



POLICY NO. 6.11

MARCH 10, 2015

TITLE: COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT:

Westlock County will provide assistance to community organizations with the Westlock County Project Grant program. This grant is intended to provide assistance to community organizations for projects that will enrich the community by providing a direct service and are responsive to community needs and issues.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the Westlock County Community Project Grant program. Each financial year, Westlock County will make funds available under its Community Grants program for local non-profit community groups for community development purposes.

DEFINITIONS:

N/A

PROGRAM PARAMETERS:

- The maximum Westlock County Community Project Grant available is \$5,000,
- Grants can be up to 50% of the project costs and need to be matched by the community (in-kind labour, services, equipment or materials may be considered),
- Applicants must be registered under the Ag Societies Act, the Societies Act or the Canadian Corporations Act (non-profit sector),
- Support will be provided for a limited number of projects/proposals.

DISCRETIONARY CONSIDERATIONS:

In consideration of public interest, Westlock County may exercise discretion in approving applications which fall outside the general intent of the program, based on

the extent to which the applicant can demonstrate the project's potential and vital contributions to the community.

At the discretion of Westlock County, applications of more than \$5,000 for large projects may be accommodated if strong community support is demonstrated (for example, significant funding provided by other public or private sources).

FUNDING CONDITIONS:

- Funding cannot be used to fund private or commercial sector facilities.
- The applicant bears ultimate developmental and operational responsibility for the project. All permits and contracts are the responsibility of the applicant.
- Applicants must provide recognition of Westlock County's contribution to the project.
- If the project involves land and/or facilities not under the direct ownership of the applicant, a letter of support from the owner is required.
- The grant recipient must establish and maintain proper accounting records.
- The project must relate to your Community Sustainable Plan i.e. goals, objectives.
- Applicants must obtain a statement of support of their proposed project from community stakeholders. If a statement is not being submitted, indicate the reasons why.
- Applications must include a statement confirming that the project is intended and accessible for general public use.
- The applicant must request approval in writing if the nature of the approved project in the original application changes.

GENERAL FUNDING CRITERIA:

In applying for funding, the following will be taken into consideration in assessing applications:

- The stated benefit of the project to the community including demographics served and the anticipated impact of the project on the community,
- How the project will benefit community residents beyond the applicant's direct membership,
- Perceived cost benefits anticipated as a result of the project,
- An applicant's ability to complete the project successfully, including how the matching component and total project funding will be provided,
- An applicant's demonstration to community service,
- The extent to which the project duplicates other available facilities in the area,

Applicants with overdue financial accounting statements for previous grants will not be eligible for further funding until financial accounting has passed program review and acceptance.

Due to limited funds, not all requests meeting the established criteria will obtain grant approval. Where considered appropriate, based on assessment criteria, a grant amount less than that sought by the applicant may be awarded.

IN-KIND REQUIREMENTS:

Volunteer labour should be directly related to the project for which funding is being requested. The valuation of volunteerism and donations is based on:

- \$15.00/hour for unskilled labour,
- \$30.00/hour for skilled labour,
- Donated materials and professional services at verified fair market value,
- Donated heavy equipment, including transportation and operator costs \$60.00/hour.

Donated labour that is NOT eligible as matching funding for a project includes any other volunteer time that provides a general benefit to the organization such as volunteer hours related to fundraising, time spent preparing the grant application, time spent in meetings or any activities related to planning the project or any other planning activities for the organization.

ACCOUNTING OF FUNDS:

Recipients of funds must file a financial accounting statement of expenditures with Westlock County upon project completion or no later than one year from the date of the grant cheque. If the project is not completed within the required one year time frame the applicant may request an extension. All extension requests must be submitted by the applicant in writing to the Westlock County office and the decision on these requests will be communicated in writing to the applicant.

The accounting must be signed by two authorized representatives having legal and/or financial signing authority for the organization and must show that the grant was expended, that matching funds equal to or greater than the grant were provided, and other funds (i.e. interest earned on the grant, GST input tax credits or GST rebates) were expended on the project. Earned interest, GST rebates and/or tax credits do not have to be matched. Westlock County may request additional information (e.g. financial statements, progress reports, permits, construction documents, on-site inspections or other relevant information) to determine that the

funds were expended in accordance with the conditions upon which they were granted.

If the actual costs are less than the approved budget, the applicant has two choices. They can submit a written request to change the scope of the project, and if approved, could apply the unexpended funds to this purpose or send in to the Westlock County office a cheque payable to Westlock County for the remaining unexpended funds once the final amount has been confirmed by the Westlock County office.

ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS:

The application deadline is March 15th followed by a review of the Community Development Committee with recommendations forwarded to Council for their approval, with the actual notification and funding of proposals occurring by March 30th.

After consideration of an application and current program objectives, Council can propose an alternative form of assistance to meet the stated objectives of the application.

Westlock County's Annual Report should include a list of financial assistance grants approved by Westlock County in the previous financial year.

MOTION: _____

DATE: _____

Peter Kelly
Chief Administrative Officer