

# Birthday bailout

## Community Foundation announces \$40K for city's sesquicentennial

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THE PACKET & TIMES

Orillia councillors may have cut \$40,000 from the city's budget for celebrating the sesquicentennial,

but that doesn't mean money won't flow to groups that look to honour the dual birthdays.

The Community Foundation of Orillia and Area (CFOA) recently announced it will provide \$20,000 to local groups choosing the celebrate Canada's 150th birthday. That money will be matched by Community Foundations of Canada, supported by the Canadian government, meaning \$40,000 will

be up for grabs.

Applications will be available online early in 2017.

"We don't want to take away grants from needy local charities in order to celebrate the 150th," said Chris Hazel, vice-president of the CFOA. "But, as it happens, we've had a really good few years."

In 2016, the CFOA provided \$125,000 in grants to local charities and organizations through-

out the region. The annual gifting number has increased dramatically in recent years, growing by nearly \$100,000.

Hazel credits this to the "rapid growth" of the foundation, with more new funds being set up by various local groups. Currently, the foundation holds \$4 million in assets as it establishes and builds permanent endowment funds.

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The celebration of Canada's 150th birthday will be special in Orillia, as it is also the municipality's 150th. Throughout the past year, city staff have been making plans for 2017 that honour both milestones.

While the CFOA money may coincidentally equal the money requested by the parks, recreation and culture department during the capital budget process, it doesn't explicitly replace it, nor will it necessarily go to support the same activities.

"The money won't flow to the city; it will flow to local organizations," Hazel said. "If Charity X decided it wanted to have a concert to mark the 150th, it could do that ... there's a lot of leeway as to what celebration means."

To be eligible for funding, events must meet three criteria: They must encourage participation in

community activities and events to mark the 150th, inspire a deeper understanding of the people, places and events that shape our country and our communities; and build vibrant and healthy communities with the broadest possible engagement of all Canadians.

Of the \$20,000 being put up by the local foundation, only \$5,000 of it is coming from money that would be used for granting in 2017. The grant committee that regularly makes the funding decisions will be having the final say here as well.

"Our grants committee will take a look at what people are thinking of doing," Hazel said. "I think they'll be picking projects that will have the most impact on the most people."

More information will be available in the new year at [communityfoundationorillia.ca](http://communityfoundationorillia.ca).  
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