



## Policy Manual

Section:	Corporate - Council
Subject:	<b>Municipal Grants</b>
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Prepared By:	Manager of Finance and Business Services

### 1.0 Objective

The Town of Essex recognizes the valuable contributions made by community organizations and agencies to improve the well-being of the community and the quality of life for its residents. In recognition of these contributions, the Town is committed to providing assistance to such organizations through its municipal grant program, “Essex Community Partnership Fund”.

The Essex Community Partnership Fund (“Essex CPF”) provides funding on an annual basis through the operating budget and allocates such funding to qualifying organizations through an annual application process.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to—

1. Establish guidelines for funding to organizations that meet the eligibility requirements and funding categories of the Essex Community Partnership Fund;
2. Define the eligible organizations, funding categories and types of funding;
3. Define the requirements for the annual application process for grant requests;
4. Define the accountability requirements; and

5. Ensure fairness and consistency in providing funding to qualifying organizations.

## 3.0 Definitions

**Annual Budget** – This is the operating budget allocated to the Essex Community Partnership Fund during the annual budget process.

**Annual Report** – The report submitted by the Finance Committee to Council to show the recommended organizations and corresponding funding amount for the Essex Community Partnership Fund.

**Application Process** – The process managed by the Finance and Business Services Division and reviewed by the Finance Committee to determine and recommend approval for grant funding to organizations ultimately approved by the Town of Essex Council.

**Cash Grant** – A monetary grant provided by the Town of Essex to assist with an organization's expenditures. This monetary grant can be for operating expenditures up to a maximum of 50% of the organization's operating costs (excludes cost to purchase or sell alcoholic beverages) and may be provided for a one-time project.

**Committee** – Refers to the Finance Committee.

**Council** – Refers to the Town of Essex Council.

**Eligible Organization** – This is a non-profit or not-for-profit community group/organization that provides products or services to improve or benefit the community. Eligible Organizations may be a Registered charitable organization, Registered not-for-profit organization or established Volunteer group.

**Funding Categories** – These are established funding categories that an eligible organization must fall under. The categories can be:

1. **Social and Community Services** – This is a funding category for services that respond to the basic needs and safety of residents within the community, including referral, information, and assistance in a variety of areas such as a health care, food, clothing, shelter, government services, counseling, employment etc. and promote healthy communities.
2. **Seniors or Youth** – This is a funding category for activities directed towards the youth or senior population primarily within the Town of Essex. Includes Youth/Senior Centres offering activities and programming for youth and seniors whose primary membership (minimum of 75%) is residents of the Town of Essex.
3. **Heritage & Cultural Events or Organizations** – This is a funding category for events and activities which serve to celebrate historical or cultural heritage or gather,

document, preserve or otherwise maintain information and artifacts of an historical or cultural value.

4. **Community Beautification & Protection/Preservation of the Environment** – This is a funding category that includes projects which serve to enhance or beautify the municipality or preserve and protect the environment.
5. **Fundraisers for Municipal Projects** – This is a funding category for the sole purpose to raise funds for a municipal project to construct, rehabilitate or maintain municipal infrastructure.

**Grant Application** – The application form required to be completed and submitted prior to consideration of any grant funding.

**Ineligible Organization** – This includes individuals, businesses (public or private business who are concerned with making a profit); publicly funded institutions (schools/hospitals). This also includes any organization outside of the Town of Essex.

**Initiative** – Refers to any public undertaking of a project, program and/or event carried out by an organization.

**In-Kind Assistance** – This refers to work performed for the organization by Town of Essex employees while employed by the Town (examples include snow removal/grass cutting), or payment of utilities for an organization’s building in or adjustment to a municipal building.

**Letter of Award** – Refers to the written communication of an award to an applicant by the Director of Corporate Services (this confirmation may be provided electronically).

**Methods of Communication** – This refers to the methods used by the Town of Essex to communicate to the public. This includes (but not limited to) the Town of Essex’s website, social media, newspaper, and press releases.

**Types of Funding** – This refers to the grant funding provided to an organization. This could either be a cash grant, in-kind assistance, or waiver of fees.

**Waiver of Fees** – Waiver for all or a portion of the fees normally charged for the usage of a space in a municipality facility.

## 4.0 Eligibility Criteria

Only those organizations that meet all the following criteria will be considered for a grant under the Essex Community Partnership Fund:

- 1) The organization must be a Registered charitable organization, Registered not-for profit organization or established volunteer group.
- 2) Only one application per organization will be considered in a fiscal year. All programs, projects and undertakings requiring grant funding for an organization must be consolidated in one application.
- 3) Organizations seeking grants must provide services that fall into one of the following funding categories: Social or Community Services, Seniors or Youth, Historical or Cultural Events, Community Beautification & Protection/Preservation of the Environment; Fundraisers for Municipal projects.
  - i. The community services or seniors/youth activities cannot duplicate any services, activities or programs offered by the Town of Essex.
- 4) Organizations must provide services that directly benefit the general public within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Essex
- 5) Organizations must be located in the Town of Essex or provide evidence of a project specific to the Town of Essex, with the majority of participants being from the Town of Essex:
  - i. All applicants under the Essex Community Partnership Fund will be required to provide information, including demographic information that identifies the level of participation or benefit that their project, activity, program, etc. provides to the residents of the Town of Essex.
- 6) Applications will only be considered if they are submitted prior to the commencement of a project and before any costs associated with the project have been incurred. The Town of Essex, through the Essex Community Partnership Fund, will not contribute to deficits from operations of past years.
- 7) Monetary grants for operating expenses are intended to supplement an organization's main source of revenue and not to help cover a deficit by the organization. This monetary grant will not be considered as the main source of funding for the organization. The organization must show exploration of other financial support (example: fundraising).

- 8) Any organization or group applying for a grant with a financial surplus or reserve from prior year's operations will be highlighted to the Finance Committee to assist in their decision making and ensure the funding request is in fact necessary.
- 9) Grant applicants related to a religious organization must be able to demonstrate that a distinct line of separation exists within its program and budgets between strictly religious activities and its community service program.

Organizations whose primary focus is not in the Town of Essex will not be considered for funding under the Essex Community Partnership Fund.

## **5.0 Sustainability**

Organizations submitting grant requests for multiple years will be required to demonstrate the efforts and achievements related to future sustainability on an annual basis including—

- 1) that they are actively pursuing other sources of financial support and fundraising through other levels of government, donations, membership fees, ticket sales, user fees, etc.; and,
- 2) That they are working towards future self-sufficiency for purposes of reducing or eliminating their organization's need for municipal assistance in future years.

After the third year of continual funding, the organization will be required to submit a 3-5 year business plan and sign a statement with the above declarations (1 and 2). Refer to Appendix A Sustainability Declaration.

## **6.0 Application for Funding Under the Essex Community Partnership Fund**

All organizations requesting funding under the Essex Community Partnership Fund must submit an application using the Town's "Application for Funding under the Essex Community Partnership Fund" contained in Appendix "B". All information requirements outlined in the application must be included with an application. Council reserves the right to disqualify any grant request where all required information has not been provided.

## **7.0 Processing of Applications**

The Finance and Business Services division will annually inform the community of the grant opportunities with updates to the Town's website.

The deadline for applicants to submit an application for operating grants, capital grants, in-kind grants and waiver of fees is November 30<sup>th</sup> of the year (for grant award in the next calendar year). Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Finance Committee for consideration.

The Finance and Business Services division will prepare an annual report to the Finance Committee to identify the applications and the amount of funding requested. The Finance Committee will review the report and make recommendations to be shared at the next Council meeting. All grant requests are to be approved by Council and must be adopted by resolution in a public meeting of Council. In a regular Council term year, all awarded recipients will be notified by February 28<sup>th</sup>. In the case of an election year, Council will not approve the recommendations until the year following the election and therefore all awarded recipients will be notified by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Operating grants will be paid after Council formally approves the annual report through a resolution. The monetary grants will be paid in a one-time payment unless directed by the Finance Committee and subject to the accountability section (Section 9).

If any funding remains, any late applications submitted throughout the year will be reviewed by the Finance Committee at the earliest possible meeting date following receipt of the request. The cut-off date for late submissions will be July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Applicants may be required to make a presentation to the Finance Committee as part of the Committee's review of a grant application. The Finance Committee and Council also reserves the right to request information in addition to the information requested in the Appendix B: Application for Funding under the Essex Community Partnership Fund.

The granting of assistance in any year is not to be regarded as a commitment by the Town of Essex to continue assistance in future years.

## **8.0 Accountability**

Grant recipients will be held accountable for the expenditure of the funds based on the initiatives provided in their application. All Community Grant recipients will provide a report to the Finance Committee within 60 days following the completion of their project/event/year-end with the following information:

- i) Certify that the grant was spent on the initiative described in the grant application.
- ii) Provide a brief report on the success of the initiative described in the grant application.

- iii) Provide receipts if requested by the Finance Committee at the time of application.

Failure to provide the above may result in disqualification for future grant opportunities through the Essex Community Partnership Fund. Refer to Appendix C: Declaration of Accountability

The deadline to submit the Accountability Declaration is December 15.

## **9.0 Repayment of Grants**

Grant recipients shall repay the whole or any part of the grant as determined by the Town of Essex if the grant recipient—

- 1) Ceases operating
- 2) Ceases to operate as a non-profit, charitable or volunteer group
- 3) Merges or amalgamates with any other party
- 4) Knowingly provides false information in a grant application
- 5) Uses grant funds for purposes other than those identified in the grant application and subsequently approved by the Town of Essex
- 6) Breaches any other terms or conditions of the Essex CPF
- 7) Breaches any of the provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code in its operations
- 8) Acts in the capacity of funding body for, or make grants or transfers funds to, any other group or organization

Any unused portion of a grant paid to a grant recipient remains the property of the Town of Essex and must be repaid by the recipient upon request.

## **10.0 Recognition**

If Council requests, grant recipients are required to acknowledge the Town's contribution to their activity, program, event or organization in all advertising, booklets, programs, signage, plaques, websites, etc. produced by the recipient. All recognition must be approved by the Town prior to printing, posting, or distributing the material.