

## Overview

The Town of Halton Hills recognizes that enhancing residents' quality of life and well-being is a shared responsibility among governments, community groups, and organizations. To support this goal, the Town provides municipal funding and resources through its Community Grant Program (CGP), which assists Community Investment Projects that align with the Town's strategic priorities.

The guidelines outline the project requirements, eligibility criteria, available funding and eligible expenses, application process, evaluation standards, and the program's terms and conditions.

The Halton Hills Community Grant Program (CGP) provides eligible applicants with grants to deliver Community Investment Projects located within Halton Hills that:

- Support group development efforts such as strategic planning, governance improvements, marketing, volunteer recruitment and management, or training that enhances the sustainability and effectiveness of community organizations.
- Launch or expand new initiatives or services that creatively respond to emerging community needs.
- Foster a welcoming, vibrant, and inclusive community, and promote diversity, equity, accessibility, and overall well-being.
- Encourage active participation in community life through volunteering, leadership development, or opportunities for residents to get involved in shaping the community.
- Community anniversary projects that mark a commemorative local historical event.
- Projects that advance Truth and Reconciliation, engage with Treaty holders, uphold Aboriginal and treaty rights, and meaningfully collaborate with Indigenous Peoples are encouraged and will be considered a priority for support.

## Eligibility Standards

To qualify, applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age, be hosting their Community Investment Project within the Town of Halton Hills and meet one of the following criteria:

- Be a Canadian non-profit organization operating for the benefit of the community.
- Be a registered charity with a valid charitable registration number issued by the Canada Revenue Agency
- Be a registered Canadian amateur athletic association or provincially recognized sport organization or club.

- Be a service club, social service agency, or faith-based organization (if the initiative benefits the broader community).
- Be a collective group of residents are eligible to apply, provided they are organized around a shared goal or purpose related to the proposed project activity

Applications will not be considered for:

- Any project as determined by the Town that falls under the scope or jurisdiction of another municipality, Halton Region, the Provincial Government, the Federal Government, school boards, school councils, or receives primary funding from another source.
- Applicants that have received Town funding within the same calendar year.
- Applications that were submitted after the intake deadline.
- Projects that have already occurred.
- Project held outside of the Town of Halton Hills.
- Groups or organizations serving only their members.
- Personal appeals, individual pursuits, or registration fees.
- Group expeditions, contests, or pageants.
- Political events or fundraisers.
- Bursaries or scholarships
- Commercial ventures.
- Fundraising-based Projects where the primary intent is to raise funds for the organization.
- Fundraising-based Projects who are in support of a provincial, national or international organization.
- Fundraising-based Project where the primary intent is to redistribute funds to a third-party (for example bursaries, scholarships and/or direct financial donations).
- For-profit organizations or other corporations' community initiatives.
- Any Project that could be deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code or for which purpose is related to religious, political and/or advocacy activity.
- Community groups and organizations that are not in good standing with the Town.
- Submissions that do not comply with the application requirements, terms, and conditions and/or align with the Town's strategic priorities or CGP criteria as contained in these guidelines.
- Any Project designed to raise money for core operating expenses, paying for accumulated deficits or debt, staffing costs and/or other.

## Funding Amount and Expenses

Funding is available for Community Investment Projects through the Community Investment Stream. Funding is limited to one grant per project, per organization, per year and is available for initiatives that meet the following criteria:

- Maximum funding: \$5,000 per project, per organization.

- Projects must be distinct from the organization’s core services or regular programming.
- Projects must have a clearly defined start and end date.
- Projects funded through the 2026 program must be delivered between April 1, 2026, and June 1, 2027.

The following is a list of items that may be eligible for funding considerations:

- Consulting fees for strategic planning, governance, marketing, or volunteer management.
- Rental fees. For example: portable toilets, Town facility rentals, equipment rentals or purchases (chairs, tables, tent, sound system)
- Marketing and promotion expenses such as printed materials, social media ads, and signage.
- Training and leadership development programs for volunteers and community leaders.
- Program supplies and materials, including educational resources and equipment rentals.
- Technology and software needed for project implementation (e.g., website development, digital tools for community engagement).
- Accessibility enhancements to ensure participation for all community members (e.g., sign language interpreters, accessible seating arrangements).

Funding will not be granted for the following:

- Salaries and wages for regular staff positions.
- Operational costs, including rent, utilities, and office supplies.
- Debt repayment or accumulated deficits.
- Travel, accommodations, food, and per diems.
- Purchase of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, cannabis products, or any type of drugs
- Restricted food items
- Activities deemed discriminatory as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Activities whose purpose is to promote religious doctrine or are being led by a person whose mandate includes the promotion of religious doctrine
- Duplication of funding received from another funding organization or level of government
- Flow-through funding (redistribution of funds to others, for example bursaries / scholarships)
- Political and / or advocacy activities
- Purchase of items to be “owned” by someone after the event / activity (e.g. prizes, gifts, medals, merchandise, swag)
- Requests to reimburse individuals for time invested
- Capital projects, such as new construction, renovations, or major equipment purchases.
- Personal expenses, including registration fees for courses, contests, or personal development.
- Projects that duplicate existing programs without demonstrated need or added value.
- Gifts, awards, or honorariums beyond reasonable project-related compensation.
- Any other items the Town considers inappropriate or unnecessary

## Application Requirements

- Application guidelines and forms will be published annually before intake.
- The application intake period is once per year in January, with funding decisions communicated in April.
- Applicants are encouraged to consult with Town staff to review eligibility and funding options.
- Applicants must disclose alternate funding sources (e.g., federal/provincial grants) and detail their budget, including in-kind contributions and expense estimates.
- Applications must be submitted on time in accordance with the posted deadlines.

## Evaluation Criteria

Applications are reviewed to assess eligibility, completeness, and clarity. Applications deemed eligible will then be reviewed by a staff review committee and funding recommendations will be made to Halton Hills Town Council.

- **Community Impact:** The initiative's potential to benefit the Halton Hills community and align with Town priorities.
- **Feasibility and Readiness:** The organization's ability to successfully execute the project within the proposed timeline and budget.
- **Innovation and Uniqueness:** The extent to which the project introduces a new idea, solution, or approach that addresses a demonstrated need.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** The degree to which the initiative is open, inclusive, and accessible to diverse community members.
- **Collaboration and Community Engagement:** Demonstrates evidence of partnerships, volunteer involvement, and meaningful engagement with local stakeholders. Priority will be given to projects that foster collective impact at the local level by bringing together organizations or sectors to address shared goals and create broad community impact.
- **Financial Responsibility:** A well-defined budget, including leveraged funding from other sources, in-kind contributions, and cost-effectiveness.
- **Efficient Use of Municipal Resources:** Demonstrated effort to minimize reliance on Town resources while maximizing impact.
- **Marketing and Outreach Plans:** Demonstrates a strategy to reach target audiences and ensure participation.
- **Volunteerism:** Demonstrates that the Special Event involves volunteers or community members in planning or delivery.

## Terms & Conditions

To ensure accountability and the effective use of municipal funds, recipients of the Community Investment Projects Stream grant must adhere to the following terms and conditions:

1. Funding must be approved prior to the project start date. Expenses incurred before approval will not be eligible for reimbursement.
2. Approval of funding is subject to the Town's annual budget and available resources. Submission of an application does not guarantee funding.
3. Organizations may receive only one (1) Community Grant Program (CGP) grant per calendar year. The Town reserves the right to decline applications from organizations that have received funding from another Town grant program in the same year.
4. The Town may modify the approved funding amount based on available resources and project needs demonstrated.
5. The Town reserves the right to request liability insurance, as required by the Town, before funds can be distributed. Failure to comply may result in forfeiture of funding.
6. All recipients must submit a final report within two (2) months of project completion. The report must include:
  - A financial summary detailing the use of funds.
  - Measurable outcomes and community impact.
  - Proof of recognition of Town support (where applicable).
7. Any unused or misallocated funds must be returned to the Town of Halton Hills. Additionally, recipients may be required to return funding if they:
  - Cease operations or dissolve before project completion.
  - Provide false or misleading information in their application.
  - Breach any of the terms and conditions outlined in the agreement.
  - Are unable to complete the project as described in the application.
8. Funded projects must adhere to all applicable municipal by-laws, policies, and procedures.
9. The Town reserves the right to request a presentation from grant recipients detailing project outcomes.
10. The Town reserves the right to request copies of receipts.
11. The Town reserves the right to modify or discontinue the Community Grant Program, including funding streams and eligibility criteria, at its discretion
12. Recipients must submit a final report within two months of project completion.