



2015 Proposed Changes to the Annual Grant Program and Application Process

The City of Victoria has supported the community through grants for over 40 years, contributing to the quality of life of residents, businesses and visitors. Some grants are used to fund delivery of services on behalf of the City such as community recreation programs and heritage preservation. Other grants support festivals, community arts, social services, and community and economic development.

As you may have heard, the City of Victoria is considering changes to the annual grant program. These changes are intended to streamline the process and align the grants with the City's new strategic objectives and outcomes, providing greater opportunities to maximize annual grant funding. The new strategic plan outlines 13 objectives and was informed by extensive public input. Council has approved grouping grants into three categories: Direct award grants, strategic plan grants, and micro grants for commons and community gardens.

Direct award grants (a non-competitive process) are for eligible organizations delivering a service or program on behalf of the City on an ongoing basis, including a service to operate City-owned facilities. Council has already approved this category of grants which include:

- i. Community and seniors centre operating grants
- ii. Neighbourhood per capita grants
- iii. Heritage grants
- iv. Recreation Integration Victoria grant

We are seeking your feedback on the other two proposed grant programs:

1. **Strategic Plan grants** (proposed to be a competitive process) - for eligible organizations working on a project or program that supports the actions and outcomes of the City's 2015-2018 Strategic Plan Objectives. You can read about the Strategic Plan at <http://www.victoria.ca/assets/City~Hall/Mayor~Council/Documents/Draft%20Strategic%20Plan%202015-2018.pdf>
2. **Micro Grants** – for eligible community groups delivering a service or program for volunteer coordination of commons and community gardens. Maximum \$500 per grant

Proposed Implementation

Changes are proposed over two years. In 2015 one grant category will be created that aligns the existing grant funding with the Strategic Plan Objectives. The following grant categories would no longer exist, however the projects under those categories would be eligible within the proposed program.

- i. Neighbourhood enhancement
- ii. Sustainability

- iii. Community arts, and
- iv. Greenways

Fee-for-service grants will remain unchanged for 2015.

Festival Investment Grants have a robust intake process and will remain separate from these proposed changes.

The City will develop one common application form for all grants and there will be one intake per year. Staff will review applications for eligibility and eligible applicants will make a presentation to City Council to inform which proposals they will provide funding support for. For 2015, the total amount of funds in this grant category is \$195,000.

In 2016, all Fee-for-Service grants will be included into the proposed process. The impacted existing grant programs include

- i. Economic Development grants
- ii. Community Development grants
- iii. Inter-municipal grants
- iv. Youth and Adult Outreach grants

The total grant envelope would increase to \$684,000. Past recipients would continue to be eligible to apply for grant funding.

Before implementing changes, City Council would like to hear from past applicants, both those who have received grants, and those who were unsuccessful in the process. To learn more about the proposed changes, **you're invited to attend a public information session on Tues, May 12, at 2pm in the Ante Chamber of City Hall.** A brief presentation of the proposed changes will be made, after which you are invited to ask questions.

After learning more, or if you are unable to attend, we welcome your organization's input in writing, through email to engage@victoria.ca until 4:30, Tuesday May 19. An updated grant policy, based on the proposed changes, is also attached.

A summary of public input and all feedback received will be presented and considered by the Governance and Priorities Committee on June 4, 2015. We recognize that the grant intake has been delayed this year as we have developed a new strategic and financial planning process and public engagement model. Once Council approves a grant process for 2015, the application process will be expedited and, where needed, support will be provided to assist potential organizations in preparing effective submissions. If you are unable to attend the information session, please feel free to send someone from your organization in your place.