

**TITLE:** Community Support Grants Policy  
**SECTION:** All Town Departments  
**POLICY NO:** 72000-08

**APPROVAL DATE:** March 24, 2025

**CAO Signature:** 

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

- a. The Community Support Grants Policy guides the allocation of financial and in-kind contributions to non-profit or charitable organizations that are based in the Town of Amherst and are providing services that in the opinion of Council, are of a benefit to the residents and businesses of the Town. Applicants and Groups that actively support inclusion, diversity, accessibility and equity will be given priority consideration as will those applications that enhance community well-being and increase the social determinants of health, such as, but not limited to food insecurity, affordable housing, early childhood development, education, social inclusion and non-discrimination of the citizens of Amherst
- b. This program does not govern the following, which are separately administered:
  - i. Tax Exemption for Non-Profit Organizations (full and partial tax exemption by-laws);
  - ii. Residential Property Tax Rebates (low-income homeowners)

## **POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this policy are:

- a. to outline the requirements to apply and be considered for a Community Support Grant
- b. to establish equitable guidelines for the distribution of limited amounts of funds to non-profit and charitable organizations in a manner approved by Council.
- c. to ensure that groups applying for Community Support Grants are evaluated on a consistent, equitable basis, utilizing the same evaluation criteria; and
- d. to provide for public disclosure of a list of grant recipients and the amounts of those grants.

### **1. SCOPE**

The Program includes financial grants in the form of cash and in-kind services (for use of municipal facilities, for example). The value of requests is not limited; however, applicants must be aware that:

- a. The application process is competitive;
- b. There are more grant applications received than available funding;
- c. Past funding commitments should not be interpreted as a guarantee that future requests will be approved. The Town is interested in ensuring that organizations are self-sufficient;
- d. The Town would like to support programs and events that promote community well being and health and safety of our citizens. With that in mind, events based on alcohol consumption (beer gardens, wine tasting tours etc.) may only receive support if other community benefits can be shown. Overall, the Town will show preference to events that are family friendly and support the overall well being of the community.

### **2. EXCLUSIONS**

The following are exclusions from the grant program:

- a. While Council reserves the right to, it is not the intent of this policy to fund activities of organizations that are clearly within the mandate of the Government of Nova Scotia (hospitals, medical programs, treatment services or social services programs) or the Government of Canada (e.g., health, social services)
- b. The Town of Amherst will not consider requests received as part of general (mass) mailing or telemarketing campaigns

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- c. Funding applications will not be considered from the following:
  - i. Businesses;
  - ii. Provincial Government organizations;
  - iii. School Boards or quasi government organizations;
  - iv. Non-profit organizations for the purpose of funding accumulated deficits;
  - v. Any organization for the purpose of fundraising to distribute to other organizations/individuals; and
  - vi. Organizations with political affiliations.
- d. Funding will not normally be provided to religious organizations where services include the promotion or required adherence to a particular belief
- e. Funding will also not normally be provided to fundraising campaigns of national charitable organizations either directly or indirectly.
- f. Funding will not normally be provided to organizations who are planning to give proceeds of the event to another organization.

### **3. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS**

Council is not obligated to:

- a. Provide funding in the form of Community Support Grants;
- b. Spend all the funds allocated for grants in any given year;
- c. Award the full amount requested in an application; or
- d. Renew any grant

### **4. GUIDELINES**

The following guidelines apply to all grant requests except those listed in 4 above:

- a. Funding will generally be limited to no more than 40% of overall costs for an event or program
- b. Funding cannot be used to directly purchase products regulated by the Liquor Control Act R.S., c. 260, s. 1. or the Cannabis Control Act 2018, c. 3, s. 1.
- c. Preference is given to new initiatives; however, grants may be provided in multiple years for the same initiative.

### **5. PROGRAMS**

The following are a list of the grants available:

#### **a. Sport, Arts, and Culture**

Maximum funding considered will be \$1000 for a team and \$250 for an individual:

- i. This includes amounts for teams / groups and individuals traveling to Provincial, National and International competitions and events when the Amherst based teams or individual have been successful at a regional qualifying competition recognized by its relevant provincial or national umbrella organization, or have been invited by such an organization;
- ii. The team / group is in the Town of Amherst and is considered by the provincial or national umbrella organization to be the home for the team;

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- iii. The individual is competing / attending as an individual and has their principal residence in the Town of Amherst;
- iv. The Town of Amherst resident has been selected / qualified to represent the Province of Nova Scotia or Canada at a national or international competition / event.

**b. Festivals, Arts and Cultural Events Grants**

Under this component will generally not exceed \$5,000

- i. Event must demonstrate broad community support;
- ii. Provides an experience not duplicated by other ongoing events, festivals or activities.
- iii. Draw spectators locally, from the Maritimes, nationally or internationally and increases the profile of our community;
- iv. Must be affiliated with a local community non-profit organization.

**c. Organizational Equipment**

Operational and capital equipment purchase requests will be considered on an individual basis.

**d. Funding for Social Equity Initiatives**

For the purposes of this policy, "Social Equity Funding" is defined as the annual funding allotment within the Community Support Area Rate, including any reserves for this purpose, to be used for initiatives that specifically target social equity issues. All applications which Council feels meet this definition and for which Council is considering funding from the annual Social Equity Funding allotment or associated reserves set aside for this purpose may be referred to the respective committees for a recommendation.

Notwithstanding the above, Council reserves the right to fund such poverty initiatives from other sources in addition to or in lieu of the annual Social Equity Funding allotment.

**e. Large Scale Projects**

Applications for large scale projects (generally greater than \$5,000 or multi-year initiatives) will be evaluated on an individual basis. In these cases, Council may require Municipal representation on a board, the development of an MOU and/or other reporting requirements etc.

**6. APPLICATION PROCESS**

The following outlines the application process:

A call out for applications will be issued by the Town in the months leading up to budget time. Community organizations will be encouraged to apply during this initial call out however applications can and will be received throughout the year and be considered based on budget availability.

Community groups may submit more than one application per year however Council will prioritize funding over a diverse collection of applications to ensure fairness and equity for all.

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- a) Applications - must submit the following information
  - i. A complete Community Grant Application
  - ii. a proposed budget for the project
- b) The Town of Amherst may request additional information as deemed necessary.

### **7. APPROVAL PROCESS**

- a. For applications over \$1,000 staff will review applications, ensure requirements have been met and make recommendations to Council. Funding will be determined by council upon reviewing the proposal and recommendations from staff.

### **8. AUTHORITY OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) may approve applications that are less than \$1000 provided such applications qualify in accordance with this policy. Council will be notified by email upon approval of each application and a media release will be issued to communicate the support provided by the Town under the application. A list of applications approved will be provided to Council quarterly. (March, June, September and December).

The CAO may waive the cost for Town owned facility rentals for organizations carrying out an event or service that satisfies the intent of this policy to a maximum of four rental waivers per year per organization.

### **9. PAYMENT PROCESS**

For amounts over \$1,000 payment will be made at time of award.

### **10. CONDITIONS**

- a. Grant recipients shall:
  - i. Make no misrepresentation on their application
  - ii. Use the grant as described in the application
  - iii. Use the funds in the year granted
  - iv. Council and/or the CAO may request an in-depth report for grants over \$5,000 at their discretion
  - v. Recipients from previous years who received over \$2,000 will be asked to complete a report detailing expenses and impact on the community or individual. This report will be sent prior to the call for applications each year. This report must be completed prior to the new application being considered.
- b. Grant recipients shall keep proper books of accounts and receipts of all expenditures related to the project and shall make them available for inspection by the Town of Amherst upon request.
- c. Non-compliance, in any aspect could result in no funding being awarded in the future year(s)

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- d. Grant recipients are required to acknowledge the financial support of the Town of Amherst in all advertising, publicity, programs and signage for which funds are granted
- e. If the event/project does not occur for any reason, all grant monies must be returned
- f. Grant recipients who fail to comply with these conditions may be required to return all or partial funds to the Town of Amherst and may be deemed ineligible for Community Support Grant funding in future years.

**11. PUBLIC DISCLOSURE**

- a. The Town of Amherst will provide financial information with respect to the budgeted amounts disbursed and actual amounts disbursed on an annual basis
- b. A summary of grant awards will be posted on the Town of Amherst's website in accordance with s.65C(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*

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**Application for Funding**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

**REQUEST FOR IN-KIND FACILITY RENTAL**

**1. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:**

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. AMOUNT OF FUNDING ASSISTANCE BEING REQUESTED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

Total cost of program event or activity \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What is the purpose for the funding requested? (Sport and Physical Activity, Arts/Culture Events, Festivals, Organizational Equipment, Community Well-Being etc.)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Please attach a budget for the tournament, event or activity; include sources of revenue and ALL costs. Please attach all documents that support the funding request.**

**5. What are the expected benefits to the community? (Event participation numbers; local, regional, provincial or national attraction; time span; community assets being used; support from business community)**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Please list all funding sources and/or other community partners for this event:**

NAME	FUNDING IF ANY

**7. How many volunteers contribute to this event or festival:** \_\_\_\_\_



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**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Title/Role	Responsibilities
Director Community Living	To ensure adherence to the policy. Advise staff of Policy changes and create awareness in the community of policy changes.
Mayor and Council	Review and approve applications as required.
CAO	Ensure applications under \$1,000 are reviewed and decision made in accordance with policy.

For Administrative Use Only:

**VERSION LOG**

Amendment Description	Policy Owner	Approved By	Approval Date
Amendments to policy to collapse A fresh grants, streamline application process, increase CAO approval limit, inclusion of MAP requirements, rewording to ensure policy is more inclusive and promotes community well-being	Director Community Living, Bristol	Council	February 27, 2023
Amendment to policy to remove Deed Transfer reference from Poverty Funding. Rename Poverty Funding to Social Equity.	Director Community Living, Bristol	Council	April 24, 2023
Eliminate section 4 as it is exclusionary of other organizations; amend Section 9 Payment Process to eliminate the two phased payment approach as this is administratively time consuming and places undue pressure on community organizations; and amend Section 10 Conditions to include the reporting requirement for organizations who intend to reapply for future grants. This will allow for transparency on how funds are used and the impact on the community.	Director, Community Living, Bristol	Council	October 30, 2023

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Change the requirement to send applications to the social equity committees from will to may	Director, Community Living, Bristol	Council	March 24, 2025
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Minutes reference date:    23 September 2013    27 October 2014    21 May 2015    25 June 2018    24 September 2018  
    28 October 2019    27 January 2020    25 October 2021    27 February 2023    24 April 2023  
    30 October 2023    24 March 2025