



## STAFF REPORT

**Title:** Policy Development for Financial Allocations in Respect of Community Service Grants

**Meeting Date:** March 19, 2019

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### Executive Summary:

At the February 19, 2019 Corporate Priorities Meeting, Council was presented with a bylaw to establish an advisory committee and a policy which would set out grant opportunities. Together, the bylaw and policy would set the foundation for a new standardized process for funding requests relating to community grants and sponsorships. Council provided feedback and requested the program be brought back before the Corporate Priorities Committee for further discussion.

### Background:

The new process for grant administration was first proposed in 2018:

- At the **December 11, 2018, Regular Meeting of Council**, Councillor Vining gave a “Notice of Motion” for the January 8, 2019 regular meeting of Council to have Council consider giving Administration direction to develop a policy/program to establish a standardized process and advisory committee to review funding requests that address a community service need. This would be a significant change in the process that Council currently uses to consider funding requests, whereby community groups and individuals attend Council directly as a delegation and request funds.
- At the **January 8, 2019 Regular Meeting of Council**, Council directed Administration to prepare such a policy/program as recommended by Councillor Vining’s “Notice of Motion” presented to Council December 11, 2018. The purpose of the program is to shift from a case-by-case consideration of grant/sponsorship applications to a standardized process that benefits from a transparent, fair, depoliticized and formalized process that increases community accountability for municipal contributions, supports long term planning of municipal expenditures and a maximized use of funds from other sources of investment. The amended process would address the growing number of requests for financial support from community members and organizations for various projects, community events, individual needs, fundraising, etc. in a fair and equitable way.
- At the **February 19, 2019 Corporate Priorities Meeting** administration recommended a process centralized around the establishment of a new “Community Grant Advisory Committee”:



- Community Grant Advisory Committee: The bylaw establishes the new Committee and provides it with the power to receive and review grant applications submitted in accordance with particular established City of Cold Lake policies. The committee would use the following process:
  - Committee receives grant applications (based on grants set up by the City through policy).
  - Committee would review grant applications, prepare a summary and recommendation to Council on grant funding.
  - Council would be provided the Committee's recommendation. Council would make the final determination of the grant allocation.
  - Administration would follow up with a funding agreement, and receive reporting requirements as required.
- Grants that the Community Grant Advisory Committee would review: Administration recommended that the new committee administer grants already established by the following policies:
  - Community Capital Project Grant (Policy No. 202-AD-16)
  - Facility Booking Discounts (Policy No. 154-RC-14)
  - Recreation and Culture Grants (Policy 097-RC-07) *\*which would be significantly revised to include new categories of grants\**
- Redevelopment of the Recreation and Culture Grant Policy (Policy 097-RC-07). Administration recommended a major revision to the policy which would now have the following grant opportunities:
  - Development Grant
  - Community Event Grant (\*significantly revised\*)
  - Major Community Event Grant (\*new\*)
  - Travel Grant
  - Leadership Grant
  - Equipment Grant
  - Other funding and Goodwill Requests (\*significantly revised\*)

Administration received the following feedback from Council at the February 19, 2019 Corporate Priorities Meeting:

- Council emphasized the need to promote both recreation and arts and culture grants and discussed how they could ensure that grant opportunities were available to support recreation as well as arts and culture. Discussion pursued around whether the committee should be made up of representatives from all areas or members at large.
- Recommendations were made around an ease for all applicants requesting grant funding through the City by amalgamation of the policies and bylaw.



- Council would like to see a quarterly intake established for grant opportunities, rather than accepting rolling grant applications. Discussion about how important it would be to communicate to community groups that grant applications would have to be received on time during quarterly intake or else could not be considered.
- Need to consider whether the total cost of a “major event” under the Major Community Event Grant should be \$100,000?
- Council discussed whether the Community Event Grant and Major Community Event Grant should be so heavily focused on bringing in non-local people to the community. Suggestion that events that cater to local community members also keeps money in the community and can make an impact on economic development. Discussion pursued around events that included non-local participants could be a criteria in the consideration for funded events but not the sole qualifier.

Following the recommendations of Council, Administration made the following amendments to the proposed policy and bylaw (significant changes are highlighted on the bylaw in green; provisions that Council discussed but have not been changed are highlighted in yellow):

- **Redevelopment of the Recreation and Culture Grant Policy**
  - The wording and formatting of the policy were cleaned up throughout for clarity and consistency.

#### **Section 4.2.2 Community Event Grant**

- Council discussed whether the Community Event Grant should only fund events that are expected to bring non-local participants into the community. Administration drafted this grant on this premise that the Community Event grant would be limited to events bringing in non-local participants because the economic benefit to the community through increased sales at stores, hotels, restaurants, gas stations, etc.
- Administration proposes leaving the requirement of section 4.2.2.1 for the Community Event Grant, however, other events catering to local participants could still apply for funding under section 4.2.8 Other Funding and Goodwill Requests. This recognizes that the impact on the community is different for events bringing in non-local participants.
  - Administration seeks Council’s direction on whether the Community Event Grant should be limited to events drawing in non-local participants.

#### **Section 4.2.3 Major Event Grant**

- The title of the “Major Event Grant” was changed to the “Major Tourism Event Grant” to further clarify that this grant is limited to events that bring significant non-local people into the community. The influx of people into the



community will support economic development through anticipated purchases at stores, restaurants, hotels, gas stations, etc. The financial support of council for these major tourism events is warranted because the large influx of people will benefit local businesses.

- The first draft of the Major Event Grant qualifications included that qualifying events must have an operating budget greater than \$100,000 to qualify. Administration researched how other municipalities deal with qualifying events for similar grants:
  - City of Grande Prairie stipulates that the event must be large scale, “expected to have a tourism draw of at least 35% of attendees from a proximity of 100km or greater from Grande Prairie; multiday event with an expected attendance of greater than 2,000 people per day.
  - City of Lethbridge stipulates that the event must be a “major provincial, inter-provincial, national, or international event, with a local organizing committee and a 100K+ proposed budget”, must attract spectators or participants from outside Lethbridge.
    - Administration seeks Council’s direction on how they would like to see the parameters of the Major Tourism Events grant determined.

#### **Section 4.2.7 Arts, Culture and Heritage Funding**

- This new grant opportunity has been added to address Council’s concern that arts and culture events have not historically received as much funding or attention as recreation opportunities in the City. This particular grant was developed based on a grant offered by Strathcona County, the intention is that this grant not be limited to festivals and events, it will provide funds for arts programs, projects and activities within the City.
  - Administration seeks Council’s direction on whether they would like to see a unique arts, culture, and heritage funding opportunity in the City.

#### **Section 4.6 Application Deadlines and Processing Times**

- Section 4.6 has been added to implement a quarterly intake process. The proposed deadlines (4:30 PM on the first Thursday of February, April, August and September) are suggested so that no deadlines will not fall on holidays.

#### **Section 4.7 Grant Fund**

- Section 4.7 was added to clarify to the public how the City determines how much money will be potentially available for grants. Section 4.7.1, 4.7.2, and 4.7.3 were copied from the terms used in the Community Capital Grant Policy.



- Section 4.7.4 was added to address Council's concern that the grant fund could be depleted during the first quarterly intake, leaving no funds available for the rest of the year. The provision was crafted to ensure the Community Grant Advisory Committee understands Council's recommendation that only 25% of the grant funds be allocated during each quarter, however, there is flexibility permitted if exceptional circumstances arise.
- Section 4.7.8 was included to make it clear to the public and Community Grant Advisory Committee that Council may provide direction on the distribution of grant dollars available between the different types of grants.
  - Administration seeks Council's direction on whether they would like to see a recommendation that a maximum allocation of 25% of the grant fund be made per quarter.

This proposed program would significantly change the way grants are currently administered by the City. There are several important changes to highlight:

- The Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee would no longer be reviewing Community Capital Project Grants or Recreation and Culture Grants. The mandate of the Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee (established under Bylaw No. 577-BD-16) would need to be revised.
- The Recreation and Culture Grants (under Policy 097-RC-07) were previously provided directly through the Recreation and Culture Advisory Committee without the decision coming before Council. Under the newly proposed program, these grants would be brought to Council for final determination.
- Grant applications and funding decisions would be made on a quarterly basis. Community groups would need to plan ahead to meet grant deadlines.
- A new grant (the Major Tourism Event Grant) and a revised grant (the Community Event Grant) would encourage local groups to host events in Cold Lake. Council's support of this initiative emphasizes the important economic development impact hosting events brings to local businesses.
- A new grant opportunity for Arts, Culture and Heritage was developed.

**Alternatives:**

This report is provided for discussion purposes.

**Recommended Action:**

Type the recommendation here



**Budget Implications (Yes or No):**

No.

**Submitted by:**

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