



Grass Roots Grant Guidelines

These guidelines are effective April 30, 2025 – previous versions no longer apply.

If you have questions after reviewing these guidelines, you can obtain more program information from the City of Chilliwack's Recreation and Culture Department. Please contact:

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City of Chilliwack Neighbourhood Grant Program

Great cities are built on the foundation of strong neighbourhoods. Since residents often know just what is needed to enhance the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, the Neighbourhood Grant Program has been developed to support residents and organizations that have small but powerful ideas that will bring people together and enhance neighbourhoods.

Through matching grants, the Chilliwack Neighbourhood Grant Program supports locally driven projects that are planned, implemented and managed by and for the neighbourhood. It encourages residents and local community groups to engage in projects that bring people together and make the community a vibrant and liveable place.

Residents can apply for amounts from \$150 to \$4,000, depending on the type of grant program stream selected.

These grants can support the planning, organizing, and implementation of neighbourhood projects. As this is a matching grant program, successful applicants must match their requested amount with contributions of volunteer labour and services, donated materials, and/or cash. For example, if an applicant applies for a \$200 grant, they need to show or contribute an equal amount through volunteer labour, supplies or cash.

The Grass Roots Grant

Residents often think about small items or projects that can enhance or physically improve the appearance of their neighbourhood. Through matching funds, the Grass Roots Grant Program focuses on resident-led neighbourhood projects that will reinvigorate neighbourhoods or make public areas more beautiful.

The Grass Roots Grant Program offers 50/50 matching funding to local neighbourhood groups to a maximum of \$4,000. The purpose of the program is to encourage resident involvement to make neighbourhoods an even better place to live while promoting neighbourhood based solutions. Through the grant program, the City hopes to inspire residents to connect with their neighbours and initiate neighbourhood enhancement projects.

The Grass Roots Grant Program focuses on six key areas. Your project does not need to support all areas, but must support a minimum of one focus area. Applications will be rated according to support levels in the following focus areas:

- Engages citizens/community
- Reaches a diverse population (age, ethnicity, individuals with barriers to participation)
- Improves community and individual health and/or quality of life
- Has an economic impact on the community
- Builds community, including collaborations and partnerships
- Provides a program or service that is unique and not duplicated by another organization

What is my Neighbourhood?

For the purposes of the Grass Roots Grant, 'neighbourhood' is defined as the local area that surrounds someone's residence. As an applicant, your neighbourhood would be your block or street and the immediately surrounding area.

Funding Criteria and Eligibility

Who is eligible? Any group of two or more residents with an idea for a project that will enhance their neighbourhood is eligible. Experience in organizing a project is not necessary.

Religious organizations, government agencies, political or partisan groups, universities, or non-Chilliwack based organizations would not be eligible.

What you need to know before you apply:

- Grants will only be available for projects located on municipal (public) lands.
- Grants are available only to residents of Chilliwack and require a minimum of two residents from separate households within the neighbourhood to operate as a project working group.
- Only one Grass Roots Grant may be received by a neighbourhood group per year, with priority given to groups that have not previously received a grant.
- The project must occur within the applicant group's neighbourhood.
- Contribution for matching funds can include cash, in kind volunteer hours and/or materials and equipment.
- Resident groups must have a project lead accountable for project funds and reporting.
- Projects taking place in public spaces or parks must follow City of Chilliwack bylaws.
- Insurance and applicable permits are the responsibility of the applicant. City staff may be able to assist.

All applications should:

- Describe the project and how it will impact neighbourhood quality of life.
- Include a plan to foster broad neighbourhood participation.
- Enhance one or more drivers of neighbourhood attachment: aesthetics, leadership, safety, offerings or relationships.
- Provide a project budget which includes details including how grant funds will be matched with cash or in-kind volunteer hours and/or materials and equipment.

Grants shouldn't be used for:

- Retro-active expenses.
- Any item that will revert to private ownership.
- Travel expenses.
- Fundraising activities.
- Volunteer honorariums.
- Any project in contravention of City bylaws.
- The purpose of private gain.

Application and Approval Process:

- Applications will be reviewed twice per year. The deadlines for submitting are March 1 and July 1. The project must be completed within six months of receiving funds.
- Should all funds not be allocated after the second intake period, applications received after the deadline will be considered on a first come first serve basis.
- City staff will rate and prioritize the applications based on the program criteria and will forward their recommendations to Council for final review and approval of selected projects.
- Applicants will be notified within four weeks of the intake deadline. In some cases, an applicant may be required to submit further information before a final decision can be made.
- The decision of the City of Chilliwack Council will be final.
- Successful applicants will be required to sign a letter of agreement that will clearly outline the terms and conditions of the Grass Roots Grant and provide proof of any applicable insurance coverage.
- Upon receipt of the signed letter of agreement, the Grass Roots Grant funding will be released.
- Successful applicants must recognize the financial assistance of the City of Chilliwack on all formal promotions and communications.
- Successful applicants will be required to complete a short project evaluation form which asks groups to provide details, such as the project's impact on the neighbourhood and a photograph of the project.
- Successful groups will be expected to provide a final budget.
- Any unused funds will be returned to the City of Chilliwack.

Need more information?

Contact the City's Recreation and Culture Department at 604.793.2904

Grant applications are available online at chilliwack.com/neighbourhoodgrants.