Media Release: Tuesday, February 25, 2020, 4:30 p.m.

Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Administration and Finance

Agenda

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Approximately 10:00 a.m. (Immediately following Planning and Works)

Regional Council Chamber

150 Frederick Street, Kitchener, Ontario

1. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest under the “Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”

2. Delegations

3. Presentations

4. Reports

4.1 COR-TRY-20-17, 2020 Community Innovation Grant

Recommendation

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following actions with respect to the 2020 Community Innovation Grant as outlined in report COR-TRY-20-17 dated March 3, 2020:

a) Reaffirm Council’s commitment to provide a Community Innovation Grant of up to $50,000 annually in line with the funding framework;

b) Approve the revised Community Innovation Grant Framework as set out in Appendix A; and,

Should you require an alternative format please contact the Regional Clerk at Tel.: 519-575-4400, TTY: 519-575-4605, or regionalclerk@regionofwaterloo.ca

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c) Use Focus /area 4: Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities with a specific focus on Making Affordable Housing More Available to Individuals and Families as the focus area for the 2020 Community Innovation Grant program.

5. Information/Correspondence

5.1 Council Enquiries and Requests for information Tracking List – No items pending

6. Other Business

7. Next Meeting – March 24, 2020

8. Adjourn
Region of Waterloo
Corporate Services
Treasury Services

To:    Chair Sean Strickland and Members of the Administration and Finance Committee

Date: March 3, 2020            File Code:  F25-01(a)

Subject:  2020 Community Innovation Grant

Recommendation:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following actions with respect to the 2020 Community Innovation Grant as outlined in report COR-TRY-20-17 dated March 3, 2020:

a) Reaffirm Council’s commitment to provide a Community Innovation Grant of up to $50,000 annually in line with the funding framework;

b) Approve the revised Community Innovation Grant Framework as set out in Appendix A; and,

c) Use Focus /area 4: Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities with a specific focus on Making Affordable Housing More Available to Individuals and Families as the focus area for the 2020 Community Innovation Grant program.

Summary:

Nil

Report:

Background

Waterloo Region is an innovative, collaborative and creative community that has a long history of people and organizations coming together to build community, address pressing social needs and deal with emerging issues.
The Community Innovation Grant (CIG) was established by Regional Council (Report CC-16-02 dated October 14, 2016) to provide support to foster this creative energy allowing for the creation of new sustainable approaches to addressing social, health, cultural, economic, environmental and other needs in Waterloo Region.

Funding under the program is provided on a one-time basis to support not-for-profit community organizations, partnerships, or collaborations in undertaking innovative projects that have the ability to lead to more effective, equitable and sustainable solutions that address existing and emerging needs in Waterloo Region and will assist in achieving the Region of Waterloo’s Strategic Plan Objectives.

2019 Regional Service Review

The CIG grant is a discretionary grant that Council can decide to award in any given year. Discretionary grants to organizations were identified as a savings opportunity in the recently completed region Service Review undertaken by KPMG. The Region provides funding support to a variety of community groups and external organizations. Council has directed staff to complete a review of all discretionary grants and staff intend to report back to Council with recommendations in advance of the 2021 budget process (see report HRC-ADM-20-01 Service Review 2019 – KPMG’s List of “Opportunities” – Proposed Next Steps and Timing dated January 22, 2020). The Community Innovation Grant was identified in the list of discretionary grants for review. As such, it would be appropriate for Council to reaffirm its intent to provide funding for this grant, or to direct staff otherwise.

CIG Framework

Regional staff have completed a detailed review of the CIG framework and recommend a small number of housekeeping changes to that framework. The proposed amendments are as follows:

- Remove the reference to “2015-2018” when referencing the Region’s Strategic Plan to allow for regular revisions by Council.
- Change the recommended timing for the annual selection of a focus area to take place in the spring, following annual budget approval.
- Add a requirement for the successful applicant to provide a follow-up report to Council after the two-year timeframe allowed to complete the project. This will allow Council to evaluate the successes created in the community as a result of the CIG program.
- Replace the requirement for applicants to provide audited financial statements with their application with a requirement for a project delivery plan and an outline of the organization’s governance structure.
With respect to the final item above, staff have received feedback from the community that the requirement for audited financial statements can be prohibitive for small grassroots community groups who may not have the funds available to engage an external auditor. After a review of expectations in other situations where funds are provided to the community, staff are recommending the proposed change. The provision of a detailed project budget and delivery plan accompanied by information on the governance structure will allow for a thorough analysis of the applications by the review panel.

The proposed amended framework is attached as Appendix 1.

2020 CIG Program

To begin the annual CIG process a focus area must be selected by Regional Council. Grant submissions from the community are to align with the selected focus area.

Since 2017 the focus area has been Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities. In each of 2018 and 2019 the focus area was narrowed down to the three “big ideas” or areas of focus identified through the Wellbeing Waterloo Region initiative. Grants have been awarded as follows for the past three years:

- 2017 – Mennonite Central Committee for the implementation of the Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise ($25,000)
- 2018 – Cambridge Self-Help Food bank for the development of Indigenous land based programming ($50,000)
- 2019 – Kinbridge Community Association for the development of the Cambridge neighbourhood Table ($50,000)

Staff have considered priorities identified through the 2019-2023 Strategic Planning process, priority areas identified by Council during the budget process, community feedback, and provincial direction. A great deal of consistency was identified in the analysis and as such staff are recommending that Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities with a specific focus on Making Affordable Housing More Available to Individuals and Families be selected for the 2020 focus area.

Corporate Strategic Plan:

The CIG Program is intended to assist in achieving the Region’s Strategic Plan objectives.

Financial Implications:

The 2020 Budget includes $50,000 for the CIG program, funded from the property tax levy. In any year, Regional Council can decide:
• To award the entire annual budget of $50,000 to support one eligible proposal
• To award lesser amounts to several eligible proposals up to the maximum budget of $50,000
• To award only a portion of the total $50,000 budget to support one or more eligible proposals, or
• To not award any Community Innovation Grant.

Should the CIG budget not be entirely allocated in any one year, the balance would be accounted for in the Region’s year-end financial position.

Other Department Consultations/Concurrence:

The Region’s Corporate Leadership Team provided input to this report.

Attachments

Appendix 1 – Community Innovation Grants (CIG) Program Framework

Prepared By: Shauna Calder, Manager of Financial Services

Approved By: Craig Dyer, Commissioner, Corporate Services/Chief Financial Officer
Appendix 1

Community Innovation Grants (CIG) Program Framework

Introduction

Waterloo Region is an innovative, collaborative and creative community that has a long history of people and organizations coming together to build community and to address pressing social needs and deal with emerging issues.

A Community Innovation Grants (CIG) Program has been established to harness this creative energy - to foster new collaborations and partnerships, to build on and strengthen existing ones, and to find and develop new sustainable approaches to addressing social, health, cultural, economic, environmental, and other needs in Waterloo Region.

What do we mean by innovation?

Social or community innovations may include new products, processes, services, and technology or some combination of these that provide real solutions to social problems and community needs in a manner that is more efficient, sustainable and effective than current approaches and, where the benefits go mainly to society or community as a whole rather than to private individuals. In meeting these social needs, they are also innovations that may result in the creation of new collaborations and/or relationships that will enhance our overall capacity to act moving forward. (Social Innovation eXchange [SIX], Stanford Social Innovation Review)

Community innovation means new ways of thinking and doing as we work together to address pressing community needs in Waterloo Region. Successful community innovations are inclusive, they are often cross sectoral, and they have a quantifiable impact on the broader conditions - social, political and economic - that created the problem or community need initially.

(Social Innovation Generation Waterloo http://www.sigeneration.ca/home/resources/primer/)

Purpose and Budget

The purpose of the CIG program is to provide one-time grants to support not-for-profit community organizations, partnerships, collaborations and/or networks in undertaking innovative projects that have good potential to lead to more effective, equitable and sustainable solutions that address existing and emerging needs in Waterloo Region and, that will assist in achieving the Region of Waterloo’s 2015–2018 Strategic Plan goals.
The Region of Waterloo will provide one-time grants to eligible organizations, partnerships, collaborations and/or networks for innovative projects that support a specific Region of Waterloo Strategic Focus Area – determined each year by Regional Council - and that produces a desired community result (outcome). The innovation could be new or an enhancement or significant expansion of an existing initiative.

Eligible organizations include not-for-profit organizations and/or organized communities of interest based within the Waterloo Region and whose primary focus is the Waterloo Region community and its citizens.

**Budget**

The maximum amount to be allocated from the CIG Program by Regional Council in one year is $50,000, to be funded by an annual contribution of $50,000 from the Region’s operating budget.

In any year, Regional Council can decide:

- To award the entire annual budget of $50,000 to support one eligible proposal
- To award lesser amounts to several eligible proposals up to the maximum budget of $50,000
- To award only a portion of the total $50,000 budget to support one or more eligible proposals, or
- To not award any Community Innovation Grants.

Should the CIG budget not be entirely allocated in any one year, the balance would be accounted for in the Region’s year-end financial position.

**Call for Proposals**

There will be one call for proposals each year.

The Region will issue a call for proposals on its website and through social media each year following approval of the Region’s annual budget.

**Focus Area Selection**

The Strategic Plan Focus Area for the CIG Program will be determined annually by Regional Council through A&F Committee by December 31 each year for the following year’s CIG intake. in the spring of each year.

**Selection Process**

a. CIG grant proposals will be reviewed by a staff group which will make recommendations on the CIG allocation(s) to Administration and Finance
Committee for final approval by Regional Council.

b. The composition of the CIG proposal review group will be determined annually based on the Strategic Plan Focus Area selected by Regional Council.

Selection Criteria

Priority will be given to the proposal(s) that:

a. Align closely with the selected Strategic Plan Focus Area
b. Address service gaps in the community
c. Create effective platforms for networking and problem solving
d. Avoid overlap and duplication with other existing services and programs
e. Leverage funding and in-kind contributions from other sources
f. Can demonstrate sustainability once the Region’s project funding ends
g. Involve collaboration, resource sharing and/or shared delivery with other organizations/agencies
h. Involve the organization’s clientele in the project in meaningful ways
i. Build capacity – enhance and develop resilience and skills in its clients, the community, the organization
j. Have potential for long-term impact
k. Have clear, measurable outcomes.

Proposal Requirements

Successful proponents will demonstrate/provide:

a. Agency effectiveness in meeting goals, serving clientele
b. A detailed project budget and implementation plan
c. Agency capacity to complete the project on time and on budget
d. A clear understanding of project benefits and the expected outcomes, and how success will be measured, and
e. Sound financial management practices through the provision of audited financial statements.
  e. An overview of the project and organization governance structure identifying accountable project leads.

There may be occasions where proponents do not have audited financial statements. In this situation, a sponsor group or entity probably would be required.

Limitations, Other Provisions & Requirements

The funding provided by the Region of Waterloo under the CIG program is one-time only and there is no opportunity for an organization to re-apply for CIG funding for the same project/proposal.
The project must be completed within two calendar years (24 months) of the award of the grant by the Region of Waterloo. **The successful recipient must provide a follow up report at the end of the two year period to update Council on the progress that has been made on the project.**

Payment milestones will be set out in an agreement between the successful proponent and the Region.

The CIG Program will be evaluated by Regional staff once every term of Regional Council to ensure the program is achieving the desired outcomes and community impact and a report made to Administration and Finance Committee.

**Exclusions/Ineligible Organizations**

The following organizations will not be considered for CIG funding:

- Hospitals
- Schools, school boards and post secondary educational institutions
- Area municipalities and/or their agencies
- Region of Waterloo departments and/or agencies
- The Provincial government and/or its agencies
- The Federal government and/or its agencies
- Local organizations whose work, clients and/or community of interest is primarily outside Waterloo Region
- Organizations based outside Waterloo Region
- Organizations or agencies whose funding, goals and/or objectives are the responsibility of another level of government
- For-profit organizations.

Note that with the exception of for-profit organizations, the ineligible organizations listed above could act as a sponsor for applicants with a worthy concept who require a sponsor.

If a specific community program and/or project has received Regional funding from another program area, that program and/or /project would not be eligible for a Community Innovation Grant. Each project funded under CIG should be unique.