

CITY OF THOROLD POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

COUNCIL		
POLICY NO: 100 - 07 DATED: Jan 14, 2014	TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GRANTS/SPONSORSHIP TO INDIVIDUALS AND VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS	Page 1 of 11

AUTHORITY

Section 107 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 provides:

“General power to make grants

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.”

The City is allowed to pass by-laws and set its own policy and priorities in response to local need, subject to Section 107 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 and other acts. Discretionary grants/sponsorship made under this authority shall be made in concert with the accompanying components of the Tourism and Economic Development Grants/Sponsorship to Volunteer Organizations Policy.

PURPOSE

The City of Thorold is aware that various groups within the community promote and improve upon the economic well-being of the community. In the course of annual budget deliberation and subject to budget constraints, Council may approve discretionary grants/sponsorship to support and assist community based groups that will be of a direct or indirect economic benefit to the City of Thorold, based on consideration of the terms and considerations of this Policy.

This policy provides for two types of grants/sponsorship: a direct grant of funding and an “in-kind” contribution grant. “In-kind” grants include the contribution of municipal equipment and/or human resources. The financial value of in-kind service requested by applicants will be identified by the relevant municipal departments and submitted to the Recreation Coordinator prior to the applications evaluation process. The Municipality will consider the financial value of the in-kind services during the application evaluation process.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals of the tourism and economic development grant/sponsorship program are:

- To support tourism development and/or economic development based projects/events in Thorold to benefit residents and/or local business.
- To enhance and encourage partnerships with local non-profit organizations for projects or events that increase tourism development and/or economic development in the City of Thorold.
- To encourage and provide financial support to events that can be proven to have true potential for bringing increased non-resident / tourist spending into the City.
- To promote and enhance the profile of Thorold as a tourism/shopping/business destination through the external marketing and promotion of special events hosted within the City.
- To promote and assist in the development of self-sustaining tourism and economic development related special events in Thorold.
- To promote and ensure accountability of public funds contributed to events.
- To ensure that municipal contributions to events are made based upon reasonable and quantifiable facts and projections, and not upon assumptions or speculation.

I. Eligibility Criteria

All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must:

(i) Location

- Be physically located with The Regional Municipality of Niagara and provide projects/special events of benefit specifically to the City of Thorold.

(ii) Legal Entity

- Be a not-for-profit organization.
- Be incorporated and/or registered under the Canada Income Tax Act for the purpose of receiving charitable donations. (This criterion may be waived at Council's discretion only, depending on the groups and on the nature of the projects/special events offered being complementary to the philosophy and priorities of Council.)

(iii) Organization

- Should have a formal administrative structure adequate in its numbers, be responsible for the overall management of the group'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 serves.

(iv) Financial Feasibility

- Provide audited financial statements for the previous fiscal year, and current year budget statements. Other pertinent financial information may be required by Council.
- It is important to present budgets and financial statements with revenues and expenditures grouped by each individual project/special event rendered by the applicant organization. This may be requested by Council, at its discretion.

(v) Inclusiveness

- The applicant's proposed services should not exclude anyone by reason of race, religion or ethnic background.
- The tourism and economic development project/special event proposed by volunteer organizations should be separate and distinct from any other activities of the group.

(vi) Groups or Types of Support That Are Not Eligible for a Grant/Sponsorship

The following are **not** eligible for funding:

- For-profit organizations.
- Recreational, arts and cultural services covered under the Municipality's "Grants to Volunteer Organizations Policy".
- Funding shortfalls resulting from projects/special events of any kind that were commenced without prior consultation with the City.
- The City will not consider funding cumulative deficits for any groups (i.e. discretionary grants and hence financial assistance should be based on budgeted revenues and expenditures in the year for which assistance is being requested).

- Groups that have failed to comply with the reporting requirement from any previous municipal grant/sponsorship.
- Group's outstanding operating deficits.
- Applications for retroactive funding.
- Travel grants.
- Capital expenditures.

(vii) Other Provisions and Considerations

The following provisions and considerations must also be noted:

- Council shall reserve a portion of the total budget for the annual grant program for unforeseen requests for funding that may arise throughout the year.
- The City will not ordinarily fund in excess of 35% of the operating budget of any service, unless Council determines a higher percentage is warranted based on a review of individual circumstances. Council may reduce its level of funding over time to encourage groups to seek alternative sources of funding.
- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must complete the appropriate application form in full. **Incomplete applications will not be considered.**
- The application form must be signed by a designated officer or official of the group.
- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must submit their application, in full, to the Recreation Coordinator no later than the last Friday of the month of November of the previous year in which consideration for financial assistance is required. **Late applications will not be considered.**
- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must demonstrate that they have and/or will be actively seeking other sources of financial support.
- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must adhere to responsible fundraising practices as determined by Council.
- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship must disclose any accounts payable to the City of Thorold. Amounts up to the entire amount owed to the City will be

appropriated from any financial assistance granted in order to discharge its obligation to the City.

- All groups seeking grants/sponsorship acting in the capacity of funding organizations will not be deemed to be a distinct entity, and will be considered together for the purposes of funding.
- Granting of assistance in any one year by Council is not to be regarded as a commitment of the City of Thorold to continue such financial assistance in future years.
- The provision of grants/sponsorship will be made annually as funds are available and within budgetary limits and priorities as determined by Council.
- Council is not obligated to allocate funds to any group.
- No financial donations or grants/sponsorship will be considered unless specifically authorized by this Policy.
- In making grants/sponsorship the Municipality may impose such conditions as it deems fit.
- Any un-claimed funds remaining for groups shall be carried forward for six months, at which point the funds will become part of the general Tourism and Economic Development Grant Allotment.
- Any groups that generate surplus revenue through the service for which they sought a grant/sponsorship **must** re-pay the Municipality the total amount of the surplus up to the total amount of the grant.
- Groups successful in obtaining a grant/sponsorship must acknowledge the City's financial contribution in any and all advertising related to the project/event; at a minimum, the group must include the City's logo.

II. Assessment Criteria

A committee of staff, through the General Committee will use the following assessment criteria in evaluating the discretionary grant/sponsorship applications.

A scoring system will be applied to each evaluation criteria. The scoring system is a ranking from “0 to 5”, where “0” is the lowest score (does not meet the criterion at all) and “5” is the highest score (meets the criterion fully). The scores for the criteria will be totaled and priority will be given to those applicants with the highest scores.

(i) Community Benefit

- The benefit to residents.
- The benefit to local businesses.
- The ability to draw visitors to the community.
- The service is complementary to Council’s policies, positions, and priorities.

(ii) Accountability

- The group must have a governing body or Board of Directors with an identifiable organizational structure and signing authorities.
- The group must have an identifiable and accountable system of financial controls and decision making authority.

(iii) Duplication

- Preference will be given to projects/special events that are not adequately provided for by other funding services.
- The project/special event must not duplicate or unnecessarily overlap the projects/special events provided by other existing groups in the City. Where duplication exists, the applicant must demonstrate linkages with those existing groups in the City in order to provide continuity of project/special event and reduce duplication.
- The project/special event must not be one, which by its nature, could be adequately performed by the private sector, City departments, or by Regional, Provincial or Federal governments.

(iv) Goals and Objectives of the Service

- The applicant must have a clearly defined set of goals and objectives for the project/special event for which City funding is being sought.
- The applicant identifies the “outcomes” or the impact of the project/special event to residents and/or local business.
- The application should specify how these goals and objectives will be achieved.

- The applicant identifies and describes the mechanism in place to measure how actual results of the project/special event compare to the goals and objectives as stated in the application.

(v) Financial Viability

- The applicant has provided evidence of a clear mandate.
- The applicant has a solid leadership structure and consistent management in a professional competent manner.
- The applicant has a solid infrastructure including staff and volunteers.
- The applicant has demonstrated, through audited financial statements and budgets, financial stability and accountability.
- The applicant has reasonable financial goals.
- The feasibility of the project/event.
- Provide a marketing plan and either an event budget or business plan.
- Identify the expected impact of the proposed project/event to residents and/or local businesses and/or the expected increase in visitors to the event.

(vi) Demonstrated Need

- The applicant has demonstrated the need for financial assistance from the City.

III. The Grant/Sponsorship Process

The following describes the steps involved in the grant/sponsorship process.

- (i) Council establishes funding for “Tourism and Economic Development Grants/Sponsorship to Volunteer Organizations” during budget deliberations.
- (ii) Notice shall be provided to the community of the availability of the current applicable year’s grant program. Notice of the grant/sponsorship program, the associated policy and application forms shall be provided on the City’s website and in local media. The Municipality will **not** distribute notices directly to groups.
- (iii) The Policy and application forms will be provided on the City’s website in a format to allow for downloading. Groups will be given a minimum of 30 days to complete and submit the application forms to the Recreation Coordinator. The deadline for submissions will be the last Friday in the month of November.
- (iv) The completed application forms will be reviewed by a committee of staff, which shall prepare a recommended allocation of the budgeted amount. Should the total allocation be less than the budgeted amount at the end of the year, the

surplus shall be carried forward to the following year's budget for the "Tourism and Economic Development Grants/Sponsorship to Volunteer Organizations".

- (v) A report outlining the recommendations of the committee of staff shall be forwarded to the General Committee for consideration and approval of Council.
- (vi) A letter of notification will be distributed by mail by the City's Recreation Coordinator to each applicant as to the result of their application.
- (vii) The decision of Council is final, with no appeals considered.
- (viii) Groups will receive their grant/sponsorship in accordance with the disbursement schedule noted below.
- (ix) Successful grant/sponsorship applicants who receive a grant amount greater than \$500 will prepare and submit a Final Report to the City within 30 days of the completion of the delivery of their service. Groups will **not** be considered for potential future municipal grants/sponsorship through this program unless they complete the Final Report to the satisfaction of Council.

IV. Community Grants/Sponsorship Staff Committee

The Community Grants/Sponsorship Staff Committee is comprised of four municipal staff representatives; the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director of Finance, the Operations Director and the Recreation Coordinator. The staff committee:

- Reviews the grant/sponsorship applications to ensure their requests meet the criteria of the policy.
- Identifies any errors or omissions in the applications and requests clarification from staff.
- Evaluates the applications using the criteria contained in this policy.
- Determines the amount of funding allocated to each successful application.
- Forwards their recommendations to the General Committee for consideration and approval of Council.

V. Disbursement of Approved Discretionary Grants/Sponsorship

An official signing officer, on behalf of the organization, must acknowledge responsibility for discretionary grants/sponsorship approved by Council, by returning the completed form, Appendix 1- Acknowledgement of Responsibility for Tourism and Economic Development Grants to Individuals and Voluntary Organizations (page 11). Approved discretionary grants/sponsorship will not be disbursed until this form has been completed and returned to the Treasurer.

If the approved grants/sponsorship are:

1. Less than or equal to \$500, 100% of the grant/sponsorship is payable no later than two weeks after Council approval of the grant/sponsorship allotments.
2. Greater than \$500, 50% is payable no later than two weeks after Council approval of the grant/sponsorship allotments; and 50% payable by the first week in September, or completion of the project/special event, and **only upon receipt of the written Final Report from the organization.**

VI. Accountability

Applicants awarded a grant/sponsorship will be held accountable for the expenditure of the funds in accordance with their stated plans. Eligibility for grants/sponsorship in future years will be reviewed based upon the past demonstrated fiscal responsibility of the applicant.

Funds granted under this policy are not transferable between projects/special events or groups and must be used for the specific purposes as stated in their application.

Successful applicants must provide a Final Report upon completion of their City funded service regarding the outcome of their project/special event. The submission of this information is required **before** the second half of the grant/sponsorship will be paid out, and before the group will be considered for any further grants/sponsorship in the future. It should be noted that any un-claimed funds remaining for Community Groups shall be carried forward for six months only, at which point the funds will become part of the general Tourism and Economic Development Grants/Sponsorship allotment.

VII. Grant/Sponsorship Policy Administration Considerations

This policy will be reviewed at the direction of Council and/or the Community Grants General Committee.

It is recognized that all previous policies specifically related to discretionary grants/sponsorship, previously adopted by Council that are inconsistent with this policy, be rescinded.

VIII. Ethical Guidelines

The Municipality adheres to the following ethical guidelines:

(i) *Conflict of Interest*

All municipal staff and members of Council who participate in the City of Thorold municipal grant/sponsorship program are expected to abstain from debate or voting when personal or professional involvement or association could result in a conflict of interest.

(ii) *Lobbying*

The Mayor, staff of the Mayor's Office, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Councillors, and other relevant municipal staff follow ethical guidelines with regard to lobbying by community groups. Requests, application forms, and correspondence sent to these parties is forwarded to the Recreation Coordinator. There is no interference in the review process. Staff and elected representatives are expected to abide by the conflict of interest guidelines and follow approved procedures.

(iii) *Gifts, Samples and Sponsorship*

All municipal staff and members of Council who participate in the City of Thorold municipal grant/sponsorship program do not accept gifts from applicants (e.g. free tickets to performances or events).

(iv) *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)*

The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) contains provisions to protect the privacy of individual citizens. The intent of the legislation is to control the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. Where a grant application includes personal information such material shall not be available to other parties without the written consent of the party named therein. Applicants and the general public have the right to request any record in the custody or control of the City of Thorold. Requests for information under this act must be directed to the MFIPPA Coordinator in City Clerk's Department.

Appendix 1 – Acknowledgement of Responsibility for Tourism and Economic Development Grants to Individuals and Volunteer Organizations

Having received approval of the request for financial assistance from the Council of The Corporation of the City of Thorold, the individual or organization agrees to the following conditions:

1. The individual or organization confirms that the representations contained in the application forms for financial assistance are true and correct in every respect and that in the event that the funds are not used for the project or program as described in the application form, or if there are misrepresentations in the application form, the full amount of the grant will be payable forthwith to the City.
2. If there is any change in the funding of the project or program from that contemplated in the application form, the individual or organization will notify the City of such changes forthwith.
3. The individual or organization will make or continue to make attempts to secure funding from other sources as so indicated in the application form and Policy.
4. The individual or organization will keep proper books of accounts, of all receipts and expenditures relating to the project or program.
5. The individual or organization will make available for inspection by the City of its auditors, all records and books of accounts of the individual or organization upon request from the City.
6. That if the project or program proposed in the individual's or organization's application form is not commenced, or is not complete and there remain City funds on hand, or is completed without requiring the full use of the City funds, such funds will be returned to the City.
7. That the project or program not be represented as a City project, and that the individual or organization does not have the authority to hold itself out as an agency of the City in any way; the only relationship being the Council of The Corporation of the City of Thorold has approved and granted financial assistance to the individual or organization.
8. That if the individual or organization is involved in activities or assuming positions that are not consistent with the vision and values of The Corporation of the City of Thorold, Council reserves the right to suspend and potentially terminate grants at their sole discretion at any time.

Signature of Signing Officer on behalf of the organization:

Print Name and Official Position:

Date: