

Community Grants Policy

Policy Number:	2026-05-07
Effective Date:	2026-05-07

1. Title

1.1 This Policy shall be known as the Community Funding Policy.

2. Authority

2.1 This Policy is made pursuant to Sections 65 (A-D) of the Municipal Government Act, SNS 1998, c 18, as amended.

3. Definitions

3.1 In this policy:

- (a) **“Community Benefit”** means a social, cultural, physical, economic, or environmental benefit delivered to the public or to a defined community within the Municipality, and not primarily for private or commercial gain;
- (b) **“Community Funding”** means financial assistance or sponsorship provided by the Municipality to eligible organizations;
- (c) **“Council”** means the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness;
- (d) **“Emergency”** means an unforeseen event that materially disrupts an eligible organization's Operations or financial stability and requires an immediate funding response;
- (e) **“Fundraising Activity”** means an activity whose primary purpose is generating revenue for an organization, rather than delivering direct Community Benefit, including galas, auctions, raffles, and donation-driven events;
- (f) **“Gambling Activity”** means any activity involving wagering or games of chance, whether licensed or unlicensed;
- (g) **“Good Standing”** means compliance with all applicable filing, reporting, and regulatory requirements;

- (h) **"In-kind Contribution"** means a non-cash contribution of goods or services that are necessary to carry out an activity and that have a reasonable and verifiable market value;
- (i) **"Municipality"** means the Municipality of the County of Inverness;
- (j) **"Operations"** means the activities required to sustain the core functioning, governance, and administrative capacity of an eligible organization;
- (k) **"Programs and Events"** means planned activities delivered over a defined period, or as one-time or recurring community gatherings, that provide direct Community Benefit; and
- (l) **"Projects"** means one-time initiatives with a clear start and end date that result in a facility improvement, a new or improved asset, or a completed study or plan.

4. Purpose

4.1 The purpose of this Policy is to govern the allocation and administration of Community Funding provided by the Municipality to eligible organizations.

4.2 The Municipality supports community-led activities that contribute to inclusive, resilient, and thriving communities and enhance quality of life for residents, newcomers, and visitors.

4.3 This Policy consolidates all municipal Community Funding categories into a single framework to ensure consistency, accountability, and equitable decision-making.

5. Parameters

5.1 Funding is provided at Council's discretion, subject to annual approval, and the availability of funds.

5.2 An organization may receive only one allocation of funding per category per fiscal year, unless otherwise approved by Council.

5.3 Where a request exceeds \$1,000.00, municipal funding will not exceed 50% of total eligible costs, unless otherwise approved by Council.

- (a) The organization's portion may include cash, funding from other sources, or eligible In-kind Contributions, provided In-kind Contributions do not exceed 90% of the required contribution.

- (b) For organizations eligible for a Public Service Bodies rebate on GST or HST, the rebate value must be factored into total eligible costs.
- (c) Council may approve conditional funding upon confirmation of supplemental funding.

6. Funding Categories

6.1 Funding is provided in three (3) mutually exclusive categories: Projects, Programs and Events, and Operations.

6.2 The Municipality may determine the appropriate funding category for a request, regardless of how the request is framed.

7. Eligible Organizations

7.1 To be eligible for Community Funding, an organization must be:

- (a) a registered charity in Good Standing with the Canada Revenue Agency, or a non-profit society in Good Standing with the Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stock Companies;
- (b) governed by current bylaws, a functioning board of directors, and an active conflict of interest policy;
- (c) maintaining appropriate financial oversight and reporting practices; and
- (d) delivering activities that provide Community Benefit.

8. Ineligible Organizations

8.1 The following are ineligible:

- (a) individuals and businesses;
- (b) public schools;
- (c) volunteer fire departments;
- (d) religious organizations;
- (e) political organizations;
- (f) organizations with expired, suspended, or revoked charitable or Joint Stocks registration;

- (g) organizations with inadequate governance, including: lapsed or unadopted bylaws; a non-functioning board; unresolved conflicts of interest; or any governance structure in which board members also serve as paid employees or contractors of the organization;
- (h) organizations that fail to maintain appropriate financial oversight and reporting practices;
- (i) organizations with outstanding reporting requirements related to previous Municipal funding; and
- (j) organizations with outstanding debts to the Municipality.

9. Eligible Activities

9.1 All eligible activities must:

- (a) deliver community benefit;
- (b) comply with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, applicable treaties, legislation, municipal by-laws, and all required permits and approvals;
- (c) be undertaken on property owned by the eligible organization or on property for which the organization holds appropriate authorization, except that where the activity involves construction, renovation, or installation, the organization must hold ownership or a lease of five (5) or more years; and
- (d) be requested prior to the activity taking place.

9.2 Project activities may include:

- (a) construction, renovation, or improvement of facilities;
- (b) acquisition, installation, or improvement of equipment or assets; and
- (c) studies, plans, or assessments.

9.3 Program and event activities may include:

- (a) community festivals, cultural celebrations, and public events that are open and accessible to the community; and
- (b) recreational, leisure, educational, or wellness activities.

9.4 Operations activities may include personnel, facility, and administrative costs directly related to an organization's Operations.

10. Ineligible Activities

10.1 Ineligible activities include:

- (a) activities that primarily serve or benefit an individual or organization that are ineligible under section 8 of this policy;
- (b) Fundraising Activities;
- (c) Gambling Activities;
- (d) compensation not directly related to the funded activity;
- (e) servicing of operating deficits, accumulated debt, or prior debt obligations; or
- (f) payment of municipal taxes.

11. Exceptions

11.1 Council may, at its discretion, approve exceptions to the eligibility requirements where permitted by the Municipal Government Act and where Council determines that doing so is in the public interest and consistent with the intent of this policy.

11.2 In cases of Emergency, Council may consider funding requests submitted outside established deadlines.

12. Funding Requests

12.1 All requests must:

- (a) be submitted in the manner prescribed by the Municipality; and
- (b) be endorsed by the organization's highest signing authority.

13. Review

13.1 The Director of Culture and Community Development, or a designate, will review funding requests for:

- (a) eligibility under this policy;

- (b) the relationship between the activity and direct municipal service delivery;
- (c) alignment with municipal priorities as established by Council; and
- (d) the organization's capacity to successfully carry out the proposed activity.

13.2 As part of the review process, staff may consult other municipal staff, request clarification or additional information from the organization, or require the organization to present to Council prior to a funding decision being made.

14. Approval

14.1 All funding decisions under this policy are made by Council, except that the Chief Administrative Officer may approve requests of \$500 or less, provided sufficient funds are available and the approval is reported to Council for information.

14.2 Council may approve disbursement of funds in installments, over one or more fiscal years, or disburse funding based upon progress reporting.

14.3 Council may pause funding approvals during a municipal election period.

14.4 Council may deny or defer a funding request at its discretion.

14.5 Organizations will be notified in writing of the outcome of their request.

15. Reporting

15.1 All funding recipients must submit a final report within sixty (60) days of the completion of the funded activity. The final report must include:

- (a) a summary of activities undertaken and outcomes achieved;
- (b) a statement of actual revenues and expenditures, including any funding received from non-municipal sources;
- (c) an explanation of any material variances from the approved budget or scope; and
- (d) supporting documentation as requested by the Municipality.

15.2 Interim reports or presentations may be requested at any time during the funded period.

16. Accountability

16.1 Funding not used in accordance with Council's approval must be returned to the Municipality and may result in disqualification from future funding.

17. Disclosure

17.1 The Municipality will annually disclose a summary of all funding approved under this policy, including the name of each recipient, the amount approved, and the general purpose of the funding.

18. Indemnity

18.1 Funding recipients must indemnify and hold harmless the Municipality, its Council members, officers, employees, and agents from any claims, losses, damages, costs, or expenses arising from activities carried out in connection with funding provided under this policy.

19. Insurance

19.1 The Municipality may require proof of insurance coverage, in a form and amount satisfactory to the Municipality, as a condition of funding.

20. Acknowledgement

20.1 Organizations receiving funding under this policy must acknowledge the Municipality's contribution in communications related to the funded activity, in a form and timing coordinated with the Municipality.

21. Legislation and Severability

21.1 In instances of conflict between this policy and pertinent federal and provincial legislation, the legislation supersedes this policy only to the extent required to resolve the conflict.

22.2 A decision by a court of competent jurisdiction that any part of this policy is illegal, void, or unenforceable severs that part from this policy and does not affect the other provisions of this policy which shall remain in full force and effect.

22. Policy Review

22.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Municipality and may be amended by Council as required to ensure continued relevance, effectiveness, and compliance with applicable legislation.

23. Repeal and Replace

23.1 This policy repeals and replaces Municipality of County of Inverness District/Regional Capital Development Grants Policy that was approved on June 10, 2013, by the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness.

Approval:

I, Keith MacDonald, CAO and Clerk of the Municipality of the County of Inverness hereby certify that the above-noted policy was passed on May 7, 2026, at a meeting of the Council of the Municipality of the County of Inverness and repeals and replaces Municipality of County of Inverness District/Regional Capital Development Grants Policy that was passed on June 10, 2013.


Keith MacDonald

Policy History

Date of Notice to Council:	2025-05-22
Date of Council Approval:	2026-05-07

