



May 26, 2023

City of Stratford
Corporate Services Department
City Hall, P.O. Box 818
Stratford, ON N5A 6W1

Attention: Finance & Labour Relations Sub-committee

Dear Sir/Madam:

2023 Community Grant Appeal

This year's event will be held on June 16th, 17th and 18th. Our ***not-for-profit corporation*** event statistics indicate 75% of our visitors are local and 25% > 40km away. We hope you will reconsider your position and grant us at least \$4,000 as in past due to the following:

- ***Of our total 2022 revenue (not including grants) we are asking for 3.8% of 2022 revenue.*** This means \$3.80 for every \$100 support we got from:
 - Local businesses - sponsorships for future business opportunities in Stratford
 - Vendors/businesses – sales that increases the community's economic development
 - Residents/visitors - donations and purchases
- For the first time in many years, ***we have money/surplus in the bank going into the event. This allows us to budget more effectively leading up to an event.*** It was not indicated on our financial statements but this operating account is reserved for downpayments on future event costs and rainy-day funds as this event is held outside and this can completely affect our attendance and revenues.
- It was indicated that council feels our event is better suited for alternate funding options rather than City taxpayers. ***However, in 2022, approximately 73% of our revenue for the event was already from City taxpayer's pockets.***
- ***Local Stratford business' sponsor our event (23% of revenue in 2022) in return for advertising of their businesses.*** Advertising costs are expensive and represent approximately 9% of our total expenses of which are paid to local businesses. We need to spend money in order to keep our sponsors satisfied so our event can continue into the future with their sponsorship. And in return we are supporting other local businesses and ensuring we have an economic impact on the City of Stratford.

- ***This is a not-for-profit corporation event completely run by a volunteer board of directors.*** Our objective is to provide the resident of Stratford with a joyful event for the whole family. There is a very minimal entrance fee price of \$10.00/day (including HST) to see 6-12 bands perform and we hope to keep it this way to allow all residents of Stratford to attend and not be restricted by price. However, the vendor and food areas are free to all residents and visitors of Stratford. We have over 10,000 people attend the event of which 4,000 pay admission to the licensed music area.
- Our festival supports musician's, 67% of the total 120 who are paid are local individuals. This entertainment expense represents approximately 36% of our expenses. ***New this year, Sunday of our event is 100% completely dedicated to Stratford musicians (We Love Stratford Day).***
- ***We provide the residents of Stratford with a joyful event for the whole family:***
 - Multiple food, drink and artisan options (up to 36 vendor stalls and Internationally Acclaimed Rib Teams)
 - Children's area that Arden Park Dental and Stratford Library run as in-kind.
 - Comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Provide volunteer experience for locals and high school students
- ***We did not obtain the budgeted \$8,000 for provincial funding;*** the grant was re-branded and our Board was not made aware.

Overall, we realize the City only has limited funds to disburse. We are not asking for much. Our committee members, Board and volunteers put in a lot of work and support this community. We hope you will reconsider our request. We are grateful to the City of Stratford for allowing us to hold this important event annually for the people of Stratford to enjoy.