Comox Valley REGIONAL DISTRICT

Board Policy

Policy Title: Recreation Grant Policy	**Policy Number:** P157
Policy Category: Recreation and Cultural Services	
Approval Date: June 16, 2026	**Policy Owner:** Community Services
Approved by: Recreation Commission	**File Reference:** 0340-50

PREAMBLE

1. Section 263(1)(c) of the *Local Government Act* gives authority for local governments to provide assistance for the purpose of benefiting the community or any aspect of the community.
2. Bylaw No. 2386 and its amendments provide for contributions to the cost of recreation programs provided by public authorities and non-profit organizations and contributions towards the Courtenay outdoor pool, for the Service 600 Recreation Grant.

PRINCIPLES

3. Recreation service delivery is a shared responsibility between local governments and the many non-profit organizations that contribute skills, volunteers, and community-driven programming.
4. The Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Board recognizes that providing financial support through recreational grants strengthens this shared system by enabling non-profit partners to enhance and expand services.
5. Grant funding can leverage additional resources, support collaboration, and help ensure that diverse and meaningful recreational opportunities are available to residents.
6. Grant funds are intended to provide supplemental, project-based support and are generally not designed to serve as ongoing annual funding; organizations should avoid becoming reliant on these grants for core operations. In some circumstances, the Recreation Commission may support funding ongoing operations.
7. The Regional District's federated structure supports partnerships and efficiencies that contribute to recreation services with broad regional benefit.

PURPOSE

8. To establish and provide a framework for the Recreation Grant Program, administered by the Comox Valley Regional District, in support of services, projects, and initiatives that provide recreational benefits to communities within the CVRD.

SCOPE

9. This policy applies to all registered non-profit organizations seeking financial support from the CVRD Recreation Grant Program, as administered through Service 600 under Bylaw No. 2386, including all amendments and focus area(s) as established and defined in this Policy.
10. This policy does not apply to local government or school district partners seeking funding from Service 600 Recreation Grants.

DEFINITIONS

Agreement(s)

Means the contractual agreement entered into by the CVRD and a non-profit organization for the purpose of annual capital or operational funding.

Capital Project

Means a project that acquires, builds, or upgrades recreational facilities, structures, or major equipment.

Core Operations

Means ongoing administrative or operational costs of an organization that are not project-specific and are generally not eligible for grant funding.

Comox Valley Recreation Commission (the Recreation Commission)

Means the body delegated by the CVRD Board to exercise all administrative powers related to awarding recreation grants and overseeing the construction, operation, and maintenance of recreation services owned and operated by the CVRD.

Feasibility Study

Means a planning activity that develops a business case or assesses the viability of a proposed program, service, or facility.

Insurance

Means insurance premiums and related fees that are necessary and directly attributable to the delivery of an approved project, program, or event (e.g.,

general liability, participant accident, property for project-specific equipment, or event insurance).

New Project or Event
Means a newly developed project or event accessible to residents across the Comox Valley.

Non-Profit Organization
Means a society incorporated under the BC Societies Act, in good standing, and not a member-funded society.

Provincial or National Special Event
Means a one-time or periodic event with provincial or national scope (e.g., championship or tournament) that demonstrably attracts participation or attention beyond the local level and provides regional benefit by showcasing a sport and attracting participants and visitors to the region.

Project
Means a time-bound initiative with defined objectives and outcomes, meeting one of the eligible project categories in this Policy.

Regional Benefit
Means a clear advantage or service accessible to residents across multiple communities within the CVRD.

POLICY
Annual Budget & Allocations

11. The total grant funding available each year shall be determined by the Comox Valley Recreation Commission through the CVRD's financial planning process for Recreation Grant Service 600.

12. The Recreation Commission shall, upon receiving the applications, determine the allocations to the applicants through the CVRD's financial planning process for Recreation Grant Service 600.

13. The Recreation Commission reserves the right to decline any application for funding at its sole discretion, regardless of eligibility, available budget, or past funding history.

14. Upon adoption of the annual Financial Plan, a listing of all successful grant applicants and the amounts that they were allocated will be posted on the CVRD website.

Applicant Eligibility

15. Applicants must meet the following mandatory eligibility criteria:
    a) The organization must be based in the Comox Valley Regional District or provide a service that primarily benefits the residents of the Comox Valley.
    b) Comply with all relevant Comox Valley Regional District grant bylaws.
    c) Be a registered non-profit organization in good standing with the BC Registrar of Societies and must:
        (i) provide a society registry number;
        (ii) be an ordinary society (vs. member-funded society) as defined under the BC *Societies Act*;
        (iii) have an active board of directors; and
        (iv) not allow voting members of the Board to benefit financially from the grant.

16. Only applications that meet the mandatory eligibility criteria will be advanced to the evaluation process.

Application Deadline & Online Submission

17. Applications must be submitted through the CVRD's online application portal by October 15th, no later than 4:30pm, through the application webform or on the next business day if this date falls on a weekend or Statutory Holiday.

18. Paper applications will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

19. Late applications will not be accepted.

Project Criteria

20. Projects seeking support through this grant program must clearly fall within one or more of the eligible categories:
    a) the launch of a new recreation project or event that is open to all residents of the Comox Valley;
    b) capital projects that enhance or expand recreational infrastructure;
    c) feasibility studies that develop a business case for a new recreational program, service, or infrastructure;
    d) hosting of local recreational special events that increase inclusion and reduce barriers to participation
    e) hosting of provincial or national level sporting events or
    f) insurance costs directly related to delivering recreational programming or events

Commission Discretion to Enter into Long-Term Funding Agreements

21. At the discretion of the Recreation Commission, the CVRD may enter into multi-year funding agreements with organizations that demonstrate sustained regional benefit and align with the Commission's priorities.
22. Organizations that enter into long-term funding agreements will not be required to apply annually for funds.
23. Long-term funding agreements may support funding of ongoing operational and/or capital costs; however, operating costs must not exceed 20% of the organization's total operating budget.
24. Where long-term funding agreements are established, organizations must provide a written report annually to the Recreation Commission outlining the use of funds, including financial statements and five year operating and capital budgets must be submitted each fall.

Demonstrates alignment with CVRD Strategic Drivers & Recreation Commission Strategic Goals

25. Applicants must clearly demonstrate how their proposed project aligns with:
    a. the CVRD's Strategic Drivers; and
    b. the Recreation Commission's Strategic Goals
26. Projects that address a greater number of these drivers and goals, or show strong alignment with key priorities, will receive increased consideration during the evaluation process

Ineligible Expenses and Activities

The following expenses and activities are not eligible for funding under the Recreation Grant Program:

27. Annual project funding, with the exception of insurance costs, for organizations that do not have long-term funding agreements in place with the CVRD.
28. Projects or services that fall outside the Comox Valley Regional District or do not primarily benefit CVRD residents.
29. Activities already funded through other CVRD services, agreements, or partnerships, including funding for local governments or school district partners.
30. Fundraising activities, including galas, dinners, raffles, auctions, or events designed primarily to generate revenue.

31. Retroactive funding for projects, programs, or events that have already been completed or substantially underway prior to grant approval.
32. Debt repayment, loan servicing, mortgage payments, or the creation of financial reserves.
33. Purchase of alcohol, cannabis, or regulated substances, or events where these are the primary focus.
34. Honoraria, gifts, prizes, or cash awards not directly tied to project delivery or public participation.
35. Private, member-only, or restricted-access programs or events that do not offer broad public accessibility.
36. Political, religious, or advocacy activities intended to influence legislation, public policy, or public opinion.
37. Programs or services that duplicate existing CVRD-delivered recreation services without demonstrating added regional benefit or unmet need.
38. Capital projects on land without secure tenure, or where the applicant cannot demonstrate long-term access or permission to develop.

Acknowledgment of CVRD

39. All promotional materials related to project funding will acknowledge the Comox Valley Regional District with a statement such as “Proudly supported by the Comox Valley Regional District.”

Use of Funds, Reporting & Unused Funds

40. A project/event report must be submitted:
    a. with any new grant application if the organization is applying in a subsequent year (due October 15); or
    b. within 18 months of receiving a grant.
41. The CVRD may request a project or financial report from any successful applicant at any time, regardless of whether the organization is seeking future funding.
42. Organizations receiving a grant for a specific project or event must use the funds solely for the approved purpose and may not redirect them to other activities or operations.
43. Grant funds must be fully utilized within eighteen (18) months of receipt.
44. Any unused funds remaining after eighteen (18) months must be returned to the CVRD.

45. Organizations that fail to utilize the funds for their intended and granted purpose, will be required to repay the funds to the CVRD.
46. If the funds are not repaid, the organization will be ineligible to apply for funds for a period of five years.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

47. The Recreation Commission is responsible for:
    a. Approving, amending, and implementing the Recreation Grant Policy.
    b. Approving the Recreation Grant Service 600 budget and the any related agreement(s) through the annual financial planning process.
    c. Selecting and entering into agreements with non-profit organizations.
48. CVRD staff are responsible for:
    a. Recommending that sufficient funding be allocated for grant funding during the financial planning process.
    b. Managing the application process.
    c. Assessing applications and making recommendations to the Recreation Commission for their consideration.
    d. Establishing and managing agreements with the non-profit organizations.

REVISION HISTORY

Approval Date	Approved By	Description of Change

APPENDIX A – GRANT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

A completed grant application must include the following information to be considered:

Organization Background Information:

a. Name, Email, Phone, and address of the organization
b. Primary contact person
c. Society registry number
d. List of the Board of Directors' name and titles
e. Organization purpose
f. A clear description of the public programs and activities that the organization provided in the last year, including dates
g. A list of geographic area(s) that the organization resides in and services

Project Information:

h. Total project cost and amount of financial assistance requested
i. A description of the timeline and an action plan of the project/event to be funded by the grant
j. A description how the funding will benefit the regional district

Strategic Drivers & Goals:

k. A self-assessment of how the project/event meets the CVRD's strategic drivers
l. A self-assessment of how the project/event meets the Recreation Commission's strategic goals

Documents:

m. Organization budget and project budget for the year in which the grant is being requested
n. If the organization received a grant from CVRD last year, details of how and when the funding was utilized, photos, and budget to actual reconciliation
o. Organization chart
p. Year-to-date and the immediately preceding year's financial statements
q. Most recent annual report
r. *Societies Act* - Registry annual report

APPENDIX B – RECREATION GRANT APPLICATION SCORING MATRIX

Applicant Organization:
Date of Application:
Mandatory application information provided: Society Information ☐
Project Background ☐ Organization Information ☐
Budget ☐
Project Final Report ☐ (if applicable)
Eligible Organization Yes ☐ No ☐ Why?_____

Project/Event Description:

Funding Request:	
Total Budget:	

Funding Over the Last Five Years

Year	Project/Event Funded	Amount Funded
2022		
2023		
2024		
2025		
2026		
	TOTAL	

	Check all that apply		
Project Criteria	**Yes**	**No**	**Notes**
A) launch of a new recreation project or event that is open to all residents of the Comox Valley			
B) capital projects that enhance or expand recreational infrastructure			
C) feasibility studies that develop a business case for a new recreational program, service, or infrastructure			
D) hosting of local recreational special event that increases inclusion and reduces barriers to participation			
E) hosting of provincial or national level sporting event			
F) insurance costs directly related to delivering recreational programming or events			
MEETS MINIMUM PROJECT CRITERIA			

Alignment with Drivers

CVRD Strategic Drivers	None 0 pts	Low 1 pt	Medium 3 pts	High 5 pts
1) Fiscal Responsibility: Careful management of services and assets is essential to providing affordable and reliable services to citizens and businesses in the Comox Valley Regional District				
2) Climate Crisis & Environmental Stewardship & Protection: We are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and accelerating our actions to adapt and respond to climate change impacts				
3) Community Partnerships: The social fabric of our communities and the health and wellbeing of citizens depend on solid and sustainable community partnerships. Collaboration and support are ever present in guiding our service delivery.				
4) Indigenous Relations: We are committed to reconciliation and relationship building with Indigenous Peoples and specifically K'ómoks First Nation.				
5) Accessibility, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: We are committed to ensuring all community members have access to services and feel they belong to our regional community				
TOTAL POINTS				

Notes:

Recreation Commission Strategic Goals	Alignment with Goals			
	None 0 pts	Low 1 pts	Medium 3 pts	High 5 pts
1) Community & Individual Wellness: Support physical, mental, social and emotional community and individual wellness throughout the Comox Valley Regional District.				
2) Excellent & Sustainable Recreation Facilities: Build and maintain excellent and sustainable sport and recreation facilities that balance location with financial responsibility and reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change				
3) Innovative & Responsive Sport & Recreation Programs: Deliver a wide variety of innovative and responsive sport and recreation programs and services that meet community needs and promote structured and unstructured activities.				
4) Accessible & Barrier Free Recreation: Ensure that recreation programs, services and facilities are accessible and reduce barriers to participate; are welcoming and culturally appropriate; promote lifelong sport and recreation; and, are inclusive and encourage a sense of belonging.				
5) Create & Support Partnerships: Create and support partnerships with municipalities, School District 71, K'ómoks First Nation and community organizations to deliver sport and recreation programs and services that increase volunteerism and make the best use of public and community facilities and resources.				
TOTAL POINTS				

Notes:

Total Point Summary	Yes	No	Points
Meets Minimum Project Criteria			
CVRD Strategic Drivers			
Recreation Commission Strategic Goals			
TOTAL			

Notes: