

NO: **R205**

COUNCIL DATE: **September 10, 2012**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **September 4, 2012**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture**
General Manager, Finance & Technology

FILE: **1850-01**

SUBJECT: **Revision to the Community Enhancement Partnership Grant Program (CEPP)**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department and the Finance & Technology Department recommend with respect to the Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP) that Council approve a change as described in this report to the CEPP guidelines to remove the restriction related to grants to “religious organizations”.

BACKGROUND

In January 2010 Council adopted the Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP), which provides financial support to individuals and groups for projects focused on community engagement and neighbourhood beautification. Under the CEPP, residents and community groups may apply to the City for a grant under either of two separate categories; these being:

- **Small Project Grants** - to support in planning, organizing and implementing projects intended to directly improve the physical aesthetic appeal of a neighbourhood; and
- **Activity and Celebration Grants** - to support projects that build community/neighbourhood relationships through celebration and activity.

The current CEPP Guidelines are attached as **Appendix A**. The CEPP has an annual budget of \$25,000.

This program has been advertised to the community through stakeholder mail-outs, newspaper ads, press releases, promotional posters at civic facilities and on the City’s website. A Grant Selections Committee has been established with representatives from various City Departments that is responsible for assessing grant applications and making recommendations on the award of grants to Council. To date, twenty-nine (29) CEPP grants have been recommended to and approved by City Council.

DISCUSSION

Grant Requests by Religious Groups

Currently, the CEPP grant criteria stipulate that grants will not be awarded to/for:

- religious organizations,
- government agencies,
- political or partisan groups,
- formal business associations,
- universities,
- exclusive clubs or associations,
- newspapers; and/or
- non-Surrey-based organizations.

Staff has received requests from religious groups who are interested in assisting to beautify the local community through boulevard plantings and other community projects. The projects as described meet the remaining criteria for a grant under the CEPP program including:

- Encourage neighbourhood participation without discrimination with a focus on “beautifying and celebrating Surrey”;
- Generate a public benefit in an inclusive and cooperative manner;
- Involve members of the community in the project;
- Commit to overseeing the project and any resulting maintenance; and
- Have broad neighbourhood support.

Staff views the prohibition on religious organizations as being overly restrictive and recommend that this restriction with respect to religious organizations be removed from the guidelines.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS-

The CEPP program assists in achieving the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter; more particularly, Charter Goal *SC5: Plan for the Social Well Being of Surrey Residents* through encouraging City beautification, in building civic pride and in creating social connections between residents.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council approve a change as described in this report to the CEPP Program guidelines to remove the restriction related to grants to “religious organizations”.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Vivienne Wilke, CGA
General Manager
Finance & Technology

APPENDIX “A”- CURRENT GRANT INFORMATION



Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP) Program Overview and Guidelines

The Community Enhancement Partnership Program (CEPP) is an initiative of Council to encourage neighbourhood projects and activities that beautify our streets and public spaces.

Through the Program, residents, groups and businesses can apply to the City for a grant to plan, organize and implement small beautification projects, activities and celebrations. Successful applicants match their requested grant amount with contributions of volunteer labour and services, donated materials, and/or cash. The Program is a partnership in which the applicant and the City contribute equally towards the applicants proposed project.

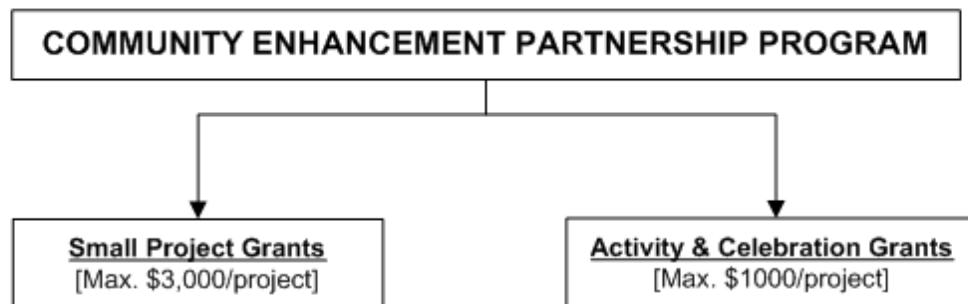
FUNDING CRITERIA & ELIGIBILITY

Grants are available to all Surrey residents, students, community groups, organizations or associations. Small businesses will also be considered for street or landscaping beautification projects. All applications must encourage neighbourhood participation without discrimination. Projects must be undertaken within the geographic boundaries of Surrey. All applicants must demonstrate their project or activity will:

- focus on “beautifying and celebrating Surrey”;
- generate a public benefit in an inclusive and cooperative manner;
- involve members of the community in the project;
- commit to overseeing the project and any resulting maintenance;
- have broad neighbourhood support; and
- fall within one of the Project Grant Types listed below.

PROJECT GRANT TYPES

The Program has two separate grant categories as illustrated below.



i) Small Project Grants

Small project grants have a maximum amount of \$3,000 per project. They are offered to support planning, organizing and implementing projects that physically improve the appearance of the City. As examples, a neighbourhood garden, boulevard landscaping, community pathway, floral tree plantings, decorative lighting display or a neighbourhood entrance feature would fall under this category. Creativity is encouraged.

Projects in this category must be completed within twelve (12) months of a grant being awarded.

ii) Activity & Celebration Grants

Activity and celebration grants have a maximum amount of \$1,000 per project. They are offered to support community activism and celebration. Projects should engage, educate and celebrate community members. As examples, a neighbourhood festival or block party, a street clean-up day, a property owner awards program or a neighbourhood improvement campaign would fall under this category.

Projects that create opportunities to develop neighbourhood organization and promote community leadership, such as citizen engagement workshops or anti-graffiti training seminars, are also encouraged.

Projects in this category must be completed within six (6) months of a grant being awarded.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & RECOGNITION

For awarded projects, photos must be submitted to the City as a permanent record and for potential posting on the City's website and within local newspapers. All projects under the Program will be eligible for Civic Beautification Awards and/or plaque or site markers.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Awarded projects may be subject to inspection by City staff during project work and upon completion.
- Applicants that have failed to undertake projects, as outlined on submitted applications, may be eliminated from consideration for future grant opportunities.
- Applicants are required to abide by all Municipal, Provincial and Federal laws and regulations.
- The City of Surrey reserves the right to remove any physical installations or improvements on public land at any time.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Each application will be evaluated by a grant evaluation committee using the following evaluation criteria and within available funding.

Evaluation Criteria

Overall Community Enhancement Program Objective (up to 25 points)

- Project corresponds with the objective to “beautify and/or celebrate Surrey”. (25)

Project Proposal & Feasibility (up to 25 points)

- Provides a clear description of what the project is and why it is proposed. (10)
- Provides a clear public benefit. (5)
- Is well planned with a realistic timeline and a clear beginning and end. (5)
- Has a reasonable budget. (5)

Community Building (up to 30 points)

- Community contribution is documented, demonstrating broad community participation and support for the project. (10)
- Encourages inclusive community participation and provides opportunity to bring people together. (10)
- Encourages interaction between different groups, such as different ethnic groups, tenants, seniors and business owners. (5)
- Encourages collaboration between all age groups, particularly youth and adults. (5)

Outcomes (20)

- There is a clear understanding of how the community will be improved as a result of the project, with anticipated outcomes clearly documented. (10)
- Project is designed for low maintenance and the applicant and stakeholders commit to the project’s on-going maintenance. (10)

Grants will **NOT** be awarded to:

- Individuals, for the purpose of private gain.
- Religious organizations, government agencies, political or partisan groups, formal business associations, universities, exclusive clubs or associations, newspapers and non-Surrey-based organizations (based or originating).
- Applicants who have failed to document a community contribution.
- Applicants who have failed to successfully carry out a project for which a grant was previously awarded.

Grants must **NOT** be used to:

- Duplicate an existing public or private program.
- Support ongoing programs or services.
- Replace funding lost from other sources or provide gap funding.
- Pay for the applicants operating expenses that are not directly related to the project for which the grant is awarded.
- Purchase land or buildings.
- Pay for out of City travel expenses.
- Pay for expenditures or financial commitments made *before* the organization’s grant application was submitted.