Council Community Grant Policy

Policy Number:	**FIN-POL-2024-02**
Applies to:	Community Grants
Approval Date:	**January 19, 2026**
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Approval Authority:	**RES-017-2026** Council, approved by Council Resolution No.

1. Policy Statement

The Town of Collingwood recognizes the valuable contributions of volunteers and community organizations and agencies on behalf of its citizens to enhance the community. The provision of grants or in-kind support demonstrates Council's commitment to working with groups that provide beneficial programs, services or projects to the community while at the same time recognizing the financial constraints impacting the Town's ability to provide these same benefits.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria and guidelines for providing Council Community grants or in-kind support of municipal resources through an allocation from the Town's annual operating budget. The objective of the grants and in-kind support is to provide assistance to organizations or individuals that demonstrate a social, economic or environmental benefit to the Town of Collingwood, its citizens or taxpayers and/or support the Town's strategic initiatives.

3. Definitions

- **Grants** – Monetary funds provided to an organization or individual for a particular purpose as described in this policy. These grants will be financially recorded under the "Council Grant & Donations" line item of the annual operating budget. Grants can be referred to as a "contribution" herein.
- **In-Kind Support** - The provision of municipal resources to an applicant and does not include the provision of cash funds to, or on behalf of, the applicant. While cash funds are not provided in relation to In-Kind grants, it is recognized that such grants will involve either an expense or foregone revenue for the municipality. Awards of in-kind support will be financially recorded in the "Council Grant & Donations" line item of the annual operating budget and are off-set against the revenue recorded in other service areas, resulting in a net zero impact to the financial statements (i.e. ice rink facility use – revenue is recorded in User Charges with offsetting expense recorded as noted above). In-kind support can be referred to as a "contribution" herein.

- **Municipal Resources** – in this policy, refers to any property, facilities, services, staff time or materials of the Town of Collingwood.

4. Scope

- This policy applies to Council Community Grant applicants.
- The policy includes grants and in-kind support requested through a Council Community Grant application form.
- Council may choose the recipient of the proceeds from the annual Mayor's golf tournament or other annual Mayor's initiative, under this policy.
- Under this policy, applications will not be considered or awarded where the application can reasonably apply to the Community Recreation & Culture Grant Program. The Community Recreation & Culture Grant Program provides grants and in-kind support to applicants and projects that support objectives of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan.
- When Council approves a grant where the applicant requires any other Town approvals i.e. Special Events; Planning and/or Building (not an exhaustive list) that those approvals must be applied for and approved under their respective policy.
- Nothing in this policy prohibits Council from considering financial assistance or in-kind support outside the scope of this policy. Council will consider each case on its own merits and any assistance provided will be without precedent.

5. Principles of the Policy

5.1. Treat all applicants fairly and consistently.

5.2. Provide contributions to applicants that are registered non-profit, not-for profit or charity organizations, elementary and secondary schools, or other organizations that demonstrate a social, economic, or environmental benefit to the Town of Collingwood, its residents or taxpayers and/or supports the Town's strategic Vision or initiatives.

5.3. To allow grants and in-kind support up to a maximum amount as identified within the annual budget process.

5.4. The total grant awarded to any single applicant shall not exceed a combined maximum of $10,000 in funding and in-kind support.

5.5. Provide assistance to applicants but not 100% of the resources/funds required for their initiative.

5.6. Contributions will not be made for the following purposes:

i. Discriminatory activities or events or organizations that may incite hatred towards any group;

ii. Activities that are contrary to the policies of the Town;

iii. Where grants would be in violation of Provincial and/or Federal Legislation, Regulations, and Human Rights statements;
iv. Activities which are deemed to be unlawful; and
v. Where other identifiable Town funding sources may be available.

5.7. While Council will consider requests for contribution, there is no guarantee that a request will be approved.

5.8. A grant given in one year does not commit the Town to ongoing funding of the same or other amount in subsequent years.

5.9. Accepting the award, the recipient is restricted from approaching Council through deputation to request additional funding for the same program within the same fiscal year.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Treasurer:

6.1.1 Accountable for the following:
i. Administrating this policy.
ii. Releasing monetary funds to successful grant applicants.
iii. Financial recording of transactions related to this policy.

6.1.2 Responsible for the following:
i. Advertising of the funding on the Town website and other media deemed appropriate.
ii. Receipt of applications.
iii. Vetting applications for completeness and determining whether the application will be presented to Council.
iv. Sharing the application with the Manager, Culture & Events to confirm the applicant should not be applying for Community Recreation & Culture Grant Program or if there is any reason this applicant should not be considered.
v. Requesting a Department Head to confirm resource availability where in-kind support is requested.
vi. Notifying applicant in writing of application rejection or acceptance and Council decision if applicable including a letter of award stipulating terms and conditions as well as any restrictions for use of grant.
vii. Coordinating the contribution with departments.

6.2 Manager, Culture & Events: Responsible for reviewing any applications under this policy that have been forwarded to them and responding as to whether the applicant should be applying for Community Recreation & Culture Grant Program or if there is any reason this applicant should not be considered.

6.3 Department Head: Responsible for providing confirmation that the in-kind support will be possible pending resource availability.

6.4 Council: Responsible for evaluating, scoring, and awarding grants and in-kind support under this policy.

7. Policy

7.1. FUNDING DETERMINED - BUDGET PROCESS

As part of its annual budget process, Council will determine the amount of funding available that will be provided for all municipal grants and in-kind support. Further, Council will retain the right to make the final decision on both the overall funding allocation and the individual grant or in-kind support.

7.2. TYPES OF GRANTS

The different types of contributions awarded under the Council Grants are as identified:

1. Grants
2. In-Kind Support

7.3. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

An applicant organization must meet the following general criteria to be considered for a grant or in-kind support from the Town:

i. Applicants must be one of the following:
   1. Non-profit or not-for profit organization
   2. Registered charitable organization
   3. Elementary and/or secondary school
   4. Other organization that provides financial support to any organization as noted in 1. through 3. of this policy.
   5. Individual supported by an organization as described in the purpose of this policy with a letter outlining the support given.

ii. ~~Non-profit and not-for-profit community groups and organizations that apply must have been in existence for a minimum of one year~~.

iii. Organizations must attach financial statements from their most recent fiscal year end to their application.

iv. Applications by individuals supported by an organization must provide governing documents such as the association's charter, constitution, or articles of association. The absence of such a document will make the individual's application in-eligible for a grant.

v. Each application must demonstrate there is a need for financial assistance and that adequate funding from other sources is not available.

vi. Each application must demonstrate how the contribution will achieve, directly or through an initiative, the purpose of this grant as described in this policy.

vii. The applicant or individuals organizing an event must not be involved in a dispute with the Town on any matter or owe monies to the Town.

viii. Contributions shall be used only for the purposes approved by Council.

ix. The recipient shall notify Council of any proposed material changes to the nature of, or budget for, the activities for which the contribution has been made and shall use the contribution for such altered activities only with the prior consent of Council.

7.4. TERMS & CONDITIONS

i. The recipient shall immediately notify the Town and repay the whole or any part of the contribution, as determined by the Town, if the recipient:
    1. Ceases operations prior to the delivery of the initiative for which a contribution was provided;
    2. Ceases to operate as a non-profit organization prior to the delivery of the initiative for which a contribution was provided;
    3. Has knowingly provided false information in its application;
    4. Uses funds for purposes not approved by Council; or
    5. Breaches any of these terms and conditions or specific terms and conditions or restrictions specifically provided in the award of the contribution.

ii. Any unused portion of a contribution remains the property of the Town of Collingwood. If any unused portion of a grant has already been paid to the recipient, it shall be repaid by the recipient upon request from the Town.

iii. Funding requests must be limited to a one-time project or initiative, or an ongoing program, and may not be used to support overall ongoing operational costs.

iv. Funding will not be provided for general accumulated deficits in the organization's annual financial statements.

v. The applicant must complete a final report, documenting the use of the contribution (the report must not exceed one page) by December 1st of the year the grant was received.

vi. If the applicant received a Council grant or in-kind support in prior years, the final report must have been submitted in order for the current year's awarded contribution to be released.

vii. Recipients of grant funding will be provided with and utilize the Town of Collingwood logo where appropriate in promotional materials and media to identify sponsors or funding contributors.

7.5. APPLICATION

i. Annually, the Town will advertise both on the website and through local media sources that it will be receiving applications for Council Community Grants.

ii. All applicants must complete the Council Community Grant application form (see Appendix A).

iii. Applications shall be directed to the Treasurer by the date noted in the annual advertisement.

iv. Only one grant request per organization/individual will be considered per year.

7.6. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

i. There will be one intake period per year for applications which will follow the Community Recreation & Culture Grant (CRCG) where intakes are generally open at the beginning of January and close mid-February.
    1. Applications may be for the current year and the first quarter of the following year.
ii. Applications received outside of this period will be considered at the discretion of Council.
iii. Applications will be received and reviewed for completeness by the Treasurer through the Grant Policy procedures.
iv. Completed applications which are received by the advertised deadline will be reviewed and assessed by all members of Council. Members of Council will be expected to score each application as described herein. Applications will be evaluated on a points-based system, with a maximum total score of 30 points.
v. Applicants must meet a minimum threshold of 15 points to be considered eligible.
vi. The review of the applications will be based on the following criteria:
    1. Merit of Funding – /10 points
        a) Demonstrates how funding request provides a social, economic or environmental benefit to the Town of Collingwood, its citizens or taxpayers and/or support the Town's strategic initiatives;
        b) Aligns with Council's goals and objectives;
        c) Community need/demand for proposed activity or service exists; and
        d) Community support exists (funding support from other organizations, local businesses, industry, services clubs, letter(s) of support).

    2. Applicant profile that supports community service – /10 points

        a) Likelihood of success (has the ability and capacity to complete the activity or service);
        b) Experience of applicant in delivering similar program/service/event/activity;
        c) Ability of applicant to leverage other funding support; and
        d) Mission of the applicant and volunteer support.

    3. Financial plan and need – /10 points

a) Sound financial management and revenue generation (accurate records, realistic and responsible budget, various sources of income, deficit reduction plan if applicable);
b) Financial need (leveraging of funds, seed money, inability to fund on their own through own resources or alternative revenue generation); and
c) Clarity on how the contribution will be used.

vii. In considering applications, Council may interview or ask any groups to make a presentation and also make final recommendations changing the total grant or in-kind support approved.
viii. Council will use the assessment and points as a guide, however may make award decisions to match funding available, and include pro-rating or other approaches to encourage best overall community outcomes.
ix. Granting of assistance in any one year or over several years is not to be interpreted as a commitment to future years' funding.
x. Ineligible applications for funding shall be notified, in writing, of Council's decision.

7.7. PAYMENT

i. The term of a grant or in-kind support shall typically be for one year only, however, may be extended at the discretion of Council.
ii. Renewals are not automatic, nor are any increase in funds.
iii. Recipients will be notified in writing of the contribution approved by Council.
iv. Grants may be awarded with certain terms and conditions. The letter of award will state, if any, restrictions applying to the grant.
v. Payments for approved grant applications shall be made following the Council meeting ratifying approval of the grants, as soon as is reasonable for the Treasury Department to process.

8. References and Related Documents

- Staff Report #PRC2019-19: Community Recreation & Culture Grant Program & Events Provision Framework
- Staff Report T2024-02 dated February 21, 2024

9. Consequences of Non-Compliance

The risk of not following this policy is that contributions to organizations may be seen as being given in a non-transparent or biased way.

10. Review Cycle

This Policy will be reviewed as required, but in any case, no later than ten (10) years from the date of the most recent review. The Treasurer will be responsible for initiating the review of this Policy.

APPENDIX A - COUNCIL GRANT APPLICATION

This appendix contains the suggested grant application. This is a template that can be modified for changes as required.