



POLICY: Community Grants

Created By:	Clerk	Approval Date:	04/02/2025
Policy No.:	A-6	Last Revised	

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The Township of Severn is committed to supporting various community organizations and other entities in the municipality, as they provide important programs, activities, services and events to residents. Support through grants enables these community organizations to fundraise, leverage other funding and support their various volunteer contributions.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to provide decision making criteria for use by members of Council when responding to requests for grants. The fundamental goal of this policy is to achieve consistency, fairness and demonstrate due diligence with respect to proper use of public funds when grants are involved.
- 1.3 This policy will establish eligibility requirements, expectations as well as the application and review process to provide structure leading to consistency and fairness respecting the disposition of requests for assistance.

SCOPE

- 2.1 The policy applies to Council, and staff involved in the administration and decision making related to grant applications
- 2.2 This policy applies to those requesting and awarded grant funding.

POLICY

- 3.1 The Township of Severn may, at the discretion of Council, provide direct monetary grants to programs, charities, causes, local boards, and agencies that:
 - Extend or compliment the community services provided by the Township, deemed to be in the best interests of the residents of the Township of Severn.
 - Are seen to be of significant value to a wide segment of the residents of Severn.
 - Benefit the community by assisting the arts, culture, and social well-being of the community and its residents.

- 3.2 Legislative Authority

Pursuant to Section 107 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* Council has the legislative authority to provide grants as follows:

“Despite any provision of this or any Act relating to the giving of grants or aid by a municipality, subject to Section 106, a municipality may make grants, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the Council considers appropriate, to any person, group or body, including a fund, within or outside the boundaries of the municipality for any purpose that Council considers to be in the interests of the municipality.”

3.3 Governing Principles

- a. The Township may, at the discretion of Council, provide grants in the form of in-kind services, or in exceptional circumstances a waiver of standards fees, whereby doing so could benefit the quality of life for residents in the community.
- b. In general, the Township will not directly contribute to charities, individuals, causes or programs because in doing so the Township would be using tax revenue for a purpose other than that for which it was primarily intended and would be at risk of interfering with the individual taxpayer's right to support charities, causes, or programs of their choice.

3.4 Type of Grants

The various types of grants and funding options awarded under this policy are as follows:

- a. **Arts and Culture:** Grants developed to strengthen the arts and culture community within the Township by providing strategic investment to local or regional organizations. The overall goal is to provide support for the creation, presentation, preservation and/or dissemination of arts and culture activities within Severn.
- b. **Community Project:**
 - One-time assistance for an organization/project, not including a capital project; or
 - Funds for a short-term undertaking with a start-up and completion date, not including a capital project.
- c. **Community Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** Grants to create or elevate an initiative that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion within the Township.
- d. **Operating:** Grants defined as operating funding will assist with the general operating expenses of an applicant, including administrative costs and program-related expenses (i.e. website, promotional materials/printing).
- e. **In-Kind Contribution:** Grants are based on the provision of municipal property, municipal facilities, materials, or resources to an applicant (i.e. rental fees, garbage cans, traffic barriers, etc.).
- f. **Special Event:** One-time or first-time 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 (i.e. Canada 150, one-time dedication event).
- g. **Community Event:** A recurring event that Council has determined provides some significant benefit to the community and is open to all members of the public (i.e. parades, tree lightings, egg hunts, festivals, etc.).

3.5 Basic Principles

The following outlines basic principles that must be met and demonstrated by each applicant for consideration of grant approval:

- a. Promote and enhance the well-being of the Township and its residents.
- b. Align with the Township's Strategic Plan and supports the needs of the community.
- c. Ensure that the requested service, activity, or program is open to the community.
- d. Encourage more active involvement in community organizations, programs, and activities.
- e. Ensure that the funds will be administered by a competent body and that there is an adequate administrative system of review, oversight and accountability implemented with groups or organizations making requests.

- f. Funding provided is not transferable between projects or groups without prior Council approval and must be used for the specific purpose detailed in the application.
- g. Applicants will be eligible for funding annually; however, applicants are encouraged to become self-sustaining.
- h. In the event that the project/event does not proceed, the grant recipient shall return those funds in full.
- i. The grant shall not be the primary source or sole source of funding for the project/event or organization. Grants shall be supplementary to the main sources of funding.

3.6 Funding Eligibility

An applicant organization must meet the following general criteria to be considered for a grant:

- a. There can only be one grant request per organization per year that will be considered which may have multiple components and fall under more than one grant classification.
- b. The organization must be in existence for a minimum of one year before being considered for a grant.
- c. Have a volunteer board consisting of three or more members. In the event that there is no volunteer board, applicants (community organizations or ad-hoc groups) are eligible for a maximum of \$2,000 in funding.
- d. Grant applicants should be able to demonstrate active fundraising efforts to support the continuation of a program, project, or service. The Township of Severn grant should never be considered as the only source of funding for the applicant.
- e. Funding requests can be defined as events/projects/programs that support, sustain, promote, inform, educate, celebrate, preserve, and/or provide access to the arts, culture, environment, heritage, and recreation and/or health activities.
- f. Financial assistance for events of municipal, provincial, or national significance which are expected to bring economic and public relation benefits to the Township of Severn.
- g. Granting assistance in any one year or over several years is not to be interpreted as a commitment to future years funding.
- h. The applicant organization must spend grant funding on the sole purpose for which it was awarded within the current fiscal year.

3.7 Funding Ineligibility

The following are not eligible to apply for a Community Grant:

- a. An organization that acts as a funding body or provides grants to another organization.
- b. Commercial businesses, for-profit organizations, or individuals. (Note: Commercial businesses that have received grants prior to the adoption of this policy, shall have a two-year grace period where they will continue to be eligible so they may re-organize to qualify under Section 3.6).
- c. An organization that is the responsibility of a higher level of government or precluded under the *Municipal Act*.
- d. Grants cannot be used:
 - i. To cover deficits of the organization.
 - ii. To fund an organization's debts.
 - iii. To fund activities that serve the membership or purposes of religious or political

organizations.

- e. An organization who receives 75% or greater of their funding from the federal or provincial government or County of Simcoe would disqualify the organization from a grant or would result in a reduction in the amount of the grant that is awarded.
- f. Organizations who have received funding and failed to provide the required financial report as to the success of the previous year and specifically with respect to the allocation of grants funds, will not be eligible for grant funding until such time proper documentation is remitted and evaluated.
- g. Consideration will not be given to requests for grants from recreational sport groups; furthermore, grants will not be approved to sponsor an individual athlete or team for a competition or to subsidize participation in a sports event.
- h. Board of Directors shall not in any way benefit from receiving a municipal grant, and there shall be no personal gain from any member of the governing board of the organization.

3.8 Application

- a. Requests for grants will be considered as part of the annual budget deliberation process.
- b. Applicants must complete and submit the application by September 30th annually.
 - i. Funding requests of \$1,500 or less must submit the simple application form (Form 1 attached)
 - ii. Funding requests of \$1,501 or more must submit the detailed application form (Form 2 attached) which requires all the information required in the simple application with additional information such as:
 - budget including all funding or anticipated funding sources, and
 - organizational information including governance, number of volunteers.
- c. Other requests for waiver of fees and in-kind donations may be granted in exceptional circumstances at other times during the budget year in writing to the Municipal Clerk by requesting delegation status at a Council Meeting for Council approval.
- d. Council has the sole authority to approve Community Grants, and Council will not approve any grant application which does not meet the grant principles or eligibility requirements.

3.9 Grant Review Process

- a. All qualifying applications that are received by the September 30th deadline will be forwarded to the Council as part of the annual budget deliberations for review and consideration.
- b. All applications for Community Grants shall progress through the following process after the deadline for submissions:
 - Initial review by municipal staff,
 - Council budget meeting review of Municipal Community Grants,
 - Confirmation of approval or denial of the application, by the Clerk's Office, following the Council meeting where the application was considered.
- c. When considering grant applications during budget deliberations, Council will evaluate applications in terms of basic principles and eligibility outlined in this policy based on the information submitted.

- d. Incomplete applications and/or applications that do not qualify will not be brought forward for consideration during budget deliberations. Staff will review applications following the September 30th deadline and contact applicants for any further information needed. Failure to provide the missing information will result in the application not being considered. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
- e. Groups submitting grant applications determined to be ineligible for funding shall be notified, in writing.

3.10 Conditions of Grant Funding

- a. The Township must be notified in writing of any significant changes and/or purpose of the supported activity/program/event.
- b. Receipt of a grant does not guarantee funding the following or any subsequent year.
- c. The applicant acknowledges and agrees that the Township shall not be liable for any incidental, indirect, special or consequential damages, injury or any loss of use, revenue or profit of the organization arising out of or in any way related to the approved activity/program/event.
- d. Organizations receiving a grant shall acknowledge the Township's contribution through all printed material and other public promotional means. The Township's logo is available by contacting the Township's Communication Officer.

3.11 Municipal Community Grant Budget

The Township of Severn shall award each year to eligible organizations who met all eligible requirements the total amount of grant funds allotted in the budget.

3.12 Reporting

- a. Each applicant organization must complete Form 3 (the Grant Report Form) attached to this policy to report on how the funding was spent/used, the impact the funding achieved and the volunteer hours that were contributed to the community by the organization.
- b. This report must be submitted to the Township by September 30th of the following year or the applicant will be ineligible to apply for the next year's grant.

DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Capital Project: The retrofitting, construction, replacement, expansion or purchase and installation of assets or infrastructure (i.e. playgrounds, arenas, park improvements, lighting).
- 4.2 Clerk: The Clerk for the Township of Severn or their designate.
- 4.3 Council: Council for the Corporation of the Township of Severn.
- 4.4 In-Kind Contribution: The provision of municipal property, facilities, materials or resources to an application. This type of contribution does not include the provision of cash funds to or on behalf of the application.
- 4.5 Member: A member of Council for the Township, including the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.
- 4.6 Organization: An organization based within the boundaries of the Township of Severn, which is created primarily for a charitable object or purpose, is a registered not-for-profit or returns 75% or greater of its net proceeds to the community for the community's benefit.
- 4.7 Policy: The Community Grant Policy.
- 4.8 Staff: The CAO and all officers, directors, managers, supervisors, and all employees, whether full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal or volunteer employees, as well as agents

and consultants acting in furtherance of the Township's interests; and

4.9 Township: The Corporation of the Township of Severn.