



Subject: *Amendments to the Municipal Grant Program Policy*
To: Corporate and Residential Services Committee
Date Prepared: April 08, 2026
Related Motions: Council Motion C23 (145) and Council Motion C25 (313)
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Approved by: Alana Tapper, Director of Parks Recreation & Culture; Adam Clarkson, Director of Corporate Services, Kim Ramsay CAO

Summary

The amendments make four general changes:

1. Moving the table of active grants to an appendix, reformatting, and updating its contents.
2. Including a statement about applicants needing to follow appropriate accounting and bookkeeping practices.
3. Adding the requirement that a grant proposed on behalf of a group demonstrate organizational support for that application.
4. Including the requirement for organizations applying to not-for-profit grants to be registered with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies as a non-profit.

Additionally, there are minor changes to phrasing and formatting throughout.

These changes carry out previous council motion requests and help ensure that grant applicants are following best practices in terms of risk mitigation, financial management, avoiding duplicate/double applications, and maintaining appropriate accreditation.

Financial Impact Statement

There are no financial impacts to these amendments.

Recommendation

Recommend that the Corporate and Residential Services Committee recommend that Council adopt the amended Municipal Grants Policy as presented.

Recommended Motions

Regular Meeting of Council (Policy & In-Camera) - April 14, 2026

Move that the Corporate and Residential Services Committee recommends that Council gives notice of intent to adopt the amended Municipal Grant Program Policy as presented and attached to the April 14, 2026 Executive Committee agenda.

Regular Meeting of Council - April 22, 2026

Move that Corporate and Residential Services Committee recommends that Council adopt the amended Municipal Grant Program Policy as presented and attached to the April 14, 2026, Executive Committee agenda.

Background

As part of a routine policy review program, the Municipal Grant Program Policy has been reviewed to enact previous council motions and address any identified gaps. In addition, various housekeeping changes have been made.

During the Regular Meeting of Council on May 17, 2023, Council carried motion C23 (145) which repealed the 'Tourism Economic Development Fund' and 'Rural Economic Development Fund' policies and ended their associated grants. Although the named policies were repealed, the TED and RED grants were still listed in the grants policy table. Reflecting this, these two grants have been removed from the active grants overview table.

During the Regular Meeting of Council on September 24 & 25, 2025, Council carried motion C25 (313) which directed staff to explore requirements for groups requesting to speak to Council or request funding to demonstrate organizational support if acting on behalf of a group. An amendment has been added to fulfill this direction.

Previous amendments to this policy have occurred as a matter of course; primarily updating which funds are available and changes to processes or program descriptions. In keeping with this, changes have been made to reflect new grant owners, updated job titles, and general updates to ensure the information is up to date and accurate for potential applicants.

Discussion

Three potential gaps were identified throughout the policy review process or regular operation of the policy and minor changes have been added to address them.

1. A statement has been added indicating that grant applicants will follow appropriate accounting and bookkeeping practices. This complements risk management principles without imposing rigid or undue requirements on organizations seeking grants.
2. A statement has been added indicating that individuals applying for a grant on behalf of an organization must display an appropriate form of organizational knowledge and support. This inclusion follows from the Council motion C25 (313). Simply put, if an individual is applying for a grant, then the organization they represent has to know about it and approve of it. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways with minimal effort and does not place undue requirements on the organization's volunteers. This addition prevents the case of an individual applying for a grant without the knowledge or permission of their organization, and avoids the duplication of grant applications; either as two applications for the same project, or multiple applications to the same grant for different projects.
3. A statement has been added requiring not-for-profit applicants to be registered as such, and remain in good standing, with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies (NSRJSC). While this is often required within the grants directed to not-for-profit organizations, the specification of the NSRJSC in the overarching grant policy ensures that not-for-profit organizations maintain appropriate credentials and creates a harmonized standard for not-for-profit applicants. Organizations within the NSRJSC databases can be searched and valid certificates are obtained as a matter of course, imposing minimal additional effort for applications.

Housekeeping changes have occurred throughout with wording or phrasing changes to ensure accuracy and promote clarity. The only major change is re-formatting the table of active grants. For this, there are three changes:

1. The table is now a standalone table in Appendix A; this allows for regular changes and updates to the table as grants are added, removed, reassigned, or otherwise changed without causing major changes to the main body of the policy. Reference to this table has been added within the policy statement.
2. Three columns have been consolidated into one; there is now an "Approval Method" column rather than indicating in separate columns whether a grant is approved by a motion of Council, as part of the approved budget, or in accordance with a specific grant policy.
3. The grants listed have been updated to reflect their current status;
 - i. The removal of the Rural Economic Development Assistance Fund and Tourism Economic Development Fund which were officially discontinued by motion C23 (145),

- ii. The Open Space Funding Grant has been removed due to process changes. Prior to a parks department being created to complete capital work and develop these assets, the open space funds contributions collected through development were, at times, provided as grants to community associations but this is no longer done.
- iii. The addition of the Community Exit Ramp Challenge which provides grants to community organizations for litter clean-up and has been operating since 2021, but was not listed in the grants overview table.

The amendments and housekeeping changes are focused on general process clarity and risk management. By updating risk management and accountability measures, potential grant applicants will have greater certainty in what is required and potential documents needed to qualify. The wording allows the strength of these measures to be commensurate with the size of the grant and the kind of organization applying for it. Additionally, the information provided by these changes will ensure that Council and Staff have the most relevant information possible when evaluating applicants. Each of the changes impose minimal additional requirements on applicants, create minimal additional work for Council or Staff when reviewing applications, and help standardize the requirements for specific applicant types.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

These amendments will further the goals of presenting open, transparent, and fair information to the public about the grants we offer and how to access them. They help ensure that grants are used in a responsible way and by qualified recipients; bolstering our commitment to corporate excellence and public trust. Additionally, the information required by the amendments will help Council make informed decisions of how best to strengthen our communities.

Alternatives

Alternatives to the proposed amendments are:

- a. Retain the current Municipal Grants Policy as status quo; or,
- b. Provide alternative direction for policy amendments

Attachments

Attached are the current Municipal Grant Program Policy and the Municipal Grants Policy with proposed amendments.