

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA**

**REPORT NO. CS-2025-0001**

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF  
COUNCIL**

August 13, 2025

**SUBJECT: 2026 Non-Profit Organization Grant Program Updates**

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**1. RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. That Council receive Report No. CS-2025-0001, prepared by the Corporate Strategy and Transformation Division, Corporate Services Department dated August 13, 2025 respecting the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program;**
- 2. That Council allocate \$100,000 within the 2026 Budget as the total program amount, with an annual 2% inflationary increase thereafter;**
- 3. That Council direct staff to update the maximum funding amount to \$10,000 with an annual 2% inflationary increase to account for increasing costs for non-profit organizations;**
- 4. That Council direct staff to adjust the program guidelines based on section 4.2 of this report; and**
- 5. That Council delegate authority to staff to evaluate, select and award funding as well as enter into funding agreements with recipients and report to Council with a briefing note annually.**

**2. PURPOSE:**

This report proposes continuous improvement modifications to the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program based on lessons learned from the 2024 and 2025 intakes and the recent changes made through Report No. CSD-2025-0007 regarding the new funding model for the Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture, the Georgina Military Museum and the Georgina Chamber of Commerce.

### **3. BACKGROUND:**

Each year, the Town has improved the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program to make it easier and more consistent for non-profit organizations to apply for grant funding.

In 2025, the funding provided was as follows:

1. Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture - \$140,000
2. Georgina Chamber of Commerce - \$67,460
3. Routes - \$35,000
4. Georgina Military Museum - \$29,500
5. Ontario Water Centre (ClearWater Farm) - \$20,000
6. The Learning Centre for Georgina - \$10,000
7. Georgina Farmers Market - \$10,000
8. Georgina Feral Cat Committee - \$8,000

At the July 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 Council meeting, Council passed Resolutions No. C-2025-0169, C-2025-0170, and C-2025-0171, C-2025-0172 relevant to the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program:

- That Council approve the following annual funding amounts from the Non-Profit Grant Program for a five-year term (2026-2030) with an annual 2% inflationary increase and direct the Treasurer to list it as a separate line item in the Budget moving forward:
  - o Georgina Centre of Arts and Culture \$165,000
  - o Georgina Military Museum \$28,000
  - o Georgina Chamber of Commerce \$67,000
- That Council provide staff the delegated authority to implement a 5-year service agreement with an optional 1-year extension and Key Performance Indicators for the Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture and Georgina Chamber of Commerce

Based on the feedback received from Council and the applicants, and in the spirit of continually improving the grant program, further enhancements are recommended to better serve the local non-profits and Georgina community.

### **4. ANALYSIS:**

#### **4.1 Feedback from the 2025 Non-Profit Organization Grant Program**

Feedback from September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Council meetings is summarized below:

- Recommend implementing consistent annual funding increases for all organizations (e.g. 2% annually or indexing to the Consumer Price Index (CPI))
- Preference for the non-profit program to focus on one-time project-based grants, rather than ongoing service delivery funding

- Support reducing administrative burden by streamlining the application process for certain organizations, potentially eliminating the need for annual reapplication
- Concern that the current grant program supports an overly broad range of activities (\$1,000 compared to \$80,000). Once fee-for-service organizations are removed, the Town should clearly define the program's purpose and scope.
- Future iterations of the grant program should include clear, transparent guidelines outlining eligible and ineligible funding areas
- Grant program should prioritize projects and services that fall within a lower-tier municipality's jurisdiction
- The animal services sector is in a near crisis; the Town should consider building sustainable partnerships with key service providers; otherwise, the Town would be responsible for delivering these services

Feedback from non-profit organizations during the application and reporting period is summarized below:

- The current application and reporting requirements can be overly burdensome for small organizations, particularly those that are entirely volunteer-run and deliver the same services annually
- The grant application timeline (September/October) is too early for many organizations, as most conduct program and budget planning for the upcoming calendar year in November
- Training and skills development initiatives were noted to have a direct, measurable benefit to the community and should be considered eligible for Town-level funding support

## **4.2 Proposed Changes to the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program**

In response to feedback on the current grant program, the following revisions are being proposed to enhance clarity, efficiency, and impact:

### **4.2.1 Project eligibility**

- **Current 2025 guidelines:** Project-based funding for non-profit organizations in Georgina that support the social, economic, cultural, health, or overall well-being of the community.
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** Include a provision specifying that the grant will prioritize projects that align with lower-tier municipal service areas (e.g. recreation, culture, environmental stewardship, animal services, etc.)
- **Rationale:** In response to Council feedback, staff recommend specifying that the grant will prioritize projects aligned with lower-tier municipal services and incorporating this focus into the assessment criteria to guide the evaluation of eligible project submissions. The Town will refer applicants to York Region's Community Investment Program or other upper-tier funding programs where there is a better alignment.

#### **4.2.2 Total funding**

- **Current 2025 guidelines:** \$355,250
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** \$100,000 (increasing by the annual inflationary amount of 2% each year)
- **Rationale:** The starting budget is \$355,250. This amount is reduced by \$165,000 for the Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture, as per Resolution No. C-2025-0169, and by \$67,000 for the Georgina Chamber of Commerce and \$28,000 for the Georgina Military Museum, as per Resolution No. C-2026-0170, resulting in a remaining balance of \$95,250. Staff recommend increasing the budget to an even \$100,000 for 2026, with an annual 2% inflationary increase thereafter.

#### **4.2.3 Maximum funding amount per organization**

- **Current 2025 guidelines:** Up to \$80,000 (plus exceptions in some cases)
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** Up to \$10,000 with an annual 2% inflationary increase to account for increasing costs for non-profit organizations
- **Rationale:** With the total funding amount reduced, the maximum funding amount per organization needs to be adjusted accordingly. This funding cap enables the program to support at least ten local initiatives, and \$10,000 can create meaningful outcomes for a project or program. Increasing the maximum funding amount in line with the 2% inflationary amount recognizes that costs will increase for non-profit organizations each year.

#### **4.2.4 Expense eligibility**

- **Current 2025 guidelines:**  
Eligible expenses:
  - Materials and supplies
  - Communications (e.g. printing, distribution, ads, etc.)
  - Equipment – up to \$5,000
  - Consultant / contractor fees (e.g. web design translation, etc.)
  - Administration costs – up to 20% of the grant request (these can include salary costs for administration)
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** Add 'staff costs associated with direct project delivery' to the list of eligible expenses.
- **Rationale:** Staff recommend that direct staff costs be eligible for funding, as some projects may not be feasible without this support.

#### **4.2.5 Assessment criteria**

- **Current 2025 guidelines:**  
The evaluation will be based on:
  1. Organizational assessment
    - a. Organization eligibility
    - b. Financial position of organization
  2. Project assessment
    - a. Project eligibility

- b. Expense eligibility
- c. Community impact of project (Alignment to the Town's Corporate Strategic Plan)
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:**  
Add project assessment criteria listed below:
  - d. Project serves marginalized and underserved populations\* and promotes equity, diversity, and inclusion in Georgina
  - e. Complements Town programs without duplicating effort
    - \*Definition of marginalized populations: low-income residents, seniors, newcomers, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) / racialized communities, people with disabilities, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, youth
- **Rationale:** Staff recommend adding the criteria for serving marginalized and underserved populations to support the Town's equity, diversity, and inclusion commitments. Staff recommend adding this criteria to ensure funded programs complement, rather than duplicate, Town services to support a broader community impact.

#### 4.2.6 Evaluation approach

- **Current 2025 guidelines:** Applications are assessed by an Internal Evaluation Committee, which then presents funding allocation recommendations to Council for a final decision.
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** Applications are assessed by an Internal Evaluation Committee, and staff have delegated authority to approve and enter into funding agreements with the organizations. Staff will report to Council annually on the successful recipients and project outcomes.
- **Rationale:** Since the maximum funding amount is \$10,000 per organization, staff recommend that decisions be made at the staff level. This approach aligns with the current program's grant requirements, which permit staff to approve funding amounts up to \$10,000.

#### 4.2.7 Grant intake timeline

- **Current 2025 guidelines:** Intake opened in early September and closed mid-October. Decisions were made by end of November.
- **Proposed change for 2026/ongoing:** Intake opens in early September and closes mid-November. Decisions are made by mid-December.
- **Rationale:** Staff recommend providing a two-month application intake period, extending the deadline to mid-November to give organizations more time to apply and plan for the upcoming year. The urgency to make a decision and provide funding before January 1<sup>st</sup> is no longer present since none of the organizations will be relying on the funding for the operation of their organization.

**5 RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The initiative supports the 2023-2027 Corporate Strategic Plan:

Pillar	Delivering Service Excellence
Goal	Ensure continued financial sustainability and accountability
Initiative	Conduct a review and implement a streamlined Municipal Funding Program for Community Agencies

**6 FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:**

The funding allocation to the Non-Profit Grant Program in 2025 was \$355,250. Based on Resolution No. C-2025-0169 and Resolution No.C-2026-0170, \$260,000 in funding amount was allocated to Georgina Centre for Arts and Culture, Georgina Chamber of Commerce, and Georgina Military Museum.

Based on the recommendations in section 4.3.3, staff are recommending that an ongoing annual operating budget for the Non-Profit Organization Grant Program be updated to \$100,000 in the 2026 Budget with an annual 2% inflationary increase thereafter.

**7 PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:**

There is no statutory requirement to provide notice of this report.

**8 CONCLUSION:**

The Non-Profit Organization Grant Program has continued to evolve and improve each year. The recommendations in this report will further enhance the program, streamline administration for both non-profit organizations and Town staff, align grant processes across the organization, and enhance community impact and outcomes.

Once approved, staff will begin preparing to launch the intake in September 2025.

**APPROVALS**

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Recommended By: Shawn Nastke  
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Rob Wheeler  
Deputy CAO/Treasurer

Approved By: Ryan Cronsberry  
Chief Administrative Officer