

# CITY OF VAUGHAN

## **EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 19, 2018**

Item 11, Report No. 6, of the Finance, Administration and Audit Committee, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on June 19, 2018.

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### **11 GRANT FUNDING PROCESS UPDATE**

**The Finance, Administration and Audit Committee recommends approval of the recommendation contained in the following report of the Chief Corporate Initiatives and Intergovernmental Relations, dated June 6, 2018:**

#### **Recommendations**

1. THAT Council approve the updated Grant Funding Policy as presented, including giving Staff the authority to apply for grant funding that supports and aligns to the strategic initiatives and priorities of the City; and
2. THAT Council approve the amendments to by-law 78-2010.

Item:



## Finance, Administration and Audit Committee Report

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**DATE:** Wednesday, June 06, 2018

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE:** Grant Funding Process Update

**FROM:**

Tim Simmonds, Chief Corporate Initiatives and Intergovernmental Relations

**ACTION:** DECISION

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### **Purpose**

In an effort to take a more strategic approach to sourcing and tracking grant funding, an organizational scan of current practices in this area was completed. The results of this scan warrant an update to the current policy, by-law, and procedures that are outdated. As any changes to policies or by-laws require Council resolution, these are being brought forward for this purpose, in addition to sharing information on the new process being implemented.

### **Recommendations**

1. THAT Council approve the updated Grant Funding Policy as presented, including giving Staff the authority to apply for grant funding that supports and aligns to the strategic initiatives and priorities of the City; and
2. THAT Council approve the amendments to by-law 78-2010.

## **Report Highlights**

- The objective of a more strategic approach to grant funding is to increase the volume of grant applications to secure non-taxation revenue to deliver city infrastructure, programs and services
- Revised policy, procedures, and by-law will better support staff in their grant application efforts as current documents are outdated and not aligned with organizational structure and responsibilities

## **Background**

The Municipal Partnerships Office, established in 2016, centralizes revenue generation efforts for the City related to corporate partnerships. One priority for the office is to take a holistic and strategic approach to the City's grant management process with the objective of increasing the volume of grant applications submitted to secure non-taxation revenue to deliver city infrastructure, programs and services.

To assess the existing process, an organizational scan was initiated in consultation with the Financial Planning and Development Finance department who currently support portfolios in their grant application efforts. Feedback was collected from key stakeholders involved in the grant process to address any challenges experienced by staff that could hinder the objective of increasing the volume of applications submitted.

### **Many challenges experienced by staff related to a need for clarity; specifically, what staff's roles and responsibilities are in the grant process**

When completing the organizational scan, common themes were emerging that were in our control to address through an updated policy, by-law and new procedural document. One theme was being unsure of when staff need to submit a report to Council for permission to apply for a grant. With the new policy, it clearly specifies what is required, and encourages staff to apply by removing confusing language around this topic. Another common thread was the desire to collaborate more interdepartmentally to increase the chances of success and mitigate duplicating efforts when completing an application. With a centralized approach for identifying opportunities and tracking applications, the Municipal Partnerships Office can make the necessary connections required for better collaboration. There were also multiple departments who had trouble navigating signing authorities for grant applications, often not knowing who was appropriate to sign. The updated by-law and procedural document addresses this so staff understand who is authorized to sign, and at what stage in the process.

## **Previous Reports/Authority**

All work related to developing the new grant process was done in coordination with the Office of the City Clerk to ensure the policy, procedures, and amended by-law were adjusted appropriately, including use of the newly developed template for policies and procedures. Legal was also consulted on the execution of the by-law amendment and policy. The policy was reviewed by the Policy Review Committee, and a presentation to

CMT and SMT was completed in December 2017 with feedback incorporated into the new process.

## **Analysis and Options**

### **Current Grant Funding Procurement Policy no. FPDF – 002 (dated 2010.04.13) needs updating to reflect the current landscape of the organization, including removal of staff role of ‘Grant Specialist’ that no longer exists**

Besides the fact that the policy is eight years old, there are other indicators for needing an update. These include multiple references to a staff role that no longer exists within the organization (the ‘Grant Specialist’), confusing language and formatting, and administrative components that are more appropriate for a procedural document versus a policy. Due to the references to the ‘Grant Specialist’ role, there is no clear authorization and direction for staff to take ownership of applying for grant funding, which can be done if the grant relates to initiatives corresponding to the City’s strategic priorities. To mitigate risk, if staff wish to apply for funding that does not correspond to the strategic priorities of the City, staff must submit a report to Council for approval before applying for the grant, which is clearly outlined in the updated policy. With the elimination of the ‘Grant Specialist’ role, there was an obvious need for responsibilities to be reallocated, which have been split between the Municipal Partnerships Office, Financial Planning and Development Finance, and departmental staff. This reallocation of responsibilities informed the updated policy as well as a detailed procedural document which will be a helpful step-by-step guide for all staff.

### **Improvements required to by-law to eliminate unnecessary limitations on staff to apply for grants**

In addition to policy improvements, minor updates are required for the existing by-law as well. The existing by-law does not include both signatories that are currently authorized to execute grant applications and agreements, the City Clerk and Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer, which places unnecessary limitations on staff to expedite applications, and therefore generate funds to support the City. This has been rectified in the amended by-law and referenced explicitly in the policy and procedures to improve clarity and usability for staff.

### **In addition to clearly defining the grant application process, support will be provided by the Municipal Partnerships Office in identifying grant opportunities**

Responding to a need identified by staff, additional support will be provided to research and source funding opportunities for the organization. Opportunities will be captured through a subscription to two grant portals that specialize in aggregating grant opportunities from government funding sources, as well as corporate and private foundations. This information will be regularly funneled to staff based on their departmental initiatives, ensuring staff are aware of opportunities to secure funding to

support infrastructure and operational costs. In addition to this, the Municipal Partnerships Office and the Financial Planning and Development Finance department will work together to track all grant activity in a centralized database to improve reporting efforts on revenue generated and inter-departmental communication.

### **Financial Impact**

With this new approach to grant funding, a positive financial impact to the city is anticipated. Costs related to this initiative include yearly fees to access the two grant portals used to source grant funding opportunities. This fee will be covered through existing budget, with the opportunity to recoup the cost through a portion of successful grant applications.

### **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

With access to a broad range of grant funding sources through this new approach, there will be grants that the city will be ineligible to apply for as a municipality, however, the City will be able to use this information to better direct community groups to grants that are a fit for them to apply. This will help us service our community better and have a positive impact on the City as a whole.

### **Conclusion**

Staff are encouraged to find ways to generate non-taxation revenue to support City initiatives through the Municipal Partnerships Office. With Council approval of the updated Grant Funding Policy and by-law, staff will have clear direction of support for applying for grant funding. This clarity and direction will help enable our objective of increasing the volume of grant applications to secure more non-taxation revenue to deliver city infrastructure, programs, and services.

For more information, please contact: Katie Maginn, Manager Municipal Partnerships, [katie.maginn@vaughan.ca](mailto:katie.maginn@vaughan.ca), x8841.

### **Attachments**

1. Grant Funding Policy, Corporate Initiatives & Intergovernmental Relations, June 6, 2018
2. By-Law XX-2018, Corporate Initiatives & Intergovernmental Relations, June 6, 2018

### **Prepared by**

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