encourage community-initiated ideas, while maintaining safety of our residents, environment, and infrastructure. Failure to become more nimble will result in a perception of poor customer service and communities either not getting involved or instead proceeding on their ideas without support from City officials.

The microgrants program is also a unique opportunity to align the volunteer efforts of the Walk21 organizing community. Below are the community partners who support the delivery this program.

Project Partners

- ***Federation of Calgary Communities (The Federation)*** will leverage their existing communications tools and community relationships to promote the program across Calgary. FCC has a long history of helping communities navigate City of Calgary processes. FCC will also administer the program by coordinating promotion, assisting communities in making applications to the program, collecting and validating submissions, and supporting communities in executing the projects that receive grants.



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- **Walk21 Community Advisory & Legacy Committees** are formed with staff from our partner organizations like Alberta Health Services, Calgary Business Improvement Areas and volunteer groups. This group will establish the program criteria and idea selection to give more transparency and fairness to the program. They will also provide the jury to curate the applications and select projects to receive grants. Finally, they will be responsible for announcing and promoting the selections at the Walk21 conference. It is anticipated that working with this group will mean strengthened partnerships that extend beyond the Walk21 conference.
- **Tactical Urbanism Tiger Team** (internal) is an informal community of practice that has formed within Administration to support projects, to expose existing best practices, and to remove barriers to saying “yes” to community-led walkability ideas. This team will be responsible for supporting the micro-grant projects by finding ways to enable the proposals while ensuring safety of the public and our built and natural assets.
- **Applicants** will consist of community associations, informal neighbourhood-level groups, cultural communities, business improvement areas, and other grass-roots organizations with interests in walking. These groups will submit applications and coordinate the execution of selected projects through their membership, volunteer base, and other resources. Each successful applicant will be required to submit a record of the event capturing inspiring stories and images, key results and direct feedback on the City’s existing and future approval tools.

Project Timeline

1. Finalize microgrant application process and communications (March – April 2017)
2. Promote opportunity with community partners (April – May 2017)
3. Review microgrants applications with Federation of Calgary Communities and Walk21 Community Advisory Committee (May – August 2017)
4. Announce successful applications (Walk21 Conference: September 20-22, 2017)
5. Microgrant projects delivered (September 2017 – September 2019)
6. Final Report to PFC on program execution, including lessons learned report (Q4 2019)

Project Budget

The program budget will go towards promotion, the events and then to

| Line Item | Amount | Responsible |
|----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Communications & Promotion | \$5,000 | City of Calgary / Federation |
| Program administration | \$40,000 | Federation |
| Microgrants | \$112,500* | Federation |
| Program / Process Review | \$15,000 | City of Calgary – Process Team |
| Total | \$172,500 | |

* Estimated at \$750 per project, grant amounts expected to vary based on idea.



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Staff time to support the program will come from existing budgets. Additional in-kind support will be provided from Walk21 staff from partner organizations such as University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services.

How does this Project meet the Criteria of the Fund as set out in the Terms of Reference?

The Council Innovation Fund applies to programs and pilot projects that encourage innovation and support the goals of Council as set out in current Council Priorities. The Walk21 Community Microgrant program will encourage innovation in communities across the city, many of which will be attempting community-led walkability projects for the first time. City Administration will be encouraged to learn new ways to support communities.

Specifically, this project supports the following Council Priorities:

1. Inspiring neighbourhoods:
 - a. Increasing the number of pedestrians on sidewalks, pathways and community spaces will lead to better driver attention to pedestrians and enhanced safety.
 - b. Small incentives, such as waiving the Neighbour Day permit fee, can be very effective to encourage communities to take action in their community.
 - c. More people walking serves as “eyes on the street”, which, along with neighbour to neighbour interaction, is an effective crime-prevention tool.
2. Prosperous economy:
 - a. Encouraging walking and vibrancy supports community businesses.
3. Smart growth and mobility choices:
 - a. Improving walking routes leads to higher transit ridership.
 - b. Safer, calmed streets encourage more families and children to walk and bike.

The Walk21 Community Microgrant program will also support the City’s efforts to live up to the recently adopted Pedestrian Strategy. Step Forward was approved in 2016 and includes 49 actions to make Calgary safer, more comfortable and interesting for walking. The Walk21 Community Microgrant program aligns with several actions from Step Forward:

- Action 17: Create a tactical urbanism program.
- Action 40: Put forward at least three innovative pedestrian projects for Council’s Innovation Fund.
- Action 43: Organize and host pre-conference events for international Walk21 Conferences.
- Action 46: Teach City leadership and staff about pedestrian and accessibility needs.

The Walk21 Community Microgrants program may also support the objectives of other City policies, strategies, and programs including:

- The Cultural Plan (creating cultural vitality)



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- Get Active YYC Campaign (inspiring active living)
- This is my neighbourhood (neighbourhood vision and projects)
- Community Traffic Program (raising awareness of local traffic concerns)
- Innovation Lab (promoting creative solutions)

The Walk21 Community Microgrant program will ensure that Walk21 leaves a lasting and positive legacy in Calgary far beyond the timeline of the event itself.

What does Success look Like and How will it be Measured?

This program is intended to help communities be more engaged in making their streets and parks more walkable. Community initiated ideas require tremendous energy, coordination, and creativity. Understanding the successes and failures of each micro-grant will help to inform future projects and identify regulatory barriers.

The Walk21 Community Microgrant program will be a success if:

- City Administration says yes to 150 community projects
- the community projects reach communities throughout Calgary,
- the community projects impact a significant number of people, and
- the program helps residents feel safer
- the program leads to simpler City processes for community-led initiatives

Success will be measured and reported back to PFC in Q4 2019 with the following key indicators:

| Measure | Target |
|---|---|
| Number of community projects completed and feedback provided | 150 |
| Number of community projects per Ward | Minimum 8 per ward |
| Number of people impacted (volunteers/attendees/impacted residents) | 6,000 |
| Surveyed residents feel safer walking in their communities | Majority of respondents |
| Better understanding of City processes to support community-led initiatives | Lessons learned report completed with recommendations and implementation plan |