ROCKY VIEW COUNTY

COMMUNITY RECREATION AND CULTURE OPERATIONAL GRANT PROGRAM

Council Policy

C-316

Policy Number:	**C-316**
Policy Owner:	**Recreation & Community Support**
Adopted By:	**Council**
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Date Last Reviewed:	**2026 October 13**

Purpose

1 This policy establishes the Community Recreation and Culture Operational Grant Program (the "Grant Program") to provide financial assistance to eligible non-profit organizations for operational activities that deliver recreation and cultural services to County residents.

2 This policy clarifies eligibility, funding intent, and alignment with the County's recreation service delivery approach, distinct from capital funding.

Policy Statement

3 The County values the contributions that organizations make to the quality of life of County residents.

4 The County supports operational funding to non-profit organizations that:

(1) deliver accessible recreation and culture programs;

(2) support community well-being and belonging;

(3) demonstrate sound operational and financial practices; and

(4) maintain safe, inclusive, and publicly accessible facilities or programs.

5 Council provides limited operational assistance to non-profit organizations whose facilities, programs, or services benefit County residents and encourages partnerships that enhance residents' quality of life.

Policy

General Provisions

6 Eligible organizations may apply for one Operational Assistance Grant and one Community Enhancement Grant per calendar year.

7 Operational Assistance and Community Enhancement Grant applications are due March 1st at 4:30 PM annually.

8 Applications will be accepted until 4:30 PM of the next business day for deadlines that fall on a weekend or statutory holiday

Funding Source and Decision Authority

9 Funding for the Grant Program is allocated from the annual Recreation Tax Levy.

10 The Recreation Governance Committee allocates funding. Any unused levy funds allocated to grants at year end are transferred to the Public Reserve account.

11 The Recreation Governance Committee grant decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

Conflict of Interest

12 Members of an applicant organization must not act or appear to act in a manner which benefits, financially or otherwise, themselves, their family, friends, associates, or businesses.

13 A conflict of interest arises when there is a real or perceived conflict between a grant recipient's personal interests and their duty to administer the grant funds in an accountable and transparent manner. A conflict of interest may arise whether the gain is financial, material, or another form of personal gain.

14 The County may withhold or withdraw approved funding without notice if the County determines that an organization's board or any of its directors, officers, or employees have a conflict of interest, provided the conflict is not corrected to the satisfaction of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Organization Eligibility Criteria

15 The following organizations are eligible to apply for a grant through the Grant Program:

(1) non-profit or charitable organizations, or the County acting as an agent on behalf of residents, which offer programs and services that are fully accessible to County residents.

16 Applicant organizations which operate on County land:

(1) must have a valid licence of occupation, in accordance with the *Licence of Occupation* policy; and

(2) must notify the County of their intent to request operational funding prior to submitting an application.

17 The following organizations are ineligible to apply for a grant through the Grant Program:

(1) organizations, facilities, or services that are not accessible to the public;

(2) organizations that offer donations or grant funding to other organizations;

(3) for-profit organizations;

(4) libraries;

(5) religious-based or affiliated organizations or societies registered under the *Religious Societies' Land Act*;

(6) school boards and school activities or teams;

(7) organizations that have overdue or incomplete accounting/reporting relating to any grant previously awarded by the County;

(8) organizations operating under a three-year operational funding agreement with the County; and

(9) organizations covered by a three-year intermunicipal operational funding agreement with the County, unless expressly permitted under that agreement.

Operational Assistance Grant

18 The Operational Assistance Grant is available to organizations that deliver recreational and cultural programming to County residents, applicable to operating costs for the most recent fiscal year.

19 The following expenditures are eligible for the Grant Program:

(1) operational costs, utilities, maintenance, insurance, salaries and wages;

(2) promotional and marketing expenses, programming costs; and

(3) maintenance, lifecycle, new or replacement of items $10,000 or less.

20 The following expenditures are ineligible for the Grant Program:

(1) purchase of capital items greater than $10,000;

(2) honoraria for volunteers or board members involved with the organization;

(3) items that are discretionary consumables that do not impact the day-to-day operations of an organization;

(4) amortization and depreciation expenses; and

(5) Goods and Services Tax (GST).

21 Eligible organizations within the County may apply for up to 50% of the total operational expenses for the next fiscal year.

22 The County will consider entering into three-year operational funding agreements with organizations that are approved for over $100,000 in operational funding.

23 Eligible organizations located outside the County may apply for up to 25% of the total operational expenses for the next fiscal year.

(1) Applicants must demonstrate a financial or in-kind contribution from the other municipality or municipalities the organization operates in as part of their financing plan.

(2) The County's contribution may be limited to an amount not exceeding the contribution provided by the other municipality or municipalities the organization operates in, subject to the discretion of RGC.

24 The evaluation process will begin immediately after the grant deadline has passed. The evaluation process will review the following:

(1) completeness of application and required documents;

(2) alignment with County plans and relevant guiding documents;

(3) impact on recreation, culture, arts, and heritage opportunities for County residents;

(4) organization capacity and asset management; and

(5) demonstrated financial need, including:

(a) recreation centres operating at up to a 10% surplus without funding assistance;

(b) community Facilities operating at up to a 20% surplus without funding assistance; and

(c) evidence of efforts to access unearned revenues (fundraising, external grants, advertising, sponsorships).

25 Detailed evaluation procedures are defined in the *Operational Assistance Grant Program* procedure.

Community Enhancement Grant

26 The Community Enhancement Grant provides funding for initiatives that offer enriching cultural and beautification experiences and strengthen community for County residents.

(1) Applications are considered for a maximum funding amount of $7,500 annually.

27 The following expenditures are eligible for a Community Enhancement Grant:

(1) program supplies and materials;

(2) insurance related to the event or initiative;

(3) promotional and marketing materials; and

(4) event or initiative rental fees.

28 The following expenditures are ineligible for a Community Enhancement Grant:

(1) operational costs, utilities, standard maintenance, salaries and wages;

(2) retroactive expenses related to the event or program;

(3) purchase of capital items;

(4) honoraria for volunteers or board members involved with the organization;

(5) amortization and depreciation expenses; and

(6) Goods and Services Tax (GST).

29 The evaluation process will begin immediately after the grant deadline has passed. The evaluation process will review the following:

(1) completeness of application and required documents;

(2) alignment with County plans and relevant guiding documents;

(3) impact on recreation, culture, arts, and heritage opportunities for County residents; and

(4) alignment with at least one of the following categories:

(a) Heritage Awareness - support tangible initiatives to promote and preserve the County's history that:

(i) document historical places or events in order to retain information for future generations; or

(ii) encourage public involvement in heritage preservation and promote knowledge about the County's history.

(b) Volunteer Development - support investment back into the community through volunteerism and are considered for:

(i) organizations that seek to improve their ability to support County volunteers through leadership development, board governance, succession planning and volunteer skills training.

(c) Arts and Culture - support organizations in their efforts to provide quality arts and cultural programming and events.

(d) Community Benefit - support organizations and projects that bring communities together to enhance the quality of life and well-being of County residents, while promoting and creating healthy communities. Community Benefit Grants are considered for:

(i) supporting a non-profit organization's ability to improve the appearance of their community, over and above standard maintenance;

(ii) initiatives to develop healthy communities; or

(iii) animal services, and community safety enhancements or programs within the boundaries of the County.

30 Detailed evaluation procedures are defined in the *Community Enhancement Grant Program* procedure.

31 Initiatives that pay tribute to people and life events in the County must align with the *Parks Tribute Program* policy.

Letters of Support

32 Letters of support can be requested from eligible organizations under this policy for funding initiatives, in accordance with the *Letters of Support* procedure.

References

Legal Authorities	• *Agricultural Societies Act*, RSA 2000, c A-11 • *Companies Act*, RSA 2000, c C-21 • *Municipal Government Act*, RSA 2000, c M-26 • *Religious Societies' Land Act*, RSA 2000, c R-15 • *Societies Act*, RSA 2000, c S-14
Related Plans, Bylaws, Policies, etc.	• *Community Recreation and Culture Grant Program* C-317
Related Procedures	• *Operational Assistance Grant Program* PRO-316A • *Community Enhancement Grant Program* PRO-316B • *Letters of Support* PRO-316C
Other	• N/A

Policy History

Amendment Date(s) – Amendment Description	• 2018 June 05 - Council amended - Renumbered from C-322 to C-328 to correct a clerical error • 2020 February 25 – Council amended to delegate RGC as approving authority, policy name changed, notwithstanding clause removed • 2020 January 30 – minor amendments recommended to include RGC and improve readability • 2022 May 16 – minor amendments for policy consistency, language clarity, and definitions
Review Date(s) – Review Outcome Description	• 2026 – Amended to separate the capital and operating grant programs into their own policies.

Definitions

33 In this policy:

(1) "applicant" means an organization applying for a grant pursuant to this policy;

(2) "capital" means resourcing used to enhance infrastructure that can be recorded as an asset or depreciated under the organization's financial statements. Assets with a useful life greater than five (5) years and a per-unit cost greater than $10,000. Capital purchases below $10,000 are treated as operational unless part of an approved capital project;

(3) "Chief Administrative Officer" means the Chief Administrative Officer of Rocky View County as defined in the Municipal Government Act or their authorized delegate;

(4) "consumables" means nondurable or soft goods that are meant to be consumed, including food, fuel, and promotional items;

(5) "Council" means the duly elected Council of Rocky View County;

(6) "funding agreement" means a memorandum of understanding defining the provision of County support or oversight through the life of the project or for the provision of the improvement, including minimum conditions for funding award, and the expectations that:

(a) transparent and fair competitive tendering practices occur;

(b) all initiatives utilizing public funds are subject to County audit; and

(c) the initiative provides for an appropriate level of public use;

(7) "non-profit organization" means a voluntary, community-based, organization incorporated under the *Societies Act,* the *Agricultural Societies Act*, or Part 9 of the *Companies Act* whose mandate is to provide social leisure or recreational opportunities to the public without realizing a profit to its members;

(8) "operational" means the routine functioning and activities of a program, service, or facility such as but not limited to operational costs, utilities, rental fees, and insurance with the exception of ineligible expenses as outlined in this policy;

(9) "programs" are formal, planned, instructor-led opportunities for individuals to develop skill or understanding in a specific content area, whether through registering for, or dropping into, a scheduled activity;

(10) "recreation" is an experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative, and cultural pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being;

(11) "recreation facility" means a location designed and equipped for the conduct of sports, leisure time activities and other customary and usual recreational activities;

(12) "Recreation Governance Committee" is a Council committee that acts as an approving body regarding matters pertaining to recreation and cultural services in the County, including grant applications, funding allocation, studies, and master plans;

(13) "recreation services" means a broad concept related to sports, fitness, social recreation, special community events, and capital community initiative development;

(14) "religious societies" means the incorporated congregations of a church or a religious denomination under the Religious Societies Land Act;

(15) "retroactive expenses" means expenditures incurred prior to approval of grant by the Recreation Governance Committee;

(16) "Rocky View County" or "the County" means Rocky View County as a municipal corporation and the geographical area within its jurisdictional boundaries, as the context requires.