

POLICY #804C

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Policy Title:	Community Grants Policy
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Policy Statement

The Town of Olds supports a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient community by providing financial and in-kind assistance to eligible non-profit organizations, community groups, and initiatives that deliver measurable benefits to residents.

Funding will be allocated in a fair, transparent, and accountable manner, aligned with Council priorities and the Town’s Strategic Plan. Priority will be given to initiatives that demonstrate clear alignment with these priorities.

Purpose

The purpose of the Community Grants Program is to:

- Support programs, services, events, and initiatives that enhance quality of life in Olds
- Encourage community development, partnerships, and volunteerism
- Improve access to recreation, culture, and social opportunities
- Leverage additional funding and community investment
- Ensure responsible stewardship of municipal resources through clear criteria and accountability

Definitions

Administration

The department assigned responsibility for managing the Community Grant Fund

Applicant

An eligible non-profit organization, society, or community group applying for funding.

Community Benefit

A demonstrated positive impact on the Town of Olds residents, including social, cultural, recreational, environmental, or economic outcomes.

Community Grant

Financial or in-kind support provided by the Town of Olds to eligible organizations or initiatives that enhance community well-being, support Council priorities, and provide a demonstrated public benefit to residents of Olds.

Community Organization

A registered non-profit located in and serving Olds and recognized as eligible for municipal support

Grant Types

- Project/Event Grant: Supports specific initiatives, programs, or one-time events
- Capital Grant: Supports purchase of equipment or infrastructure improvements
- In-Kind Support: Non-monetary assistance such as facility use, staff time, or fee waivers

Good Standing

An applicant that has no outstanding debts to the Town of Olds, has fulfilled previous grant reporting requirements, and complies with applicable bylaws and policies.

Not-for-Profit Organization

A legal entity registered under Alberta's Societies Act, Companies Act, or with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) as a charitable organization with operations and services based in Olds

Standards

1. Guiding Principles

The Community Grants Program will be administered in accordance with the following principles:

- Transparency: Decisions are clear, consistent, and defensible
- Accountability: Applicants demonstrate responsible use of funds and measurable outcomes
- Community Impact: Priority is given to initiatives that provide broad and meaningful benefit
- Sustainability: Projects demonstrate long-term value, partnerships, or leveraged funding
- Equity: All eligible applicants are treated fairly with decisions made based solely on clear criteria

2. Eligibility

Applicants must:

- Be a registered non-profit organization, society, or recognized community group
- Operate within or provide direct benefit to the Town of Olds
- Be in good standing with the Town
- Demonstrate organizational capacity to deliver the proposed initiative
- Eligible projects must be located within the Town of Olds or the Olds Recreation Area of Mountain View County

3. Ineligible Applicants and Expenses

The following are not eligible for funding:

- Individuals or for-profit organizations
- Political or advocacy activities
- Retroactive funding for completed projects
- Debt repayment or deficit reduction
- Core services mandated or funded by other levels of government
- Projects that primarily benefit a closed membership group without broader community access

4. Funding Streams

The Town may offer multiple funding streams, including:

- Project/Event Grants
- Capital Grants
- In-Kind Support

Specific criteria, funding limits, and application requirements may vary by stream.

5. Application and Intake

- Applications will be accepted annually, with timelines established by Administration
- Additional intake periods or rolling applications may be considered subject to available funding
- Tiered application requirements may be implemented based on funding request amounts
- Applications exceeding \$5,000, requests for recurring Community Events extending beyond a single year, and Ad Hoc Community Events of an emergent nature require approval of Council.
- Council may, at its discretion, refer applications to an adjudication process as outlined in Section 5.1.

5.1 Adjudication Committee

- Council may, at its discretion, establish a committee composed of elected officials and/or community representatives to review and adjudicate applications to the Community Grants Program. Where established, the committee will operate in accordance with terms of reference approved by Council and will provide recommendations to Council or Administration as applicable.

6. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Alignment with Council priorities and the Town's Strategic Plan
- Demonstrated community benefit and impact
- Organizational capacity and financial sustainability
- Level of community support, partnerships, or leveraged funding
- Clear objectives and measurable outcomes

7. Funding Conditions

- Funding is not guaranteed and is subject to annual budget approval
- Approval of funding in one year does not constitute a commitment for future funding
- Applicants may be required to enter into a funding agreement

8. Reporting and Accountability

Successful applicants must:

- Use funds for the approved purpose
- Return any unused or surplus funds within 60 days of project or grant term completion

Successful applicants may also be asked to:

- Enter into a Funding Agreement with the Town
- Submit annual or final reports as outlined in the agreement, including:
 - Use of funds;
 - Alignment with Town strategic priorities;
 - Impact and performance metrics;
 - Detailed financial reporting, including revenues, expenses, and confirmation of other funding sources;
 - For operational grant recipients, a demonstration of ongoing financial need, including a summary of organizational reserves, other funding sources, and budget pressures;
 - Provide adequate proof of liability insurance coverage
- Operational grant recipients must submit an annual report regardless of term length. These reports must include program outcomes, measurable impact, and a year-end financial summary
- Provide additional reporting or presentations to Council where applicable
- Acknowledge the Town's support in promotional materials and event signage where applicable

Failure to comply may impact future eligibility.

9. Administration

Administration is responsible for:

- Developing application processes and timelines
- Evaluating applications and making recommendations to Council (if applicable)
- Monitoring compliance and reporting outcomes

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed every four (4) years, or as required, to ensure continued alignment with community needs and Council priorities.