

Policy Title:	Applies to:	Reference #
Regina Economic Recovery Grant	All City of Regina businesses	CR20-68
Approved by:	Dates:	Total # of Pages
Executive Director, Financial Strategy and Sustainability	Effective:	10-AUG-2020
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	Next Review:	JAN-2021
Authority:		
Council report CR20-68, approved by City Council on 29-JUL-2020		

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide timely financial support for local business to respond to local economic conditions. The outcome of this policy is to promote long-term local economic stability.

Guiding Principles

- **Timely access:** Providing timely access to grants is key to supporting the business community. The policy framework supports a swift response while ensuring appropriate levels of oversight.
- **Nimbleness:** The grant is designed to be flexible, allowing Administration to review grant performance regularly, and pivot as required within the existing policy framework. Given that business related challenges and needs evolve, maintaining grant nimbleness will be key to its success.
- **Balancing priorities:** There is a need to balance immediate financial needs that local businesses face related to relaunch with longer term priorities related to diversification and local business sustainability. The City must also balance needs versus resources available. This policy endeavors to support this balance while maintaining mechanisms to pivot if and when required.

2.0 Scope

This grant program applies to Businesses located within the City of Regina. The Business must be in good standing with the City of Regina. The Business must – if leasing space – be in good standing with the property owner. The applicant must be the owner of, or designated authority of the Business applying for the financial support, to bind the Applicant. No more than one grant for a Business will be allowed.

3.0 Definitions

- The Regina Economic Recovery Grant is financial support available to Local Businesses which requires a 100% matching commitment from the Local Business with a minimum grant of \$1,000 and a maximum grant of \$5,000 in Phase 1 and a minimum grant of \$5,000 and a maximum grant of \$25,000 in Phase 2. The purpose of this financial support is to help Local Businesses respond to Local Economic Conditions.
- Eligible Costs - means those eligible costs set out in section 4.6 of this policy.
- Core Criteria - means those criteria described in section 4.2 of this policy.
- Application Agreement/Declaration - the application agreement and declaration located with the application materials described by section 8.2 of this policy
- Executive Director - The Executive Director of Financial Strategy and Sustainability.
- Director – The Director of Assessment & Property Revenue Services.
- Intake Period - the period of time when the City will accept applications for a grant. Intake Periods will expire at the earlier of: 11:59 p.m. (Regina time) on the date that the particular Intake Period opens or when the City receives 40 applications for the Program. Applications will be received by the Program Manager on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Local Business - a business operating from a property assessed as non-residential within the city of Regina, at the time of application. The business should have been in operation in February 2020 and may own or lease the space it occupies at the time of application.
- Local Economic Conditions - external factors that have a significant negative effect on Regina's local business economy.
- Phase 1 – August 17 to December 31, 2020.
- Phase 2 - January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.
- Program - The Regina Economic Recovery Program
- Program Manager - Administers the Program, including but not limited to the evaluation and monitoring of the Program, managing the financial support awards under the Program, communication with applicants to the Program, coordinating administrative review of all applications, working with members of the Adjudication Committee, auditing applications for compliance with the Program and Program requirements, and other duties as required.
- Adjudication Committee - A group made up of City staff as well as representation from Economic Development Regina (EDR) that will evaluate eligible applications to determine grant recipients, as well as assisting with the evaluation of Program

success and discussing and implementing changes to the Program and these Procedures.

- The City - means the City of Regina.

4.0 Guidelines

4.1 Area of Application and Effective Date

- This policy, subject to change at the City's sole and unfettered discretion, applies to the Program and all Local Businesses in the city of Regina who apply to the Program.
- The Program will end upon the earlier of: the budget for the Program being fully depleted or December 31, 2021 (the "**Program End Date**").

4.2 Program Core Criteria

The criteria below (the "**Core Criteria**") are used by the Adjudication Committee to evaluate applications to the Program to identify the level of alignment with the outcomes for the Program:

- A. **Jobs:**
Supporting return-to-work potential and the creation of new positions.
- B. **Financial Sustainability:**
Creating short-term financial impacts that help keep businesses open.
- C. **COVID-19 Impact:**
Activities that counter the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on businesses during the relaunch and recover stages.
- D. **Partner Leverage:**
Opportunity to leverage funds from partner organizations to amplify impacts.
- E. **Economic Diversification:**
Impact or contribution to diverse industries.
- F. **Business Transformation:**
Support businesses as they identify and implement changes to help them succeed.
- G. **Tangible Placemaking Benefits:**
Contribution to a vibrant and accessible neighbourhood
- H. **Environment Alignment:**
Supporting the transition to a low carbon future and increasing resilience to a changing climate.
- I. **Community Impact:**
Demonstrates benefits to members of communities that are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

4.3 Eligibility Requirements

- 4.3.1 Only Local Businesses are eligible.
- 4.3.2 The Business must be in good standing with the City of Regina.
- 4.3.3 The Business must – if leasing space – be in good standing with the property owner.

- 4.3.4 The applicant must be the owner of, or designated authority, of the Business applying for the financial support to bind the Applicant.
- 4.3.5 No more than one grant for a Business will be allowed.
- 4.3.6 The application must contain a description of how the financial support will be used and how these plans will meet or demonstrate effects of at least one of the Core Criteria.
- 4.3.7 As part of the application, the Business must indicate which grant amount they are requesting based on their ability to match the City's financial support with their own financial contributions. The City will define the grant amounts that applicants may choose from.
- 4.3.8 The City's decision to approve an application involves reviewing applications and allocating financial support according to the Policy and based on alignment with the Core Criteria, eligibility of the business, demonstrated financial need or hardship, eligibility of proposed use of financial support provided, and the availability of financial support under the Program.
- 4.3.9 Maximum grant amounts are not guaranteed, and lesser amounts may be allocated at the sole and unfettered discretion of the City.
- 4.3.10 Approval of an application does not constitute an agreement by the City that any financial support will be disbursed.
- 4.3.11 All decisions made by the City regarding whether to approve or reject an application are final and cannot be appealed.

4.4 Application Requirements

Applications must include the following components:

- 4.4.1 A completed application form, including but not limited to:
 - 4.4.1.1 A description of how the applicant plans to use the financial support;
 - 4.4.1.2 A description of how this use aligns to one or more of the Core Criteria;
- 4.4.2 For financial support requests over \$5,000, the applicant must submit at least two different quotes or documentation for cost of services and/or products relating to a Program Eligible Cost with their application to demonstrate that the applicable Local Business will be spending at least 50% more than the requested amount.
- 4.4.3 A signed Application Agreement/Declaration, in the City's form, as amended from time to time in the City's sole and unfettered discretion.

4.5 Application Process

- 4.5.1 Prior to submitting an application, the applicant will review all application requirements, and may reach out to the Program Manager with any questions as required.
- 4.5.2 Completed applications are to be submitted to the Program Manager.
- 4.5.3 In order to ensure consistent review and evaluation, the application shall be prepared in accordance with the format established by the City.
- 4.5.4 Incomplete applications will neither be reviewed nor kept on file.

- 4.5.5 Applications may only be submitted to the City during an Intake Period. Applications submitted outside an Intake Period will neither be considered nor kept on file.
- 4.5.6 Applications will be received and reviewed in each Intake Period by the Program Manager and the Adjudication Committee and the applicable financial support will be awarded until the Program End Date.
- 4.5.7 Each application will be reviewed by the Program Manager, to ensure application completeness and that all required documentation are included.
- 4.5.8 Each eligible and complete application, as designated by the Program Manager, will be evaluated and ranked by the Adjudication Committee in alignment with the program core criteria.
- 4.5.9 Applications that have met the application requirements but have not been approved by the Adjudication Committee during an Intake Period may be rolled over for consideration in the subsequent Intake Periods at the sole and unfettered discretion of the Adjudication Committee and if the applicant indicates their agreement on the application.
- 4.5.10 All applicants will be notified of the status of their application following the closing date of each Intake Period.
- 4.5.11 All applicants are responsible to pay any and all costs associated with the preparation and submission of their applications.
- 4.5.12 Submitting an application does not commit the City to participate in subsequent negotiations or to award financial support through the program.
- 4.5.13 The City reserves the right, in its sole and unfettered discretion, to accept, reject or modify any application and render decisions in regard to complete applications as approved, approved with conditions or refused.
- 4.5.14 For grants of over \$5,000, applicants are required to enter into an Agreement with the City of Regina which specifies work to be completed, the costs of the project, the amount of the grant, the reporting obligations of the applicant, and conditions under which the City will provide grant funding.

4.6 Eligible Costs

- 4.6.1 Subject to the ineligible costs set out below, eligible costs for the Program include:
 - 4.6.1.1 Costs associated with purchasing goods or services related to the proposed use of the financial support that were (or will be) incurred on behalf of the Business, and as specified by the applicant in an approved application;
- 4.6.2 Ineligible costs include:
 - 4.6.2.1 Costs relating to rent, mortgages, property taxes, utilities or any other similar form of costs of the Business;
 - 4.6.2.2 Costs relating to wages or payroll for employees of the Business;
 - 4.6.2.3 Costs relating to any permit or license fees of the Business;

- 4.6.2.4 Costs relating to debt servicing;
- 4.6.2.5 Costs relating to any fees for memberships, professional associations, or any other similar form of fees; and
- 4.6.2.6 Retroactive costs associated with the proposed use of financial support that were incurred prior to May 19, 2020 or the Reopening of Saskatchewan phase 2.

4.7 Reporting Requirements

- 4.7.1 The City must provide data and information about the Program, including but not limited to the use of financial support under the Program by Businesses, to the Regina City Council, its committees, and the public at large.
- 4.7.2 Applicants must provide data and information about the Program and results from the use of the financial support to their Business. Therefore, the City will require the following information within 90 days of the financial support being awarded to the applicant:
 - 4.7.2.1 Written proof or documentation (including but not limited to receipts) regarding the use of the financial support and the applicant's matching contribution;
 - 4.7.2.2 Information regarding the applicant's experience with the Program process and the status of their business following the receipt of the financial support; and
 - 4.7.2.3 Any other information related to the Regina Economic Recovery Grant, how the funding was applied, and how the funding supported the Business as identified by the City.
- 4.7.3 The City may contact all applicants to gather information about their experience with and the effectiveness of the Program, suggestions for improvement, and overall opinions of the success of the Program.

4.8 Adjudication Committee Review

- 4.8.1 Complete and eligible applications for the Program are reviewed by the Adjudication Committee against the Core Criteria to determine a ranked list of all applications received during an Intake Period.
- 4.8.2 The considerations to determine application ranking will be:
 - 4.8.2.1 The degree to which the application meets each Core Criteria. In each Intake Period, applications that demonstrate alignment with a higher number of Core Criteria will be given priority for funding over those that meet less of these criteria or to a lesser degree. This alignment with the Core Criteria will be based upon the information provided in the applications and the decision of the Adjudication Committee, which shall be determined in the Adjudication Committee's sole and unfettered discretion;
 - 4.8.2.2 The demonstrated financial hardship of the applicant due to COVID-19;

- 4.8.2.3 The amount of funds that may be available to each application based on the requirements for the Program.
- 4.8.3 The City's decision to approve an application involves three steps:
 - 4.8.3.1 Confirming the applicant's eligibility and that all of the application requirements have been met;
 - 4.8.3.2 Reviewing the applications and allocating funding based on the applicant's demonstrated alignment with the Core Criteria, financial hardship due to COVID-19, and funding amounts; and
 - 4.8.3.3 The availability of financial support for the Program in each Intake Period.

4.9 General Conditions

- 4.9.1 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, no individual or entity will be eligible to receive any funding under the Program if that individual or entity is in default of any taxes, utilities, fees or fines owing to the City, is in default of any obligation under any other municipal program or is in active or pending litigation with the City.
- 4.9.2 An applicant for the Program is solely responsible for any and all payments to any of its contractors. The City will not be responsible to pay contractors directly.

5.0 Special Considerations - Program and Funding Conditions of Dispersal

- 5.1 As the Program offers matching grants, it is expected that all applicants match the amount of financial support required to satisfy the applicable Program.
- 5.2 An applicant will be expected to collect and make available to the City, within 90 days of the applicant receiving funds all supporting documentation, including but not limited to receipts, that relate to the use of the funding awarded by the City under the Program and the matching contributions spent by the applicant in respect of same.
- 5.3 In the event that the applicant has not matched the financial support awarded to them by the City within 90 days of the applicant receiving the awarded financial support by the Program, the Applicant is required to repay the financial support to the City, failing which the City is entitled to seek any and all remedies that may be available to the City at law, or in equity, or otherwise, all of which are intended to be cumulative and not alternative.
- 5.4 If there are any misrepresentations in an application or there is a failure to comply with the requirements of the Program, the applicant, the Business and/or any other entity associated may be ineligible to receive future funding from the City.
- 5.5 By participating in any aspect of the Program, including but not limited to participating in the Program, the applicant specifically agrees that they will have absolutely no claim against the City or any of its employees, advisors, or representatives for anything resulting from the exercise of any or all of the rights set out in these Policy and Procedures. Without limiting the generality of the

foregoing, the applicant also agrees that in no event will the City, or any of its employees, agents, advisors, or representatives be liable, under any circumstances, for any claim, or to reimburse or compensate the applicant in any manner whatsoever, including, without limitation, for the costs of preparing and/or submitting any application, awarding financial support, failing to award financial support, refusing an application, loss of anticipated profits, loss of opportunity, or any other matter.

- 5.6 The Executive Director or designate may make exceptions to these Procedures in their sole and unfettered discretion.
- 5.7 The Program Manager has the sole authority, in their sole and unfettered discretion, to determine eligibility of proposed work and confirmation of completed work. Certain work may be required as a condition of funding.
- 5.8 The City reserves the right to close applications to or cancel the Program at any time at the sole and unfettered discretion of the Executive Director.

6.0 Program Performance and Procedures Review

- 6.1 The Program will be regularly monitored to ensure that it is meeting the guidelines set out in the Policy and the intended outcomes of the Program as determined by the Executive Director in their sole and unfettered discretion.
- 6.2 The Program Manager will review the key metrics for the Program as determined by the Executive Director, or their designate, in their sole and unfettered discretion.
- 6.3 Reports on the Program will be shared with the Executive Director or their designate on a regular schedule, as determined by the Executive Director in their sole and unfettered discretion.
- 6.4 The review of the Program will involve a review of the number of applications received, the application review process for the Program, the disbursement of funds, the collection of information from the applicants, and key metrics as determined by the Executive Director, or their designate, in their sole and unfettered discretion.

7.0 Roles & Responsibilities

- 7.1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
 - 7.1.1 Oversees the Program, including but not limited to the evaluation of the Program and the financial support awards;
 - 7.1.2 May vary the Program or these Procedures from time to time, in their sole and unfettered discretion;
 - 7.1.3 Approves and makes changes to detailed application requirements as necessary; and
 - 7.1.4 Delegates authority as required in regard to implementation of the Program.
- 7.2 DIRECTOR

7.2.1 The Director will receive all approved applications from the Program Manager, and conduct a quality assurance test on randomly selected applications.

7.3 PROGRAM MANAGER:

7.3.1 Monitors the Program to ensure that it is meeting the intent of the Policy and stated Program outcomes;

7.3.2 Prepares recommendations and any proposed changes to the Program or Procedures for the Director.

7.3.3 Reviews applications for the Program;

7.3.4 Communicates with applicants as required;

7.3.5 Audits applications for compliance with the Program and the Program requirements; and

7.3.6 Performs other duties as required.

7.4 ADJUDICATION COMMITTEE

7.4.1 Working under the direction and guidance of the Program Manager, evaluates and scores complete and eligible applications from the Program according to the Core Criteria, financial hardship due to COVID-19 and funding amount;

7.4.2 Performs other duties as required.

8.0 Related Forms

8.1 Online Application

8.1.1 The form will be made accessible on Regina.ca during the Intake period until the designated number of applications have been received. At that time, the link to the application form is disabled until the next Intake period.

8.2 Declaration form

8.2.1 Upon successful approval of a grant, recipients must sign an Application Agreement/ declaration before a grant will be issued.

8.3 Cost Summary form

8.3.1 Within 90 days of receiving a grant, recipients must submit a completed cost summary form, detailing invoices for eligible expenses covered by the grant.

9.0 Reference Material

<https://www.regina.ca/about-regina/grants-scholarships>

10.0 Revision History

Date	Description of Change	(Re)-Approval Required (y/n)
31-Jul-2020	Initial Release.	Yes