Big Lakes County Policy

Community Organization Operating & Capital Grants

Policy Number:	Admin 67
Legal Authority:	
Approved by Council:	September 11, 2024
Effective Date:	September 11, 2024
Revised Date:	June 11, 2025

Policy and Procedure Statement

Big Lakes County believes in supporting local community organizations that benefit and improve life in the County. The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for Operating and Capital grant funding for Non-Profit Organizations located in and serving Big Lakes County residents.

The goals of this program are to support Community Organizations that:

- Aim to create an environment that attracts and retains residents, promotes personal growth, ensures social well-being and fosters a vibrant and cohesive community.
- Enrich the lives of residents by providing opportunities for recreation, relaxation, learning and socialization.
- Preserve, protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural resources, and heritage of our community.

Definitions

- **Capital or Capital Project** shall mean a tangible capital asset, or specific project work in relation to a tangible capital asset that is owned by the Community Organization and will be used for the duration of one year or more, including:
    - Facility/site construction, renovation or major repairs
    - Facility/site assessment, study, design, or construction documents to support the above projects; or
    - Furnishings and/or equipment
- **Community Organization** shall mean a Non-Profit Organization identified by Council as a provider of community services for the purposes of this policy. Organizations which are the mandate or responsibility of the federal or provincial governments including but not limited to healthcare, education, religious or housing are excluded.
- **Eligible Operating Expenses** include, but are not limited to, insurance, rent, utilities, repairs and maintenance, professional fees, waste removal, telephone services,

programming and events, office supplies, janitorial expenses, memberships, and salaries/wages.
    - Ineligible expenses include investments/GICs, donations, capital infrastructure, start-up costs, debt reduction, and endowments.
- **Emergency Capital Grant Funding** shall mean grant funding that is for a Capital Project that is emergent and poses an immediate risk to health, life, property, or the environment, if the project is not undertaken.
- **Non-Profit Organization** means an organization which provides products or services to improve or benefit a community. Any money made by a Non-Profit Organization is not for the personal gain of its directors, members, or officers, but whose excess revenue goes back into the organization to further its aims and projects. For the purposes of this policy, organizations incorporated under the following acts of Alberta or Canada are considered Non-Profit Organizations:
    - Agricultural Societies Act
    - Societies Act
    - Cemeteries Act
    - Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act
    - Registered as a charity under the Income Tax Act
- **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** means the Chief Administrative Officer of Big Lakes County or their designate.

Criteria

- To be eligible for grant funding as a Community Organization, an organization must be a recognized Non-Profit Organization, be located within Big Lakes County and provide services to Big Lakes County residents.
- Each grant funding category or stream has a limited supply of funds. Not all eligible projects may receive grant funding, and some may receive less than the original requested amount.
- Funding must be applied for annually. An application submitted does not guarantee funding approval, and Council may approve the total or partial amount requested, or deny any request received.
- Council will prioritize grant funding requests according to need and availability of funds.
- Eligible Community Organizations can apply to multiple grant streams and stack grant funding for Eligible Operating Expenses up to a maximum of their previous years operating expenses less any expected grant funding received from sources other than Big Lakes County.
- Community Organizations that receive less grant funding than expected from sources other than Big Lakes County may request additional funding for Eligible Operating Expenses up to a maximum of their previous years operating expenses for the streams in which they are eligible year-round. These funds may be granted at the sole discretion of Council.

- Community Organizations funded by a multi-year funding agreement(s) are not eligible for operating or capital grants under this policy.
- Retroactive grant funding requests will not be accepted.

Community Organization Operating Grants

Community Organizations seeking operating grant funding must apply under the appropriate stream(s) as outlined on Schedule A:

- The Recreation Facility Stream encompasses Community Organizations that operate a community facility (other than a Hall) used for instructional programming, organized recreation, community functions, special events, rentals, or provides services to the community. Only one (1) Community Organization in each Hamlet shall be recognized under this stream.
- The Community Halls & Organizations Stream encompasses Community Organizations that operate Community Halls, and/or offer programming, community functions, special events, rentals, or community services.
- The Seniors Programming Stream encompasses Community Organizations that provide programming for senior citizen members.
- The Museums Stream encompasses Community Organizations that operate with a mandate that focuses on education, interpretation, arts, culture, and heritage.
- The Cemeteries Stream encompasses Community Organizations that are the owner or caretaker of a registered cemetery.
- The Daycare Facility Stream encompasses Community Organizations that own and/or operate a facility providing childcare services, programming and afterschool care that are not otherwise the mandate or responsibility of the federal or provincial governments.
- The Curling Club Stream encompasses Community Organizations that own and/or operate a facility which is dedicated to hosting curling leagues and/or bonspiels.
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OPERATING GRANT FUNDING STREAM	MAXIMUM GRANT FUNDING
Recreation Facility	Maximum of $55,000
Community Halls & Organizations	Maximum of $11,000
Seniors Programming	Maximum of $5,500
Museums	Maximum of $22,000
Cemeteries	Maximum of $2,200
Daycare Facility	Maximum of $5,500
Curling Club	Maximum of $11,000

Community Organization Capital Grants

- Eligible Capital project grant funding requests may be funded up to 50% of project costs with a maximum of $27,500 for projects that align with Big Lakes County's Strategic Plan.
- Due to limited funds and high demand for County funding, Capital Grant funding is not guaranteed.
- Shovel-ready projects will be given funding priority.

- Projects may be carried forward a maximum of one year, after which the project must be resubmitted for funding.
- Funds shall be dispersed after the project is complete and a capital claim form is received.
- Funds may be dispersed prior to project completion based on need at the discretion of the CAO.
- Community Organizations may apply year-round for Emergency Capital Grant Funding with proof that their project meets the relevant criteria.
- Any Community Organization may apply to receive Capital grant funding.

Grant Funding Stream Inclusion and Removal Criteria:

- Community Organizations seeking to be included on Schedule "A" for operating grant funding must submit an application to the Grants Officer, or designate, for review no later than September 30th of the year prior to when the grant funding is required by the Community Organization.
- Applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with Council having final decision.
- Council may request further information or delegation from your Community Organization before final decision.
- Applicants will be notified of a final decision on their application in writing.
- Community Organizations who do not submit a grant funding application for two or more years will automatically be removed from Schedule "A" and must re-apply for inclusion.

Application Requirements

- Community Organizations seeking operating grant funding shall complete an Operating Grant Application and submit it to the Grants Officer, or designate, for review no later than October 31st of the year prior to when the grant funding is required by the Community Organization.
- Community Organizations seeking capital grant funding shall complete a Capital Projects Application and submit it to the Grants Officer, or designate, for review no later than October 31st of the year prior to when the grant funding is required by the Community Organization.
- All applications for grant funding must be complete, signed and accompanied by the following documents:
    - Current list of Board of Directors
    - Current Financial Statements as approved at the organization's last Annual General Meeting (AGM).
    - Example: To request 2026 grant funding, the Organization must submit 2024's Financial Statements.
    - AGM minutes of the previous year that the organization has applied for grant funding.

    - Current year operating budget including revenues and expenses
    - Projected operating budget showing Eligible Operating Expenses for the year in which the grant will be received
    - Most recent Proof of Filing from the organization's annual return/non-profit status.
- If the application is missing any of the required documents, the application may be denied.
- Applications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with Council having final decision based on the most recent Financial Statements, other grant funding sources and alignment with the goal of this policy.
- Applicants will be notified of a final decision on their application in writing.

Reporting Requirements

- Grant recipients must submit a project report and financial statement annually for operating grant funding and within 60 days of project completion for capital grant funding.
- Failure to submit a report, or delinquency in submission, may affect consideration for future grant funding opportunities.
- Where an organization that has received grant funding and has excess funds at the end of a fiscal year exceeding $2000.00, the organization must:
    - Request the reallocation of funds to be approved by Council; or
    - Return the funds to Big Lakes County

Grant Considerations

- Community Organizations receiving grant funding shall acknowledge Big Lakes County's contribution through promotional means such as:
    - On-site Signage (in consultation with the County)
    - County Logo/Name included in Advertising
    - County Logo/Name recognized on the Community Organization's social media
    - County Logo/Name in the Community Organization's newsletter
    - County Logo/Name recognized at public events
- Big Lakes County may promote Community Organizations that have been grant funded on our website, social media or other promotional materials.

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Chief Administrative Officer

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Date of Final Signature