

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL

TO: *MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS*

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY GRANT POLICY AND COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION AMENDMENTS

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the amendments to the Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application, as indicated in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 of the report titled “Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application Amendments”, dated March 3, 2026, of the Executive Committee of Council meeting, be adopted.

REPORT

The Executive Committee of Council, at its meeting held on March 3, 2026, received and adopted the *attached* report seeking Council approval for amendments to the Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application.

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
SUBJECT: **COMMUNITY GRANT POLICY AND COMMUNITY GRANT APPLICATION AMENDMENTS**
PURPOSE: To seek approval for amendments to the Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the amendments to the Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application as indicated in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 of the report “Community Grant Policy and Community Grant Application Amendments”, dated March 3, 2026, be adopted.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The provision of community grants is aligned with the following Council-adopted policies, plans, and strategies: Burnaby Food System Strategy (2024); Burnaby Strategic Plan (2022); Burnaby Economic Development Strategy (2020); and the Social Sustainability Strategy (2011), that identifies the importance of a sense of belonging, inclusion, and high quality of life.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Community Grant Policy came into effect January 1, 2024, and had revisions in 2025. Staff undertake continuous review of the policy to ensure a seamless continuation of the program, allowing for any necessary adjustments based on feedback and evolving community needs. In addition, at the November 25, 2025, Council meeting, Staff were requested to review the allocation of funds for the Food Security Initiative Grant based on the number of people served.

Staff have reviewed the grant requirements and propose further revisions to the policy and application form for clarity purposes based on questions received by applicants.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

3.1 Proposed Amendments to the Community Grant Policy and Application

Since the inception of the Community Grant Policy in January 2024, the grant submission process has become significantly more streamlined, improving accessibility and efficiency for applicants. However, through its implementation, a

few areas have been identified that require further clarification within the policy to ensure consistency and transparency in future application cycles.

Staff have identified the following areas within the Community Grant Policy and application form that may benefit from further clarification.

3.1.1 Amendments for all Operating and Initiative Grants (Section E)

Currently the section advises that grants must be directed towards initiatives or operating costs that primarily benefit Burnaby residents and must be accessible for free. Staff would like to add information outlining the restrictions for grant use noting they cannot be used for bursaries, scholarships or awards, travel for conferences, dept repayment or research projects. Similar wording appears in other cities grant policies and the additional wording provides clarity and allows for policy reference.

In addition, staff have noted the need to add that Burnaby-based Non-profit Organizations must be in Burnaby and provide a Burnaby address.

3.1.2 Amendments to Food Security Initiative Grants (Section J)

Staff recommend minor changes to the types of initiatives that are eligible for this grant. Staff have removed mention of one-time events from the Community Grant Policy to better reflect the goals of the grant which is to support ongoing community food security programs that help households in obtaining sufficient food on a day-to-day basis.

3.1.3 Amendments to the Community Grant Application Form

In addition, staff have made a few revisions to the Community Grant Application. In section 6, Applicant Type: Other has been removed as this was never utilized and caused confusion to applicants.

In Section 6.2 an additional request was added to identify number of Burnaby residents served or attending programs for all initiative grants (including Food Security Initiative Grants).

3.2 Allocating Food Security Initiative Grant Funds

During the first intake of the Food Security Initiative Grant stream in October 2025, the value of grant requests (\$41,200) exceeded the amount of funds available (\$30,000). As a result, all applicants received approximately 73% of the funds they requested. At the November 25, 2025, Council meeting, Staff were requested to review allocating funds based on number of Burnaby residents served instead of equally amongst all applicants, when the amount requested is greater than funds available.

While allocating funds based on number of residents served would in theory support programs with a larger reach, there are challenges with this approach including that:

- Organizations currently have different methods to track the number of people served which may result in unreliable comparisons (e.g. some track unique individuals, others record number of households etc.).

- Some programs may require more time, resources, or support depending on the needs of the population group they are working with. Allocating funds per person served does not account for nuance in program delivery and may negatively impact programs for higher needs groups.
- Distributing grant funds on a per person basis may also result in applicants feeling pressure to inflate numbers to receive more of their grant request which could lead to inaccurate data and inequities in funding.

Given these noted challenges, if the value of grant requests is larger than funds available, staff recommend continuing to award an equal percentage of funds amongst all applicants. With that said, Burnaby Food Security Table members are interested in discussing methods for more consistent data collection and have expressed an interest in being a part of future discussions about how the food security initiative grant funds are allocated. Information collected in the Grant Application Form about number of residents served, and further engagement with the Table can help inform future decision making regarding the allocation of funds on a per person basis.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

If changes to the Community Grant Policy (Attachment 1) and Community Grant Application (Attachment 2) are approved, the information will be communicated to all 2026 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 are provided through the Community Grants Program and funded from the Gaming Reserve.

Respectfully submitted,

Juli Halliwell, General Manager Corporate Services

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – DRAFT Community Grant Policy Revised

Attachment 2 – DRAFT Community Grant Application Revised

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Kathryn Matts, Administrative Officer and reviewed by Claire Shepansky, Planner 1, and Blanka Zeinabova, Sr. Manager Legislative Services