



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the General Committee

From: Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner, Community Services

Meeting Date: March 2, 2026

Report: 2026 Community Project and Investment Grants and funding for EC3 in 2027, Report CSD26-001

Subject

A report to recommend the award of Community Project and Investment grants to eligible applicants in 2026 and to extend the funding agreement with the Electric City Culture Council for 2027.

Recommendations

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSD26-001, dated March 2, 2026 of the Commissioner of Community Services as follows:

- a) That the recommendations of the Community Project Grant Committee in the total amount of \$20,965 be allocated to various community groups as described in Appendix A;
- b) That the recommendations of the Community Investment Grant Committee in the total amount of \$204,070 be allocated to various local charitable and Not-For-Profit organizations (NFPs) as described in Appendix B;
- c) That the term of the Community Investment Grants Advisory Committee consisting of Joleen Edmondson, Dustin Harford, Jessica Kuhl Morgen-Hille, Jean-Luc Plante, Pauline Sandys and Thomas Vaccaro be extended to April 30th, 2027;
- d) That changes to the Community Grants Program be deferred to 2027 to allow for guidance from the Municipal Cultural Plan which is scheduled to be completed in November 2026, and

- e) That an extension to the current funding agreement be granted to the Electric City Culture Council (EC3) for 2027 to also allow for guidance from the Municipal Cultural Plan on the role of an arts council in Peterborough.

Executive Summary

- The Staff Project Grant Committee recommends 25 organizations to receive funding totaling \$20,965
- The Community Investment Grant Committee recommends 22 organizations to receive funding totaling \$204,070
- The term of Community Investment Grant Advisory Committee be extended to cover the 2027 Community Grants Program
- Funding for EC3 be extended for 2027

Background

Community Grants Application Process

Both the Investment and Project Grant application processes were completed through an online portal on the City's website. Staff regularly updated the website to reflect the process and published on the City's Social Media pages and through other media sources to ensure all potential applicants were aware of the process and the grant opportunity.

2026 Community Grants Committee Members

The Community Project Grant Committee was comprised of City staff with expertise and experience in the four major program areas. It was formed to reflect the approved funding streams: Arts/Culture/ Heritage, Environment, Health and Social Services, and Recreation and Sports.

The Community Investment Grant committee was comprised of Citizen Appointments as per report LSCLK25-019 - Citizen Appointments to Various Committees Report dated October 20, 2025 with terms until November 2026.

Both the Community Project and Investment Grant Committees met separately to review the applications and applied the eligibility and evaluation criteria to award funding to successful eligible groups.

Community Project Grant Program

Eligibility Criteria for Community Project Grants

Through the formal application process, community groups were required to meet the following eligibility criteria as approved by Council:

- Be new or existing, incorporated or unincorporated Not For Profit, or Neighbourhood Associations
- Be located and conduct the majority of activities within the geographic boundaries of the City of Peterborough

The following are considered ineligible:

- Organizations receiving Community Investment Grants or in a Community Service Agreement
- Individuals
- For-profit businesses
- Organizations with political affiliation
- Organizations serving as funding sources for others, e.g., Service Clubs
- Faith organizations where services/activities include the promotion and/or required adherence to a faith
- Hospitals, clinic-based services, or medical treatment programs
- Fund-raising events
- School boards, primary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions
- Programs within legislated mandates of other government or City departments
- Provincial/national organizations unless a local chapter exists to service the residents of Peterborough
- Organizations receiving 80% or more of funding from senior levels of government
- Organizations that conduct the majority of their activities outside of the City
- Costs for major capital equipment/renovations and minor renovations; and financing of deficits

Applicants were evaluated on the following criteria:

Community Need: Organization demonstrates its understanding of current community needs and addresses these through its activities and partnerships in the application in a diverse, equitable and inclusive manner. – 25%

Financial Viability: Demonstrated sound financial management and revenue generation (accurate records, responsible budget, various sources of income; if deficit, then reduction plan); Operating surpluses or reserve accounts should not exceed 25% of total operating without acceptable explanation (e.g., capital campaign); Board and staff skills are appropriate for this size and scope of organization and ensuring the success of the application. – 25%

City Priorities, Feasibility and Evaluation: The application meets one or more City priorities and participant priorities within target sectors (as outlined on the application forms), the organization has the feasibility to complete the proposed activity or service, and has identified accountability/mechanism for evaluation (identification of key performance measures and outcomes). – 20%

Strategic Direction and Previous Funding: Organization identifies benchmarks and goals for organizational development. The organization has plans to sustain and develop its

audience, service and or participants (specific to Investment Grants). The application has adequately demonstrated impact of previous year’s funding support. – 15%

Other Funding/Community Support: Funding from various levels of government, foundations, support or sponsorship from other organizations, local businesses, industry, service clubs; and evidence and impact of community collaboration, partnerships. – 15%

Community Project Grant Applications

The Community Services Department received 30 applications for the Community Project Grant stream and 5 organizations were deemed ineligible. The total recommended allocation for 2026 is \$20,965 and the maximum grant allowable in this category is \$1,000. Refer to Appendix A which provides full details of recommendations for funding in the Community Project Grant category.

The following chart illustrates how the Community Project Grant program has evolved since 2022

Year	Submitted Applications	Approved Applications	Total Allocation Per Year
2022	20	18	\$15,525
2023	41	28	\$20,655
2024	35	29	\$20,965
2025	37	24	\$20,965
2026	30	25	\$20,965

Community Investment Grants Program

Eligibility Criteria

Through the formal application process, applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria as approved by Council:

- Be NFPs that are located and conduct the majority of their activities within the geographic boundaries of the City of Peterborough
- Have sustained a history of activity over two years prior, normally achieved as past recipient of at least two Community Project Grants within the last 5 years
- Have demonstrated sound financial management and good standing with the City of Peterborough and be able to demonstrate that they provide those services and programs in an effective, accessible, open, and inclusive manner

The following are considered ineligible applicants:

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- Organizations receiving Community Project Grants or in a Community Service Agreement
 - Individuals
 - For-profit businesses
 - Organizations with political affiliation
 - Organizations serving as funding sources for others, e.g., Service Clubs
 - Faith-based organizations where services/activities include the promotion and/or required adherence to a faith
 - Hospitals, clinic-based services or medical treatment programs
 - Fund-raising events
 - School boards, primary and secondary schools, post-secondary institutions
 - Programs within legislated mandates of other government or city departments
 - Provincial/national organizations unless a local chapter exists to service the residents of Peterborough
 - Organizations receiving 80% or more of funding from senior levels of government
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Applicants were evaluated on the following criteria:

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Financial Viability: Demonstrated sound financial management and revenue generation (accurate records, responsible budget, various sources of income; if deficit, then reduction plan); Operating surpluses or reserve accounts should not exceed 25% of total operating without acceptable explanation (e.g., capital campaign); Board and staff skills are appropriate for this size and scope of organization and ensuring the success of the application. – 25%

City Priorities, Feasibility and Evaluation: The application meets one or more City priorities and participant priorities within target sectors (as outlined on the application forms), the organization has the feasibility to complete the proposed activity or service, and has identified accountability/mechanism for evaluation (identification of key performance measures and outcomes). – 20%

Strategic Direction and Previous Funding: Organization identifies benchmarks and goals for organizational development. The organization has plans to sustain and develop its audience, service and or participants (specific to Investment Grants). The application has adequately demonstrated impact of previous year's funding support. – 15%

Other Funding/Community Support: Funding from various levels of government,

foundations, support or sponsorship from other organizations, local businesses, industry, service clubs; and evidence and impact of community collaboration, partnerships. – 15%

Community Investment Grant Applications

This year, the City received 23 applications for Investment Grant funding with 22 applications recommended to receive funding. The Investment Grant committee reviewed the applications and applied the eligibility and evaluation criteria. After the initial ratings were tallied, the committee met a final time and collectively recommended the grant allocations as outlined in Appendix B – Recommended Allocations for Community Investment Grants. The total recommended allocation for the Community Investment Grant Category for 2026 is \$204,070 and the maximum grant allowable in this category is \$15,000.

The following chart illustrates how the Community Investment Grant program has evolved since 2022.

Year	Submitted Applications	Approved Applications	Total Allocation per year
2022	12	12	\$196,980
2023	25	20	\$215,828
2024	19	18	\$219,070
2025	22	19	\$204,070
2026	23	22	\$204,070

Next steps for Community Grants Program

Report CSD24-003 established Community Service Agreements (CSAs) with 16 local agencies. The 3-year term of these agreements expire December 31, 2027. A report will be prepared in 2027 to summarize the annual reporting each of these organizations have provided to support funding from the City and to renew their CSAs for another 3-year term.

The term for the members of the Community Investment Grant Advisory Committee expires at the end of 2026. The new City Council will appoint new members to Advisory Committees in early 2027, however, this timing does not accommodate the need to have the Community Investment Grant Advisory Committee in place in December 2026. The Community Grant application process closes in early December. This allows the

Advisory Committee to evaluate and make funding recommendations for the end of January. It is being recommended that the term of the following members of the Community Investment Grant Advisory Committee be extended to April 30, 2027:

- Joleen Edmondson
- Dustin Harford
- Jessica Kuhl Morgen-Hille
- Jean-Luc Plante
- Pauline Sandys
- Thomas Vaccaro

Community Grants Program in 2026

Report CSD25-007 2026 Community Wellbeing Fund proposed modifications that would update, adjust, and clarify aspects of the Community Grants Program. This Report was deferred by Council on August 11, 2025, with the following conditions:

- The Municipal Cultural Plan is completed and adopted by Council
- A clear transition strategy for arts organizations currently receiving Community Investment Grants is presented
- The Professional Arts Organization Grant program is in place with a committed timeline and budget reflecting sector needs
- The guidelines and program details used for the 2025 program be used in the meantime

The Municipal Cultural Plan (MCP) is scheduled to be completed in November 2026. This timing does not allow for any changes to the Community Grants Program based on direction in the MCP. This Report is recommending a further deferral for a revised Community Grants Program to be presented to Council in 2027.

Agreement with EC3 for 2027

The one-year funding agreement with EC3 is also impacted by the November 2026 completion schedule of the MCP. The MCP will provide insights into the potential role of an arts council in Peterborough. On December 8, 2025, Council passed the following resolution to support EC3 in 2026:

Be it resolved that Council approve the recommendation outlined in Report CSD25-009 to extend the Community Service Agreement with EC3 for one year, covering the period of January 1 to December 31, 2026, including the \$100,000 allocation in the Draft 2026 Community Services Administration Budget and the \$50,000 allocation in the Draft Cultural Services Operating Budget for Artsweek and the Grants to Individual Artists program; and

Be it further resolved that an additional \$25,000 be added to the Cultural Services Operating Budget to restore the Grants to Individual Artists program to \$50,000.

This report is recommending that funding for EC3 be approved for 2027 in the same amounts as approved in 2026. This would include \$100,000 in operating funds through the Community Grants Program, \$50,000 through the Cultural Services Budget for the Grants to Individual Artist Program, and \$25,000 through the Cultural Services Budget to deliver Artsweek in 2027.

EC3 has historically received \$50,000 to deliver Artsweek every two years. EC3 is approved to receive \$25,000 in 2026 to cover planning costs associated with the event in 2027. A one-year extension to the current agreement realizes the completion of Artsweek in 2027.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Pillar: Community & Well-being

Strategic Initiative: Foster community resiliency, neighbourhood identity, civic pride, sense of belonging, and intercultural harmony. Enhance and protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all in our city. Provide robust, affordable, and accessible sport, recreation, wellness, the arts, and social programs for people of all ages and abilities

The community grant program offers community partnerships and opportunities to expand the vibrancy and well being of our community. Municipal investment can bring cultural enrichment, economic growth, community identity, job creation and quality of life benefits to the community

Budget and Financial Implications

The recommendations can be accommodated within the approved \$20,965 Community Project Grants budget and the approved \$204,070 Community Investment Grants budget.

The recommendation to extend the funding agreement to EC3 will represent a precommitment to the 2027 Budget in the amount of \$175,000. \$100,000 would be in the Community Grants Budget and \$75,000 would be in the Cultural Services Budget.

Conclusion

The Community Grant Programs have been operating under the current model for 18 years to support not for profit organizations in their on-going activities to enrich local

quality of life. Following the evaluation criteria approved by Council, this report recommends the disbursement of \$20,965 to qualified applicants in the Community Project Grant Program, and \$204,070 in the Community Investment Grant Program.

Future changes to the Community Grants Program and the role of an arts council in Peterborough will be impacted by the new Municipal Cultural Plan, which is due to be completed in November 2026. The timing for completion of the MCP support the rationale for deferring changes to the Community Grants Program and a funding extension to EC3.

Attachments

Appendix A: Recommended Allocations for Community Project Grants

Appendix B: Recommended Allocations for Community Investment Grants

Submitted by,

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