

## **REPORT**

### ***Community Services***

**To:** Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council  
**Date:** May 26, 2025

**From:** Blair Fryer, Director, Community Services  
**File:** 2702345

**Item #:** 2025-148

**Subject:** Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees

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#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. *THAT the report titled “Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees,” dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be received for information;*
  2. *THAT the City’s Grants Policy as specified in Attachment A of the report titled “Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees,” dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be approved;*
  3. *THAT the City’s three Grant Committees Terms of Reference be updated as specified in Attachments C, D, and E of the report titled “Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees,” dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be approved.*
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#### **PURPOSE**

This report provides Council with an update about continued phased refinements to the Community Grants program, including updated Grants Policy and Grants Application

Guidelines, and seeks approval of updated Terms of Reference for the three Community Grants Advisory Committees.

## **SUMMARY**

On July 8, 2024, Council directed staff to undertake a phased approach to refinements to the Community Grants program based on public consultation that took place from March to June 2024. This report provides an update on that process, as well as an updated Grants Application Guidelines document to be received for information. This report also seeks approval on an updated Grants Policy and proposed updated Terms of Reference for the three Grants Advisory Committees.

## **EXISTING POLICY**

The three Community Grants Advisory Committees are governed by Terms of Reference which have been informed by the Grants Policy. Staff have developed a comprehensive Grants Application Guidelines document to support applicants based on the Grants Policy, best practices, and commonly asked questions received by staff.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Document Revisions**

A revised Grant Policy was last brought to Council for approval in July 2019. In keeping with best practices, a new proposed Grant Policy (see Attachment A) removes several items that would not typically be contained in a Council-approved policy and are suggestions for applicants, information on process, or background information. For example, information related to how best to write an application is best suited to an application guide rather than a policy. Items like these have been relocated to the Grants Application Guidelines (see Attachment B), which was last updated July 2023. No substantive changes are proposed to the information that is contained within the two documents, but rather, where the information is presented has been edited to be more accessible and in keeping with best practices related to policy versus guidelines.

The Terms of Reference for the three Grant Advisory Committees were last brought to Council July 13, 2020. Staff proposed updates to the grant program based on community feedback in July 2024. Based on the changes to the Grants program that have taken place or are planned to come before the next Community Grants program intake, the Terms of Reference to the three committees require updating. See Attachments C, D, and E for proposed Terms of Reference. Key changes include:

- Removal of the voting staff position on each committee
- Reduced the required meetings from six annually to a maximum of three
- Removed references to advisory bodies that no longer exist

### Refinements to the Community Grants Program

In July 2024, Council approved a phased approach to refinements to the Community Grants program. This approach was devised to provide a careful and smooth introduction to changes so that community partners were well informed. Staff also required additional time to investigate some of the proposed actions. Below is a status update of the approved actions. Generally, all actions are on track.

Action	Timeline
<b>Phase 1</b>	
<b>Online Platform</b> – configure a new platform and onboard users.	Complete
<b>Improved Reporting</b> – tiered reporting	Complete, will be used for 2025 funding year reporting.
<b>Funding Terms</b> – allow for give year funding terms	Complete, was applied for 2025 funding year.
<b>Partial Payment up Front</b>	Complete, was applied for 2025 funding year.
<b>Budget Enhancements for Staffing and Communication</b>	Complete, was included in 2025 budget. Community Grants Coordinator hired late April 2025.
<b>Phase 2</b>	
<b>Improvements to Adjudication Model and Grant Process</b>	Estimated: Q1/Q2 2025 Status Update: In progress, to be completed by recently hired Community Grants Coordinator.
<b>Calculation of City Services – adjustments to how City Services are calculated to make the process more transparent and easier to understand.</b>	Estimated: Q2 2025 Status Update: Will be incorporated into the planning for fall 2025 intake.
<b>Microgranting</b> Development of a microgrant program using unused funds.	Estimated: Q3 2025 Status Update: not yet started.
<b>Mentorship Program for Incubating or Emerging Community Initiatives</b>	Estimated: Q3 / Q4 2025 Status Update: not yet started.
<b>Total Funding Envelope Budget Increases</b>	Estimated: Budget 2026 and beyond Status Update: Not yet started, will be included in budget development
<b>Phase 3</b>	
<b>Analysis and Development of a Service Delivery Partnership Model</b>	Estimated: Analysis and Planning 2026, Budget considerations and Implementation 2027 Status Update: Not yet started

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications stemming from this report.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Once the Terms of Reference for the Community Grants Advisory Committees are approved by Council, work will begin to recruit and fill member positions in advance of the fall intake. Staff will return to Council with those nominations.

Staff will continue to work on the phased approach refinements to the grants program and return to Council for updates or input as required.

## **OPTIONS**

There are four options for Council's consideration:

1. **THAT** the report titled "Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees," dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be received for information;
2. **THAT** the City's Grants Policy as specified in Attachment A of the report titled "Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees," dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be approved;
3. **THAT** the City's three Grant Committees Terms of Reference be updated as specified in Attachments C, D, and E of the report titled "Community Grants Program Update and Updated Terms of Reference for Grants Advisory Committees," dated May 26, 2025 from the Director, Community Services be approved.
4. **THAT** staff be provided with other direction.

Staff recommend Option 1, 2, and 3.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Proposed Grants Policy

Attachment B: Proposed Grants Application Guidelines

Attachment C: Proposed Terms of Reference for Community Grants Advisory Committee for Community Livability and Social Equity Grants

Attachment D: Proposed Terms of Reference for Community Grants Advisory Committee for Social and Cultural Vibrancy

Attachment E: Proposed Terms of Reference for Community Grants Advisory Committee for Community Economic Activators

## **APPROVALS**

This report was prepared by:

Jen Arbo, Manager, Community Partnerships

Stephen O'Shea, Community Grants Coordinator

This report was reviewed by:

Jennifer Miller, A/Deputy Director, Community Services

This report was approved by:

Lisa Spitale, Chief Administrative Officer

Blair Fryer, Director, Community Services