



**Subject:** *Updates to the Municipal Grant Program Policy*  
**To:** Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee  
**Date Prepared:** February 10, 2022  
**Related Motions:** C16(221)  
**Prepared by:** Nathan Hoffmann, Policy Analyst  
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**Reviewed by:** Senior Grants Review Committee  
**Approved by:** Sheralee Mitchell-MacEwan, Assistant Municipal Clerk

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### Summary

The 'Municipal Grant Program Policy' (the "Policy") is one of the first policies reviewed through the new policy review program. A jurisdictional scan was conducted and meetings were held with impacted staff to identify ways to improve the Policy. Several sections were added to the Policy concerning the eligibility of religious groups for funding, recognition of receiving funding, edits to the single window grant application, and updates to the 'Grants Overview' Table.

### Financial Impact Statement

The Financial Impacts of this Policy will be characterized through the Annual Operating Budget approval process.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommend to Council to enact the proposed updates to the 'Municipal Grant Program Policy.'

### Recommended Motion

*To be considered at the May 17, 2022 Executive Committee Meeting:*

***Move that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommend to Council to give notice of intent to approve the proposed updates to the Municipal Grant Program Policy dated May 17, 2022, last updated September 2016.***

*To be considered at the May 25, 2022 Regular Meeting of Council:*

***Move that the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee recommend to Council to approve the proposed updates to the Municipal Grant Program Policy May 25, 2022, last updated September 2016.***

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### Background

#### Municipal Grant Program Policy

The 'Municipal Grant Program Policy' (the "Policy") manages the administration, application process, and accountability requirements for all Municipal grants. The Policy also outlines the approval process and grant facilitator for each grant. Created in 2012, this Policy was last updated in 2016, leading to some sections requiring updates and clarification.

#### Review

The Policy was reviewed through discussion with staff who regularly interact with the Policy and a jurisdictional scan of similar grant programs across Nova Scotia.

Discussions with staff indicate that the current Policy's structure is easy to work with and effective with no significant changes needed to the document's body. Additions were made to the 'Grant Applications' and 'Grant Administration Framework' sections to clarify decision-making on the eligibility of religious groups to receive funding and encourage grant recipients to recognize Municipal funding. Staff also identified several edits required within the Grant Table Section of the Policy.

A jurisdictional scan was conducted to identify how the Policy aligns and differs from similar policies throughout the Province. The Municipality's grant Policy is similar in structure to most other municipalities in Nova Scotia. All the considered policies outlined a similar framework for grant administration and framework. The Municipality's Policy differs in one regard from others by having all types of grants, including community development, tourism, and fire departments, covered within the same policy. This difference reduces confusion for residents and staff on finding information on grant administration.

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## Discussion

Informed by the jurisdictional scan and discussions with staff, there are five (5) types changes recommended to this Policy:

- Role updates;
- Addition of religious groups eligibility clarification;
- Clarification of 'Single Window Grant Application';
- Addition of 'Recognition Guidelines'; and
- Updates to the 'Grant Review Table'.

### Role Updates

Since the Policy was written, several organizational changes and position changes have not been reflected within the Policy. Some outdated roles that have been updated from include the Director of Finance and Administration, Manager of Administrative Services, Senior Business Development Officer, and Tourism Development Officer. These changes do not change the administration of the grants but more accurately reflect the facilitator of the grants. All these changes are represented in Table 1.

### Addition of Religious Groups Clarification

Religious groups play an important role in community development throughout the Municipality. However, public funds should not be used to support any particular group's religious education or development over another. The addition of section 1.17 of the Policy clarifies that religious groups are eligible to apply for grants when providing a community service beyond the immediate religious group, such as a community-wide day camp. Events that promote the religious education or the expansion of the physical infrastructure of a religious group are not eligible for funding. This section does not preclude applications for funding by religious organizations with heritage buildings.

### Clarification of 'Single Windows Grant Application'

Section 2.3 of the Policy dictates that all grant applications must be submitted to the Assistant Municipal Clerk who will then distribute the applications to the correct staff grant facilitator. In practice, most known community groups directly contact the correct grant facilitator based off of previous experience. However, there is value with the initial intake being the Assistant Municipal Clerk for new community groups or applicants. Updates to this section of the Policy maintain the single intake for grant applications, but also empowers applicants to directly contact a known grant facilitator.

### Addition of Recognition Guidelines

The various Municipal grant programs provide funding to groups in the range of hundreds to thousands of dollars. The addition of section 2.4 of the Policy requires grant recipients to recognize the Municipality's funding of their event, program, or building. Staff have drafted a 'Grant Recognition Guidelines' document, attached as Appendix A to outline suggested levels of recognition based on the amount of funding a group receives. This edit supports transparency in how Municipal funding is used and raises awareness for how the

Municipality supports community development.

#### Grant Overview Table Updates

Discussion with the Director of Corporate Services and the Manager of Development Services indicate that the 'SPCA Funding Grant' is no longer in effect following the 2019 service contract between the Nova Scotia SPCA and the Municipality of East Hants. This change in status warrants its removal from the Policy within Table 1. This removal does not affect the existing contract between the Nova Scotia SPCA and the Municipality.

The 'Recreation Access Policy' was written in 2020 to support residents who may experience financial limitations preventing them from participating in Municipal recreation programs. As this grant was created since the last update of the Municipal Grant Program Policy, the 'Grants Overview' table has been updated to reflect the 'Recreation Access Policy's' administration. This addition does not impact the 'Recreation Access Policy.'

The 'East Hants Alternative Transportation Service Funding' grant provided financial support to the precursor of the East Hants Community Rider. Since this grant's development, funding for the Community Rider has shifted to the 'Community Partnership Fund', leaving this grant inactive. Removing this grant does not have any impact on the financial support for the Community Rider.

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## Alternatives

There are three (3) alternatives to the provided recommendation: reject the Policy changes entirely, accept the changes made to the 'Grants Overview' table and reject all other edits, or any other direction from Council.

### Reject

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee may recommend to reject all edits to the 'Municipal Grant Program Policy'. This option would reflect no change to how the Policy is written or how grants are administered.

### Accept Changes to Grants Overview Table

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee may recommend to accept the updates to role titles, the removal of the SPCA Funding Grant, the removal of the East Hants Alternative Transportation Funding Grant, and the addition of the Recreation Access Fund from the list of grants and reject the changes to the eligibility of religious groups to apply for funding, the updates to the 'Single Window Grant Application' section, and the addition of recognition guidelines.

### Other Direction

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee may recommend to pursue another direction for this policy not captured by the previous alternatives.

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## Attachments

Municipal Grant Program Policy  
Appendix A: Grant Recognition Guidelines