POLICY TITLE:	Community Grant Program
POLICY #:	
CATEGORY:	Community Services/Community Development
AUTHORITY:	N/A
POLICY APPROVED BY:	Report No. CSE-2025-025
EFFECTIVE DATE:	July 7, 2025
APPLICABLE TO:	Council, Town Staff and Community Organizations

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Community Grant Program (CGP) Policy is to establish a clear, transparent, and equitable framework for allocating municipal funding to community groups, organizations, and residents to leverage community funding for activities, projects, and/or events that take place in Halton Hills.

2. Policy Statement

The Town of Halton Hills recognizes that governments, community groups, organizations, and residents share the responsibility of making Halton Hills an environmentally healthy, safe and welcoming community. To support this, the Town offers funding and resources to enhance community-based activities, events, and projects that align with the Town Council's Strategic Plan. Through the Community Grant Program (CGP), the Town aims to strengthen community-initiated actions that enhance local quality of life that contribute to a thriving, engaging and sustainable Halton Hills.

3. Policy Details

The Community Grant Program policy outlines how the Town provides funding and support to community groups, organizations, and residents in delivering activities, events, and projects that align with Town Council's Strategic Plan and the Community Services Department.

4. Scope

This policy governs the community funding opportunities and allocations offered within the Community Services Department. These funding opportunities that meet the

approved criteria are for community groups, organizations, and residents undertaking community activities, projects, events within Halton Hills. Additional Town funding opportunities offered by other Town Divisions or Departments are not included in this scope.

5. Definitions

Activity: A program or opportunity planned and operated by a community group, organization or resident related to their initiative or event.

Application Intake Period: A specific time during the year when grant applications can be submitted to the Town to request funding.

Business: commercial entity that pays taxes to the Town of Halton Hills, directly or indirectly.

Community Benefit: The proposed initiative has positive impact and enhances quality of life in Halton Hills.

Community Organization: duly constituted group, club, association, or society.

Community Organization Affiliation ("Affiliated"): A group or organization that meets the criteria outlined in the Town's Community Organization Affiliation Policy.

Council: The Mayor and Council members of the Town of Halton Hills.

Department(s): Refers to work sections at the Town, such as the Community Services Department.

Eligible: Activities, events, and initiatives that meet the criteria of the CGP outlined in the funding stream guidelines.

Eligible Expenses: Costs that can be covered by the grant, as outlined in the funding streams.

Event: A planned occasion or experience that is held withing the Town of Halton Hills.

Grant Opportunity: The type of grant offered by the Town for activities, events, or initiatives of community groups or organizations.

Group: two or more individuals who work together to achieve a goal and share a common purpose.

School Board: a local board or authority responsible for the provision and maintenance of recognized educational schools.

Individual: a resident or business owner who pays property taxes to the Town of Halton Hills.

Ineligible Expenses: Costs that cannot be covered by the funding opportunity as outlined in the funding stream guidelines.

Local: Activities, events, or initiatives occurring within the boundaries of the Town of Halton Hills.

Reporting Requirements: The documentation and financial accountability measures required from grant recipients after completing their projects.

Stream Guidelines: Detailed criteria, funding limits, eligibility requirements, application processes, and reporting obligations for each grant stream. These guidelines ensure transparency and equitable distribution of funds.

Sustainability: Ensuring that a project or initiative has long-term positive effects, either environmentally, socially, or financially.

Town: Refers to "The Corporation of the Town of Halton Hills."

6. Objectives

The Community Grant Program aims to achieve the following objectives:
1. **Support Community Initiatives:** Provide grants to local groups, organizations and/or residents undertaking activities, events, and projects that enhance the well-being of Halton Hills residents.
2. **Align with Town Priorities:** Ensure funded initiatives align with the Town's strategic goals as set by Council and the Community Services Department.
3. **Enhance Quality of Life:** Promote programs and events that improve social, cultural, and recreational experiences.
4. **Encourage Community Participation:** Foster engagement, collaboration, and participation among residents, community groups, and organizations.
5. **Create Community Gatherings:** Celebrate the rural character, culture, agriculture, and local history of Halton Hills through events.
6. **Build Connected Neighbourhoods:** Strengthen community bonds and promote engagement.
7. **Promote Active Recreation:** Encourage sports, recreation, and nature-based healthy lifestyles for all ages and abilities.
8. **Support Health, Well-being, and Inclusion:** Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
9. **Foster Civic Participation and Volunteerism:** Provide quality opportunities for civic engagement and volunteerism.
10. **Ensure Fair Distribution of Funds:** Allocate municipal funds equitably based on transparent criteria.

11. **Promote Local Biodiversity and a Healthy Environment:** Support initiatives that protect and enhance local biodiversity and the natural environment of Halton Hills.

7. Eligibility

Eligibility is defined in each funding stream's guidelines.

8. Application Process

1. Submission Methods: Applications are to be submitted as outlined in the funding stream that is being applied to.
2. Required Documentation: Applicants must provide a project plan, budget, timeline, and letters of support where applicable.
3. Application Deadlines: Intake dates are published annually as outlined in the guidelines for each funding stream. Late applications and/or incomplete applications will not be considered.
4. Project Timeline: Applicant submits a final report within 14 months of receiving funding for their activity, event or initiative.
5. Stream Guidelines: Each stream will have its own detailed criteria, funding limits, eligibility requirements, application processes, and reporting obligations for each grant stream as each stream has different application intake periods and definitions.
6. Notification: Applicants receive notification by email in regard to the application.

9. Funding Disbursement and Reporting

Funds are disbursed either as a lump sum or waiver of municipal fees. Recipients must submit a final report with financial documentation and project outcomes. Failure to complete the project as proposed may result in future ineligibility.

10. Grant Streams

Each grant stream as shown in the table below, is designed to support different types of initiatives, ensuring that funding is allocated to projects that align with the Town's priorities and community needs. Specific eligibility criteria, funding limits, application requirements, and reporting obligations for each stream are outlined in the program guidelines. Applicants are encouraged to review the guidelines carefully to ensure they meet all conditions before applying.

The Community Grant Program funding streams are listed below which are designed to support specific types of community initiatives.

Grant Stream	Purpose	Funding Amount	Percentage of Total Grant Budget
Community Projects	Supports group development efforts such as strategic planning, governance improvements, marketing, volunteer recruitment and management, or training that enhances the sustainability and effectiveness of community organizations. Launches or expands new initiatives or services that creatively respond to emerging community needs.	Up to $5,000 per project	20%
Neighbourhood Projects	Empowers residents and neighbourhood groups to organize events and activities that build stronger, more connected neighbourhoods.	Up to $250 per neighbourhood, per year.	1%
Special Events	Supports municipal fees for community events held on Town property. Includes facility/park rental fees, road closures, use of Town equipment, and delivery costs.	As per the special event classification.	68%
Environmental Stewardship	This funding is dedicated to enabling on-the-ground environmental projects that enhance local biodiversity and a healthy environment.	Up to $2,500 per project.	11%

11. Governance

Staff reviews applications and consults with leadership teams for funding recommendations. Council receives an annual report on fund distribution. The Community Services Department manages program updates and communication.

12. Policy Review

The policy is reviewed periodically by the Community Services Department, with input from stakeholders. The Commissioner of Community Services (or designate) oversees updates and administration.