
MY GREAT NEIGHBOURHOOD GRANTS POLICY

(updated January 2021)



A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the My Great Neighbourhood Grant Policy is to guide the allocation of grants that impact public space and support community activities.

B. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the My Great Neighbourhood Grants are to bring neighbours together to animate and leave a positive physical legacy in under-utilized community spaces, and to support community development through action and education.

C. DEFINITIONS

Great Neighbourhood projects that qualify for this funding fall into three categories:

Placemaking projects, which have the following characteristics:

- They are initiated by local residents.
- They animate under-utilized community spaces.
- They create gathering spots that bring people together.
- They are partnerships between the community and the City of Victoria
- The community takes the lead in these projects. City staff provide advice in design, development, installation and construction.
- They can be a pilot project.
- They must be completed within one year upon receiving funding.
- They contribute to neighbourhood pride and enhance quality of life

Activity projects, which have the following characteristics:

- They are initiated by local residents.
- They engage and/or educate community members.
- They promote community development and community programming.
- They serve as a neighbourhood improvement campaign.
- The community takes the lead in these projects. City staff provide advice in regulatory guidelines
- They can be a pilot project.
- They must be completed within one year upon receiving funding.
- They contribute to neighbourhood pride and enhance quality of life

A third interim category, in response to COVID 19, has been extended into the 2021 intake period. Titled *Community Recovery & Resiliency*, this category has been created to further reinforce community actions that support residents due to the impacts to COVID 19, as well as assist in the recovery period.

- They are initiated by local residents
- They engage and/or educate community members
- They promote community development and community programming
- They are in direct response to the COVID 19 pandemic
- The project does not have to produce a physical legacy
- The project must adhere to Province of BC guidelines for social distancing

All three categories require a 100% matching contribution by the community. The City will fund up to \$5,000 to match the equivalent contribution the neighbourhood makes for a Placemaking and Community Recovery & Resiliency and up to \$1,000 for an Activity grant. The matching contribution can be a combination of volunteer labour, donated services, donated materials and supplies and other funds raised. A rate of \$20/hour will be used to calculate the match made with volunteer labour. If professional services are provided, the professional donating their services will provide a reasonable value for their contribution (e.g. \$20-60).

D. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The program is open to all not-for-profit organizations including community and neighbourhood associations and schools. Ad hoc, informal organizations and businesses may also apply for funding by partnering with a local not-for-profit group. The not-for-profit group is required to sign the application as the sponsor, and if approved, will receive the funding for disbursement to the applicant.

The applicant must meet all the following criteria to apply for a grant:

- Registered non-profit organization in good standing in the Province of BC or registered charitable organization in good standing with the Canada Revenue Agency
- Each applicant can submit one application per category in the same funding year (Registered non-profit organization in good standing can sponsor multiple applicants)
- The organization can reside outside of Victoria
- The project must be situated in Victoria and benefit residents of the City of Victoria
- There must be evidence of clear mandate and competent administration
- Applicant organization must not be in arrears with the City of Victoria, not in bankruptcy and/or seeking creditor protection
- Projects must be completed within one year upon receiving funding
- Recipients must fulfil reporting requirements
- Applicants must outline the match from the community
- Placemaking applicants must describe how the project will be maintained and removed
- Community Recovery & Resiliency applicants must describe how their project will impact residents during COVID 19 with the focus on social well-being

Eligible expenses for **Placemaking** funding include:

- Materials (e.g. paint, equipment, wood, etc.)
- Insurance fees
- Equipment rentals
- Professional labour costs

Eligible expenses for **Activity** and **Recovery & Resiliency** funding include:

- Program materials (e.g. craft supplies, food, etc.)
- Insurance fees
- Equipment rentals
- Professional facilitation costs
- Room rental fees

My Great Neighbourhood grants are an investment in community and often include payment to individuals (e.g. project facilitation) to ensure the project is successfully implemented. Honourariums may also be helpful in undertaking a community project where specific contributions

are deserving of acknowledgement. An honourarium is intended to be modest and a small part of the budget. Staff salaries cannot be paid by this grant program, however, they can be accounted for in the matching portion of the budget.

The following guidelines are provided to assist in budget preparation:

- Project facilitation costs for an individual are capped at 25% of items funded by the grant
- Honorariums per individual contributors are capped at \$100 per person
- Administration costs for the sponsoring not-for-profit agency are capped at 15% of items funded by the grant

Artists rates are exempt from these limits as the City has overarching guidelines for arts-related projects. Please email culture@victoria.ca to discuss these guidelines with a member of the Arts, Culture and Events staff.

Ineligible expenses include all other expenses not related to the project including:

- Fundraising
- Direct financial assistance to individuals or families
- Maintaining ongoing programs, services or events
- Funding staff positions and staff training / professional development costs
- Deficit or debt repayment
- Commercial activities and related costs
- Projects on private property
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Travel and accommodation expenses

Applicants are limited to one application per category per year for a maximum of 3 applications. For a multi-phased project to be considered, a substantial new element must be introduced with each application for a maximum of 3 phases. Applications for new projects will be prioritized over recurring applications, factoring in quality of application.

The following items are required as part of the application package:

- Project budget showing matching contributions
- Letters of support and permission
- Consideration for any risk associated with the project
- Program or event outline for activity projects
- Design information, including a site map and visual images of the location, for placemaking projects
- Consideration for maintenance and termination of placemaking projects

If the application is not from a recognized not-for-profit organization, a letter from a not-for-profit partner providing their support for the project needs to accompany the application. If the applicant is successful, the grant payment will be made to the sponsoring not-for-profit organization to disburse to the group they are supporting on terms agreed to by the two parties.

E. EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS

Examples of Placemaking Projects include:

- Community garden enhancement
- Boulevard enhancement
- Neighbourhood gathering place

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- Community pathway
 - Decorative lighting display
 - Community art display or mural*
 - Neighbourhood branding initiative
 - Interpretive signage
 - Community lending installation
 - Playground enhancement
 - Playable space
 - Other projects that animate public space

Examples of Activity Projects include:

- Social Connection community program
- Educational community program
- Neighbourhood improvement program
- Neighbourhood diversity program
- Temporary site transformation (pop ups)
- New neighbourhood parties (not previously established)

Examples of what Recovery & Resiliency proposals could look like include:

- Support community conversations using the basics of asset-based community development to help revive social infrastructure
- Formation of mutual aid groups at the block or neighbourhood level (beyond Bock Watch)
- Engage ongoing neighbourhood response teams to provide tangible and emotional support to isolated individuals, especially seniors
- Create/enhance more recreation spaces to ease isolation and keep people active
- Create and promote more online connected youth groups/communities
- Support for programming that supports community health
- Build more sophisticated placemaking design projects that offer both public and separate space

* Community murals are subject to the guidelines provided through the City's mural process. Once the original design has been submitted and signed off from the City and artist, major alterations or additions will not be allowed. Refusal to comply may require removal of the mural by the City. In addition

1. Profanity, hateful language and any other words and/or images that are likely to be perceived by the general public as offensive will not be permitted.
2. Any language or images that convey or portray drug and/or alcohol use will not be permitted.
3. Explicit or encrypted signatures or acronyms will not be permitted.

F. GRANT REVIEW PROCESS

Applications are accepted on a rolling intake beginning April 1st, with the program closing October 31st. Applications will be considered throughout the intake period until such a time that the grant fund is fully expended. All grant applications are evaluated and awarded using a competitive process.

The process of reviewing the grants includes the following steps:

1. Intake period is ongoing
2. Staff work with applicants to help refine their project ideas and advise on submissions
3. Applications submitted as ready on a rolling intake
4. Staff review applications for eligibility
5. Staff conduct a technical review of the applications to ensure they meet City of Victoria standards and bylaws
6. Applications that impact public space are vetted through appropriate departments to

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- assess the project or program feasibility
7. Eligible applications are presented to the City Manager for approval
 8. Recipients are contacted with results of their application
 9. Successful recipients have up to one year to complete their project.
 10. Recipients complete a final report as projects are completed

G. DECISION MAKING

Staff will review all applications and evaluate them based on the eligibility requirements, technical details and meeting the grant program objectives. All eligible grant applications will be presented to the City Manager who will approve the grant allocations.

H. GRANT LIMITATIONS

Not all applicants meeting the eligibility requirements will necessarily receive a grant. Grants are one-time approvals and are not an automatic ongoing source of annual funding.

I MAINTENANCE AND PROJECT LIFESPAN

Successful Placemaking projects will be maintained for a mutually agreed upon lifespan not to exceed 5 years. If the item created through the project falls into disrepair, requires replacement or becomes a safety concern it will be removed by the City of Victoria. Placemaking projects may be continued beyond the initial term through agreement of the City and the community organization. Activity projects with a physical nature will be maintained for a period of up to six months by the community organization once activated.

J MONITORING AND REPORTING

Each grant recipient will be required to submit a final report as specified by the City of Victoria.

K. TIME EXTENSIONS AND REPAYMENT OF GRANTS

If the grant will not be used for the stated purpose, the full amount must be returned to the City of Victoria.

At the discretion of the Neighbourhood Team, a three-month extension may be granted for placemaking projects; a second three-month extension may be granted under extenuating circumstances. If after eighteen months (one year to complete and six months of extension) the project is not complete, the City will ask for the grant funds to be returned.

At the discretion of the Neighbourhood Team, one three-month grant extension for an activity may be granted under extenuating circumstances.