



Category: Community Services

**Title: Community Investment Policy (Grants)**

Policy Number: A09-CMS-100

Approved by: Committee Recommendation #DRS21-01  
Council Resolution #CW-21-018

Administered by: Parks, Recreation and Culture Department

Effective: January 18, 2021

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### 1. Background

Grants are community investments that help the Town of Grimsby achieve its social, economic and cultural goals. These goals include building stronger communities, strengthening neighbourhoods, promoting an active citizenry, fostering the Town's image, building civic pride, and enriching the community with activities that may not be viable by government alone.

Through various granting programs and initiatives these investments may be in the form of program or event funding, fee assistance, loans, or in-kind services provided to organizations, community groups or individuals.

Council has the legislative authority to provide grants pursuant to Section 107 of the Municipal Act, 2001.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a framework for the consistent administration of Town grants and grant programs.

### 3. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to all grant initiatives (financial or in-kind assistance) provided by the Town to organizations, community groups or individuals . It provides for the basic principles to guide eligibility requirements, the types of funding available, application administration, monitoring and reporting requirements.

Information on specific criteria and requirements (e.g. financial need and community benefit), the assessment methodology used to determine which eligible groups will

receive funding, and submission of mandatory documentation will be provided to Council in detailed guidelines for each grant program or initiative.

#### **4. Outcomes**

- 4.1 Clear line of sight between the Town's investment in a grant and the results achieved;
- 4.2 Consistent administration of Town grants and grant programs through clear accountabilities, reporting, and risk management;
- 4.3 Reduced administrative duplication;
- 4.4 A timely, agile grants process that enables innovation and adapts to community and Town needs;
- 4.5 An improved experience for grant applicants in understanding and participating in the application process;
- 4.6 Leveraging and multiplying the Town's investments through a grant applicant's ability to bring volunteer resources and other funding to the table; and,
- 4.7 Consolidated grant data to inform Council and Town decision-making.

#### **5. Principles**

- 5.1 Integrity - A transparent, defensible, and consistent grants process that is free of conflicts of interest and where grant applications are evaluated on their own merit in a fair and equitable way utilizing criteria-based assessments.
- 5.2 Transparency - Application guidelines are published and available to the public. Grants awarded by the Town are inventoried and posted on Grimsby.ca.
- 5.3 Responsiveness - A timely, agile process that enables innovation and adapts to changing needs in the community.
- 5.4 Stewardship - A process where there is a clear line of sight between the Town's investment in a grant and the results achieved. Results should advance the Town's social, economic, and cultural strategic goals. Risks should be understood and managed.

#### **6. Types of Grants**

The following table describes the range of grants the Town may employ from time to time. All grant programs are subject to funding availability and are conditional on approval of the annual operating budget by Council. Council reserves the right to initiate, cancel or alter grant programs as needed.

	<b>Type of Grant</b>	<b>Description</b>
6.1	Community Project	One-time funding for the start-up of an organization/project, not including a capital project; or  Funding for a short-term undertaking with a start-up and completion date, not including a capital project.
6.2	Capital Grant	Non-recurring, non-operating funding for the purpose of creating new and/or improving existing community infrastructure (i.e. social, health, cultural and recreational facilities).
6.3	Discount Rental Rates/ Facility-use subsidies	Financial arrangements to ensure that public facilities owned and operated by the Town are accessible and affordable for community activities, and pre approved community organizations.
6.4	Fee Waivers for Community events	Similar to facility-use subsidies. Waiving of fees for municipal services(e.g. vendor licenses, park rentals, potable water supplies, port-a-potties, road closures, garbage bins etc.) that are required for community events.
6.5	In-kind Contributions	Provision of Town property/ facilities, materials or resources to a grant recipient at no cost or reduced cost
6.6	Special Events:	One-time or first-time funding for events that are of cultural, historical, social, environmental, or recreational significance to the community and which may include the participation of more than one organization.
6.7	Charitable Tax Rebates	As permitted by Section 361 of the Municipal Act. This is a property tax rebate for eligible charities for the purposes of giving them relief from taxes on the eligible properties they occupy.

## **7. Funding Ineligibility**

7.1 An organization that acts as a funding body, or makes grants to another organization is not eligible to apply for a Town of Grimsby municipal grant;

7.2 Grants can not be used to:

- a) Cover the deficits of the organization;
- b) Fund an organization's debts; or
- c) Fund activities that serves primarily the membership or purposes of religious or political organizations.

## **8. Policy Statement(s)**

Guidelines and requirements for administering all Town grant programs and initiatives:

- 8.1 The Town shall evaluate grant applications based on the type of funding requested and conformity to the available grant programs and funding limits. Approval processes shall be consistent with the specific guidelines of the grant program applied for.
- 8.2 Grant funding or assistance is not guaranteed.
  - a) All grant programs are subject to funding availability and are conditional on approval of the annual operating budget by Council. Council reserves the right to cancel or alter grant programs as needed;
  - b) The Town reserves the right to reject any grant request or application including those that meet all conditions as stated in this Policy or an applicable Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). For example, the Town may reject grant requests where the demand for grants is greater than the funding available for allocation, or the Town, in its sole discretion, is of the opinion that it is in its best interests that the grant request be rejected;
  - c) Approved grants or other types of assistance in any one year, or over several years, is not to be regarded as a commitment for future assistance and/or ongoing financial support;
  - d) Grant applicants should not expect the Town to be the sole source of project funding. Applicants may be required to demonstrate that they have fully explored alternate and/or other funding sources such as federal and provincial grant programs. Applicants who have or will have funding from alternate sources must disclose this information in their grant application;
  - e) The Town reserves the right to restrict the number of applications received by a single organization in a calendar year based on the amount of funding or type of grants already awarded to the same community organization;
  - f) The amount of a grant award should be tied to how well the grant objective and the general municipal/ departmental strategic objectives are aligned and

- the duration of the benefit. Grants should demonstrate measurable community and financial benefit;
- g) Funding requests are generally only received for an established grant program and a call for applications.
- 8.3 The amount of the grant should consider the level of risk being assumed by the Town as a result of funding an activity or asset with a grant.
- a) Risk is most effectively controlled at the point of grant application and evaluation. The level of strategic, operational, financial and compliance risk should be evaluated as part of the grant funding decision and should determine the level of control and oversight the Town.
- 8.4 The Town does not fund retroactively. If an applicant chooses to start a project or otherwise commit funds before knowing that a grant application has been approved, the Town is under no obligation to provide the funding.
- 8.5 In the event that grant funds are not used for the project/program indicated in the application:
- a) The funds must be returned to the Town to the attention of the Treasurer; and,
  - b) If funds are expended inappropriately or for a purpose other than the event/program/project indicated in the application, Council may at its discretion disqualify the organization from all subsequent financial or in-kind assistance from the Town.
- 8.6 Application forms shall be designed to capture information about the grant applicant (organizational structure and governance), the grant objectives, the amount of the grant request and the duration of the benefit;
- a) The level of information required from an applicant will be relative to the grant request amount and the level of the risk to the municipality in awarding the grant.
- 8.7 A schedule of all Council approved grant programs will be posted to Grimsby.ca and shall include a brief overview of the grant, the application deadline (if applicable) and the related governing document (guidelines, by-law or policy).
- 8.8 Applications will only be accepted from eligible organizations and signed by an officer of a Board of Directors, Executive Committee, or an authorized member of an organization that has the authority to bind an organization;
- 8.9 Fundraising-based activities are only eligible for Grant assistance from the Town on a limited case-by-case basis or in accordance with a specific Grant Program;

- 8.10 Awarded Grant amounts will vary according to the type of Grant that is being applied for. Each grant program will establish minimum or maximum grant amounts if applicable. Final awarded grant funding may be subject to an adjustment of the amount originally requested at the Town's discretion;
- 8.11 All Grant applications must be supported by financial statements, as stipulated in grant program guidelines and SOPs;
- 8.12 Successful grant recipients must obtain and provide proof of liability insurance providing coverage for their organizations and operations in addition to any other liability insurance requirements deemed necessary by the Town before a grant can be distributed. Failure to obtain liability insurance that is deemed acceptable by the Town shall result in the cancellation of an awarded grant;
- 8.13 The Town reserves the right to cancel awarded grant assistance without notice if the applicant is in violation of any terms and conditions set forth in this Policy, SOPs or other legally binding agreements;
- 8.14 Grant recipients must acknowledge funding support from the Town in all communications materials, media coverage, and verbal promotion pertaining to the event/ program/ project being support by the grant; and,
- 8.15 The Town requires all organizations receiving municipal grants to complete a reporting out form with required documentation as per the the guidelines of the particular grant program or initiative.

## **9. Roles and Responsibilities**

- 9.1 Town Council is responsible for:
  - a) Approving the level of funding in the Town's operating budget for all grant programs and initiatives;
  - b) Approving the grant guidelines for all grant programs and initiatives;
  - c) Considering Grant Review Panel recommendations if applicable and providing final award approvals; and
  - d) Ensuring timely approval for grant applications where a motion of Council is required to award funding.
- 9.2 Grant Review Panel (if applicable) is responsible for:

- a) Executing their duties and responsibilities as stated in the grant review panel terms of reference;
- b) Reviewing opportunities, issues, successes, measures and recommendations related to this Policy and the applicable grant program; and,
- c) Convening meetings to review applications for the applicable grant program, including making recommendations to Council for the awarding of grants to eligible organizations.

9.3 Departments are responsible for:

- a) Recommending a suitable funding amount in support of a grant program budget, to be included in the Town's annual operating budget presented to Council each fiscal year.
- b) Initiating and implementing guidelines for each grant program and program stream including application requirements, eligibility criteria, performance measures monitoring and reporting;
- c) Initiating the creation and selection of a grant review committee to assess, evaluate and make recommendations of applications;
- d) Providing secretariat support to grant review committee;
- e) Creating a centralized application portal accessible to the public;
- f) Having the discretion to approve In-kind grants such as an eligible organization requesting a single or limited fee waiver(s) up to a maximum of \$2,500 in value, subject to each request being approved by an appropriate Department Head.
- g) Incorporating the general principles, criteria and guidelines contained in this Policy into any policies, SOPs and/or guidelines established for programs linked to a grant program, as appropriate.
- h) Review opportunities, issues, successes, measures and recommendations related to related to this Policy and the applicable grant program;
- i) Preparing reports and communications as to the outcomes of grant programs for website, staff teams and for Council.

9.4 Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for:

a) developing policies and processes to reflect corporate priorities

9.5 Treasurer is responsible for:

a) Recommending policies and procedures surrounding the management of grants;

b) Preparing reports for presentation to both senior management and Council surrounding grants; and

c) Ensuring adherence to statutory and policy requirements.

## **10. Monitoring and Compliance**

10.1 Responsible Departments will evaluate the outcomes, as outlined in the agreement between the Town and a grant applicant, to ensure accountability for use of funds and monitor how the desired goals were achieved;

10.2 Any reporting requirements, as stated in the grant program guidelines not met by the Applicant will be subject to potential withdrawal of future funding support;

10.3 Council may at its discretion disqualify an organization from subsequent grant support from the Town in circumstances where funds are expended inappropriately or for a purpose other than the event/program/project indicated in the application; and,

10.4 All surplus funds not used for the intended or closely related purpose must be returned to the Municipality.

## **11. Definitions**

11.1 “Act” means Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25;

11.2 “Application” refers to the formal application form developed by the Town specific to the grant program from which funds are being sought.

11.3 “Asset” refers to machinery, property, buildings, information technology hardware and software, and other items and related systems that have a distinct and quantifiable business function or service, and a financial value and economic life greater than one year.

11.4 “Town” or “The Town” refers to the Town of Grimsby, a municipal corporation pursuant to the Ontario Municipal Act, 2001.

11.5 “Council” refers to the Mayor and Council Members of the Town of Grimsby.

11.6 “Grant” refers to financial and/or in-kind assistance from the Town of Grimsby to an eligible applicant hosting an event and/or undertaking an approved project.



- 11.7 Grant Review Committee consisting of citizen appointed and/or Town staff members as applicable;
- 11.8 “In-kind grant” refers to a grant from the Town to an eligible applicant for the use of municipally owned assets, including equipment, facilities, property, and additional or incremental Town staff labour cost associated with the use of Town-owned assets required to support an approved activity related to the type of grant that is being applied for. Examples of additional Town staff costs include, but not limited to the following: event space to host a community-based project; Town-staff operators to transport, set-up and tear-down a Town owned stage, broadcast equipment, picnic tables, refuse containers, clean-up after an event; Town staff operators to setup and remove barricades, manage traffic signals associated with road closures.
- 11.9 “Project” refers to a Town-approved collaborative enterprise or event that is planned and designed to achieve a particular community-related goal or purpose.
- 11.10 “SOP” refers to a Standard Operating Procedure that outlines guidelines, steps and/or requirements for a Town process, program or service.

**12. References and Resources**

**External references**

- Section 107 of the Ontario Municipal Act, 2001

**Revision History**

Date	Description
2021/01/18	Approved
[yyyy/mm/dd]	Next Scheduled Review