

Policy Statement

1. The City recognizes that community groups can efficiently and effectively provide certain municipal services. The City believes that financially assisting these organization improves community welfare and promotes strategic municipal goals. The City of Owen Sound Council grants funds exclusively to organizations delivering services that would otherwise fall under municipal responsibilities. These services must directly benefit the community and align with the City’s strategic goals and objectives.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent framework for the allocation of municipal grants to external organizations that provide services that complement or supplement municipal functions.

Scope

3. This policy applies to the allocation of municipal grants by the City of Owen Sound Council to external organizations. It covers all aspects of grant eligibility, application, evaluation, disbursement, and accountability.
4. The policy is designed to support local non-profit organizations or registered charities that provide services traditionally encompassed by municipal functions, and local minor sports associations.
5. The scope explicitly excludes organizations involved in services outside of the City’s current offerings, including social housing, education, healthcare, events that charge fees for admission, and entities with limited membership.

Definitions

6. For the purposes of this policy,
“City” means the City of Owen Sound, and a reference to the City is a reference to the geographical area or The Corporation of the City of Owen Sound as the context requires;
“Director” means the City Manager, the Director of Community Services, the Director of Corporate Services, the Director of Public Works & Engineering,

the Fire Chief, the Chief Curator, or any one of the above, and any designates thereof;

“Employee” means City of Owen Sound full-time employees, part-time employees, students, volunteers, members of Council and Committee;

“Manager” means an employee who is responsible for a City division and includes employees who supervise and manage other employees;

Policy

Eligible groups

7. The following criteria must be met for an organization to be eligible for municipal grants:
 - a. The organization must be a:
 - i. local sports association;
 - ii. non-profit organization that serves the population at large; or
 - iii. registered charities operating within the City.
 - b. The organization's services must replace or supplement those typically delivered by the City.
 - c. The organization's activities must yield demonstratable benefits to Owen Sound residents.
 - d. The organization will be required to show that:
 - i. reasonable efforts have been made to raise additional funds from sources other than grant contributions from the City, specifically from Community Foundation Grey Bruce;
 - ii. the organization can:
 1. provide the services proposed; and
 2. control the finances involved;
 - iii. the fees charged to participants are:
 1. reasonable, related to the cost of the service provided; and
 2. in line with similar projects.
8. Organizations explicitly excluded from grant consideration include those that provide services outside the City's current service offering scope, including but not limited to:
 - a. social housing;
 - b. education;

- c. healthcare;
- d. events that charge a fee for attendance; and
- e. organizations with limited membership or registrants.

Eligible projects and services

- 9. Eligible projects and services are those generally afforded by lower-tier municipalities, including but not limited to:
 - a. capital projects that serve the community;
 - b. public events: organization, promotion and execution of community festivals, cultural events and civic celebrations that are offered free of admission fees;
 - c. waste management: initiatives related to recycling, composting, waste reduction, and public waste education programs;
 - d. tourism services: activities aimed at promoting local tourism, including information centers, marketing campaigns, and tourist advisory services;
 - e. recreation programs: development and delivery of sports leagues, recreational activities, fitness programs, and youth engagement activities;
 - f. warming and cooling stations: management of facilities offering respite from extreme weather conditions for vulnerable populations;
 - g. museums and cultural services: Operations and programming for museums, art galleries, historical sites, and cultural heritage initiatives;
 - h. security: community-based safety initiatives, neighbourhood watch programs and support for local law enforcement activities;
 - i. parks maintenance and cleanup: programs dedicated to the upkeep, beautification, and environmental sustainability of parks and public spaces.
- 10. Projects that are not eligible include:
 - a. grants in lieu of taxes, except where legislation permits;
 - b. projects that fall within the jurisdiction of the provincial or federal government;
 - c. projects by organizations who, in Council's opinion:

- i. are providing an adequate level of service without public funding; or
 - ii. do not make sufficient efforts to raise money through other means;
- d. projects that:
 - i. can be funded through other agencies;
 - ii. duplicate existing services; or
 - iii. do not have a life expectancy of at least five (5) years.

Conditions

- 11. Approval of a grant contribution is effective for the calendar year in which the approval was given, after which the approval is void.
- 12. All eligible grants, subsidies or other contributions from other government jurisdictions must be accounted for and details must be provided with the grant application.
- 13. Organizations who purchase capital equipment with City grant contributions must undertake that the equipment becomes the property of the City if the organization dissolves.
- 14. If an organization is approved for grant funding, it is required to enter into a formal funding agreement with the City of Owen Sound. This agreement will outline the terms of the funding arrangement including but not limited to:
 - a. the specific amount of funding awarded;
 - b. the scope of services to be provided;
 - c. expected outcomes and performance metrics;
 - d. reporting and accountability requirements;
 - e. payment schedules and duration of the agreement;
 - f. conditions for the use of funds;
 - g. procedures for monitoring and evaluation; and
 - h. terms related to grant termination or claw-back in case of non-compliance.

Financial Considerations

- 15. The amount of each grant contribution will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

16. Council will approve grants only within the constraints of its current budget. Therefore, any grant application must demonstrate potential operating efficiencies, savings in municipal costs or an increase in municipal revenues that will offset the cost of the grant being considered. Applicants must include a detailed analysis of how their services will result in benefits to the City of Owen Sound. This can be demonstrated through an Economic Impact Analysis, including:
 - a. estimated additional tax revenues;
 - b. increases in municipal service fees or charges;
 - c. cost-benefit analysis; and
 - d. long-term financial benefits to the community
17. In years where the City is in a surplus position, as reported by the Treasurer through tri-annual financial updates, City Council has the discretion to award one-time funds that are outside of the current operating budget.
18. This ensures fiscal responsibility and maximizes the return on investment for municipal funds, aligning overall financial strategies and objectives of the City.

Policy review

19. The Treasurer will review this policy:
 - a. every five (5) years to ensure effectiveness and compliance with current business processes; or
 - b. sooner, if required, based on legislative changes.
20. The Treasurer is authorized to make such administrative changes to this policy as appropriate to keep the policy current. Any revision to the policy's intent must be presented to the Council for consideration.

Related Information and Resources

Internal

21. Policy - Waiving of Rental Fees for Provincial, National & International Events
22. Policy - Minor Sports Subsidy
23. Policy - Waiving of Rental Fees

External

24. N/A

Appendices

25. N/A

Revision History

| Authority | Date | Approval | Description of Amendment |
|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Council | 2025-01-27 | By-law No. 2025-012 | Formerly CS9 – Guidelines for Corporation Grants |
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