

# **COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM (CGP) GUIDELINES**

## **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP STREAM**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Town of Halton Hills recognizes that enhancing residents' quality of life and well-being is a shared responsibility among governments, community groups, and organizations. To support this goal, the Town provides municipal funding and resources through its Community Grant Program (CGP), which assists community investment projects that align with the Town's strategic priorities.

The guidelines outline the project requirements, eligibility criteria, available funding and eligible expenses, application process, evaluation standards, and the program's terms and conditions.

The Environmental Stewardship Stream is dedicated to enable groups and organizations and/or residents to implement local, on-the-ground environmental projects that occur within the town of Halton Hills.

### **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

To be considered for funding, applicants must ensure their project meets the following requirements:

- The project contributes to improving environmental health in Halton Hills, and aligns with Town plans, strategies and/or initiatives such as Council's Strategic Plan, Low-Carbon Transition Strategy, Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Green Infrastructure Management Plan, Biodiversity Strategy, Invasive Species Management Strategy, and the Fairy Lake Implementation Plan.
- The project relates to the objectives and /or goals in the following:
  - Natural environment objectives identified in the Town's Strategic Plan.
  - The Town's Low-Carbon Transition Strategy and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., energy conservation, active transportation, water conservation, waste management).
  - The goals of the Town's Climate Change Adaptation Plan and support strengthening resiliency (e.g., tree planting, rain gardens, natural assets, and low-impact development).

### **ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS**

To receive funds, the current year application can be submitted directly by a Halton Hills resident, business, school, not for profit and social service organization, registered charity, and other group dedicated to advancing Halton Hills' natural environment and climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives.

- An application can be submitted through a collaborating partner to undertake

climate actions in Halton Hills.

- The project must take place within the municipal borders of the Town of Halton Hills.
- The project must demonstrate a community-wide benefit.
- The applicant is encouraged partner on their project.
- The project shall achieve measurable results.
- The applicant must submit a final report within 14 months of receiving funding.

Applications will not be considered for:

- Purchasing and/or rental of vehicles.
- Purchasing buildings, equipment, and/or renovations that are considered as capital assets.
- Ongoing operating expenses such as wages, salaries, rent, and insurance.
- Initiatives held before the application deadline.
- Political affiliations.
- Disbursement of funding to third-party recipient(s) other than partners identified in the application.
- Fundraising activities/events.

If your project is not eligible, but it supports implementation of the Town's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals, contact the Environment Section of the Parks, Community Development and Environment Division within the Community Services Department. We may be able to assist with your project in alternate ways.

## **FUNDING AMOUNT AND EXPENSES**

Funding available through the Environmental Stewardship stream is as follows.

- Up to a maximum of \$2,500, per project per applicant, per intake period will be funded.
- A total of \$15,000 may be funded through the stream per year.
- A maximum of two applications may be made by the same applicant for distinct and separate projects.
- Funds will be distributed based on funding availability, number and quality of applications received, as well as the amount of funding requested.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply for additional funding from other sources, and where appropriate, additional funding may be available from other Town funding program. The Town will not support funding from multiple funding streams for the exact same item(s).

Funding will not be granted for the following:

- Purchasing and/or rental of vehicles.
- Purchasing buildings, equipment, and/or renovations that are considered as capital assets.

- Ongoing operating expenses such as wages, salaries, rent, and insurance.
- Initiatives held before the application deadline
- Political affiliations
- Disbursement of funding to third-party recipients(s) other than identified in the application.
- Fundraising activities/events.

## **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- Application guidelines and forms will be published annually before the Environmental Stewardship opens for intake of applications.
- The application intake period is once per year opening in February, closing in May and decisions communicated in August.
- Applicants are encouraged to consult with Town staff to review eligibility and funding options.
- Applicants must disclose alternate funding sources (e.g., federal/provincial grants) and detail their budget, including in-kind contributions and expense estimates.
- Applications must be submitted on time in accordance with the posted deadlines.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated based on extent to which they demonstrate the following criteria:

- The project contributes to improving environmental health in Halton Hills, and aligns with Town plans, strategies and/or initiatives such as Council's Strategic Plan, Low-Carbon Transition Strategy, Climate Change Adaptation Plan, Green Infrastructure Management Plan, Biodiversity Strategy, Invasive Species Management Strategy, and the Fairy Lake Implementation Plan.
- The proposal has broad community benefits.
- The proposal demonstrates collaboration and community engagement.
- The proposal promotes volunteerism, participation, leadership development, and maximizes community involvement, engagement and awareness.
- The proposal offers a new service or complements an existing service, without duplication.
- The proposal takes place within the Town of Halton Hills and benefits Halton Hills residents.
- The proposal is realistic and likely to be implemented.
- The proposal leverages other sources of funding, including matching funds and in-kind contributions
- The proposal promotes efficient/effective use of municipal resources.
- The proposal facilitates self-sufficiency over the long-term.
- The proposal demonstrates ability to achieve measurable and long-lasting results and

report these to the Town.

- The proposal is accessible, inclusive and diverse.
- The proposal is submitted by an applicant who is in good standing with the Town.
- Demonstrates an innovative approach to addressing climate change that has the potential to scale.

In some cases, additional information may be requested to supplement the above. Applicants have 30 days to submit any outstanding required information to Town staff or the approved funding is cancelled. Applications are reviewed to assess eligibility, completeness, and clarity. Applications deemed eligible will then be reviewed by a staff review committee and funding allocations will be communicated to Halton Hills Town Council.

## **TERMS & CONDITIONS**

To ensure accountability and the effective use of municipal funds, recipients of the Environmental Stewardship stream must adhere to the following terms and conditions:

- Funding must be approved prior to the project start date. Expenses incurred before approval will not be eligible for reimbursement.
- Approval of funding is subject to the Town's annual budget and available resources. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.
- The Town reserves the right to decline applications from organizations that have received funding from another Town grant program in the same year.
- The Town may modify the approved funding amount based on available resources and project needs demonstrated.
- The Town reserves the right to request liability insurance, as required by the Town, before funds can be distributed. Failure to comply may result in forfeiture of funding.
- All recipients must submit a final report within 14 months receiving the funding from the Town of Halton Hills. The report must include:
  - A financial summary detailing the use of funds.
  - Measurable outcomes and community impact.
  - Proof of recognition of Town support (where applicable).
- Any unused or misallocated funds must be returned to the Town of Halton Hills. Additionally, recipients may be required to return funding if they:
  - Cease operations or dissolve before project completion.
  - Provide false or misleading information in their application.
  - Are unable to complete the project as described in the application.
- Funded projects must adhere to all applicable municipal by-laws, policies, and procedures.
- The Town reserves the right to request a presentation from funding recipients detailing project outcomes.
- Request copies of receipts.
- The Town reserves the right to modify or discontinue the Environmental Stewardship funding stream and eligibility criteria, at its discretion.

