

## 1. Policy

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<b>Policy Number:</b>	P-CS-23-04
<b>Policy Name:</b>	Discretionary Grants
<b>Effective Date:</b>	June 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
<b>Last Revised:</b>	
<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	December 2019

## 2. Policy Purpose

This policy serves to prioritize and allocate discretionary grants to organizations, groups and events that support and enhance the cultural, social, and economic well-being of the community of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake. Through the allocation of discretionary grants, the Council of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake acknowledges the significance of various organizations, groups, and events that contribute to the community's welfare. These grants, subject to budget limitations and deliberations, are intended to provide direct or indirect benefits to the citizens and are evaluated and approved through the Discretionary Grants Committee.

## 3. Scope

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The scope of this policy extends to the administration of the Discretionary Grants Program and is provided under Section 107 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*:

*107 (1) Despite any provision of this or any other Act relating to the giving of grants or aid by a municipality, subject to section 106, a municipality may make grants, on such terms as to security and otherwise as the council considers appropriate, to any person, group or body, including a fund, within or outside the boundaries of the municipality for any purpose that council considers to be in the interests of the municipality. 2001, c. 25, s. 107 (1).*

## 4. Definitions

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TERM	DEFINITION
Discretionary Grant	One-time grants to financially assist organizations, events and activities that Council has determined improve the quality of life of the residents in the Town.

## 5. Policy Statement

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Discretionary grants may be offered by Council to financially assist organizations, events and activities whose functions, in Council's estimation, improve the quality of life of the people in the Town.

Specific examples are described by, but not limited to, the following:

- Human Services, social, health care and educational programs that benefit our citizens and improve the quality of life

- Economic Promotion and Development
- Arts, Culture and Recreation, activities and events that may enrich and perpetuate the artistic level and cultural heritage of the citizens of Niagara-on-the-Lake; and
- Other beneficial organizations not easily classified

## 6. Policy Details

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All organizations seeking discretionary grants must meet the following: (Requirements may be waived at Council's discretion)

- Each applicant should be physically located within the Town or potentially provide services related to the residents of the Town. The organization's programs must address a community need, an under serviced demand, or represent an innovative approach to delivering service. The service must provide a social, recreational, cultural and/or economic benefit to the community.
- The activities or services proposed must be extended to all members of the general public in the Town and should not exclude anyone by reason of race, religion or ethnic background, or disability.
- Each applicant should be a registered business or not-for-profit corporation with the CRA, and will be required to provide their Business Identification Number.
- Each applicant must show evidence and clearly outline their organizational and administrative structure. The administrative structure must be adequate in its numbers, be responsible for the overall management of the organization's resources, be responsible for the administration of its funds and should preferably have a Board of Directors that would be representative of the community it services.
- Each applicant should indicate the reason for its existence and how its proposed services will relate to the existing pattern of other services, and/or provide new services, to enhance the quality of life of the citizens of the Town. Thus, the merit of the proposed services can be evaluated in sufficient detail in order that the Committee can assess the value of the services to the community.
- Each applicant will be required to complete the necessary application for discretionary grants.
- Each applicant must demonstrate that, if it is successful in obtaining a grant from Council, the group or organization becomes financially capable of offering the services it proposes. Financial statements for the previous fiscal year along with current year budget statements that show the organization's financial activities. In the first year of application, the organization should provide more than one set of previous financial statements to demonstrate financial stability.
- Each applicant must demonstrate if it has and will be actively seeking other sources of financial support from the private sector and other levels of government.
- Each applicant must adhere to responsible and ethical fund-raising practices.
- For events, grant funding cannot be used for paid ticketed events.
- For events, only new events or initiatives will be considered, and for existing events, only new items/initiatives will be considered for funding.

Granting of financial assistance in any one year by Council is not to be regarded as a commitment by Council to continue such financial assistance in future years, unless Council deems it appropriate. The provision of discretionary grants will be made annually as funds are available and within budgetary limits and priorities as determined by Council.

## **7. Procedures**

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Discretionary Grant applications will be extended to all members of the general public in the Town and should not exclude anyone by reason of race, religion or ethnic background. Applications will be posted on the Town's website and a notice will be placed in the local newspaper advising of the deadline for filing applications. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Subject to available funds, number of applications, and pre-existing Council direction and motions; the Discretionary Grant Committee will attempt to extend funds to the maximum number of applicants as possible. Where possible, the Committee will pro-rate requests based on the pool of available funding after considering pre-existing Council motions/direction; but reserves the right to make allocations as it deems appropriate.

The total amount available through the Discretionary Grant program will be indexed annually by the general Consumer Price Index; however, this does not preclude Council from amending the total discretionary grant budget.

Discretionary Grant applications will be reviewed by a Committee consisting of three (3) Council Members and one (1) Corporate Services staff member and one(1) Senior Management Team member, known as the Discretionary Grant Committee.

Discretionary Grants are offered in the following two categories:

### **Category 1**

Category 1 covers groups/organizations that are looking for financial assistance for a specific event or undertaking that would benefit residents of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (Town). This may take place only once or could be an annual event, but the event or undertaking for which funds are being requested must have a defined starting and finishing period.

The organization would be required to complete an "Application for Discretionary Grant" and include with the application their financial statements from the previous year as well as a proposed budget.

The Discretionary Grant Committee will review each application including the Guidelines/Criteria and decide whether the organization will qualify for financial assistance from the Town.

Examples: Fireworks displays, Community Festivals, etc.

**Category 2**

Category 2 covers groups/organizations that are requesting significant financial assistance to achieve longer-term capital goals to enhance their operational capabilities.

Examples: Major capital improvements (examples include: roof replacement, boiler/HVAC replacement, and a building expansion project).

**Please note:** It is not the intention or mandate of the Discretionary Grant Program to provide ongoing operational funding to any organization in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Applicants will be required to complete an “Application for Discretionary Grant” and include financial statements from the previous year and a proposed budget. The Discretionary Grant Committee will permit organizations in this category to apply for one or several years of support if they wish, limited only by the condition that the support requested must not extend past the final fiscal term associated with the anticipated term of Council. Should the Discretionary Grant Committee wish to approve funding for more than one year, the organization will still be required to file annual financial statements and a proposed budget on an annual basis, including a brief statement regarding the organizations’ success achieved to date through grant proceeds. In cases where multi-year grants are approved, funds will be disbursed on an annual basis according to our prescribed funding schedule, not as a lump sum.

**Disbursement of Approved Discretionary Grants**

If the approved Discretionary Grants are:

- i) less than or equal to \$1,500 - 100% of the grant is payable as soon as possible, after Council has approved the annual budget
- ii) greater than \$1,500 – Contact Finance Staff at the Town to arrange payment details and timing based on event.

**NOTE:** In certain instances, Council may choose to issue Grants at times different from those above. Also, the Treasurer may deviate from the above disbursement schedule, in special circumstances where it is not practical.

**8. Forms**

- Discretionary Grant Application Form

**9. Responsibilities**

POSITION or OFFICE	RESPONSIBILITIES
Director of Corporate Services	1. Periodically review the Discretionary Grant Program and make recommendations for improvement. 2. Coordinate and execute the program per this policy.

**10. Related Information**

N/A

**11. Contacts**

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to be below contacts:

OFFICE	PHONE	EMAIL
Director of Corporate Services	905-468-3266 ext. 296	kyle.freeborn@notl.com

POLICY GOVERNANCE	
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