

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

SUBJECT: FOOD SECURITY GRANTS

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Community Grant Policy be updated to allow for food security grants to support direct delivery of food programs and services to Burnaby residents, as outlined in the report “Food Security Grants” dated May 5, 2025, of the Executive Committee of Council meeting;

THAT up to \$30,000 of the Community Grant allocated annual budget be available for food security initiatives; and

THAT a contribution of \$90,000 over a three-year period (\$30,000 per year) from the Gaming Reserve to assist with the administrative costs associated with starting the Burnaby Food Security Table, be approved.

REPORT

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on May 5, 2025, received and adopted the attached report seeking approval for the inclusion of a Food Security Grant stream as part of the Community Grant Policy and for \$90,000 to be allocated over a 3-year period to contribute to the operational start-up of a Burnaby Food Security Table.

On behalf of the Executive Committee of
Council,

Councillor S. Dhaliwal
Chair

Councillor P. Calendino
Vice Chair

TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL (ECC)
FROM: GENERAL MANAGER CORPORATE SERVICES AND
GENERAL MANAGER PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBJECT: **FOOD SECURITY GRANTS**
PURPOSE: To seek approval for the inclusion of a Food Security Grant stream as part of the Community Grant Policy and for \$90,000 to be allocated over a 3-year period to contribute to the operational start-up of a Burnaby Food Security Table.

RECOMMENDATION

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1.0 POLICY SECTION

Review of grant requests with a food sustainability component is aligned with the following Council-adopted policies and plans/strategies:

- Equity Policy (updated 2020);
- Social Sustainability Strategy (2011);
- Corporate Strategic Plan (2022); and
- Burnaby Food System Strategy (2024).

2.0 BACKGROUND

At the Executive Committee of Council meeting on January 20, 2025, a report titled “Food Sustainability Grant Requests” was brought forward for the information of the Committee and subsequently Council. The report provided a summary of the recommendations from the Burnaby Food System Strategy that was adopted by Council on October 16, 2024. At the meeting on March 3, 2025, Executive Committee of Council

received a delegation from Kimberly Barwich, Burnaby Neighbourhood House, and Simone Brandl, Long Table Society, and were provided with a presentation on food security in Burnaby as a response to the recommendations from the Burnaby Food System Strategy. On March 25, 2025, Council referred the March 3 presentation to staff to provide a report on the proposed streams for food security grants and the process required for implementation.

2.1 Recommendations from Burnaby Food System Strategy

The Burnaby Food System Strategy, theme 4: Community Sector support includes three actions that relate to the proposed changes to Community Grants:

- *Action 4.7 – Support the reformation and formalization of a food security service provider working group to support the BFSS serving as a network and resource for the City of Burnaby. (short term)*
- *Action 4.12 - Consider establishing a small grant program for food security organizations to upgrade facilities, purchase fridges/freezers, expand or install responsible waste management (e.g. composting,), and generally improve the spaces that programs use to provide food to people. This could include matching funds from other levels of government, as available. (long term goal)*
- *Action 4.15 - Review the City's existing community granting program to better align with and support the needs and capacity of Burnaby's social service sectors. (medium term goal)*

2.2 Background on Community Tables

Staff have noted there are community tables (networks of non-profit organizations) that would benefit from operating grants to support coordination of their work but are ineligible under the current grant policy. Examples include:

- a new community-based food security table (coordination of free groceries and meal programs);
- a new community-based poverty reduction table (alignment/coordination of poverty reduction initiatives); and
- Burnaby Early Childhood Development community table; and Community Based Seniors Services Network (age-friendly heat response awareness).

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The speakers of the March 3 ECC delegation proposed two streams for food security grants which would help the City fulfil actions 4.7, 4.15 and 4.12 in the Burnaby Food System Strategy:

- Stream 1 - Community grant to support the ongoing coordination of a Food Security Advisory Table.

- Stream 2 - Smaller community grants to support direct delivery of food programs and services to Burnaby residents.

The following sections provide more details on the proposed streams and process for implementation:

3.1 Food Security Advisory Table Grant

The delegation brought forward the idea of a community-based Food Security Advisory Table that would act as a central coordinator for Burnaby's food security needs. Currently there are many faith, charity, and non-profit organizations in Burnaby working towards the goal of improving food security to those in need but as the effort is not coordinated, it is not as efficient as it could be. A collaborated response to the food security emergency would increase collaboration among agencies providing food security programs, build and strengthen the food network in Burnaby, and maximize the sharing of limited food resources.

The delegation advised of the need for a grant to support the creation of the Food Security Advisory Table including hiring a coordinator and support with administrative costs for the first three years of their operations. The delegation noted that short term funding for three years would enable the Food Security Advisory Table to develop a strategic plan to fund and support itself long term. It is recommended that \$90,000 be allocated over a 3-year period (\$30,000 per year) to contribute to the operational start-up of a Burnaby Food Security Advisory Table.

3.2 Food Security Initiative Grants

Year-to-year, the Community Grant funds generally have a surplus at year end between \$20,000 - \$30,000 after all the eligible grants have been awarded. As a result, it is recommended that up to \$30,000 be set aside in the Community Grant fund to assist with Food Security Grant requests. The grant applications would follow the same process as all other applicants. While Community Grants are now considered twice per year by the Committee, it is recommended that this new stream be considered monthly for 2025 so that there is opportunity for applicants to become familiar with the process. A maximum of \$5,000 is recommended for Food Security Initiative grants.

Required criteria for applicants to these grants would be similar to other Community Grants, including:

- registered non-profit organization operating for at least one year;
- be Burnaby based; and
- must be open to all.

In addition to the community grant criteria listed above it is recommended that in order to be eligible, applicants must also be members of the Food Security Advisory Table. Any organization (e.g. non-profit organizations, faith-based

organizations) providing direct food security (like meals and food hampers) in Burnaby may become a member of the Food Security Advisory Table. Membership will be further defined in the Food Security Advisory Table's Terms of Reference, once it is established.

The revised Community Grant Policy is included as Attachment 1

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If changes to the Community Grant Policy and Application are approved, the information will be communicated to all 2024 and 2025 applicants and the new policy and application will be uploaded to the website along with additional information on the changes made.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Grants provided through the Community Grants Program are funded from the Gaming Reserve. The 2025 contribution for the Food Security Advisory Table, if approved, would also be funded from the Gaming Reserve.

Respectfully submitted,

Juli Halliwell, General Manager Corporate Services and Ed Kozak, General Manager Planning and Development

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Revised Community Grant Policy

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Kathryn Matts, Administrative Officer 2, and reviewed by Claire Shepansky, Senior Planner 1.