

2023 Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environment Category

ISSUE

The Environmental Grant assists community groups with environmental initiatives, as directed by Council Policy C03-018, Assistance to Community Groups. This annual administrative report requests approval of the recommendations for the 2023 Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environmental Category (Environmental Grant) and provides project summaries from 2022.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services approve the funding allocations for the 2023 Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environment Category.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting held on May 9th, 2022, the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services, received the [2022 Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grants – Environmental Component](#) report outlining the results of the 2021 funded projects and the funding recommendations for the 2022 competition.

Funding for the Environmental Grant is directed by Council Policy C03-018. Increases to the Environmental Grant are approved by City Council during the business plan and budget process. In 2023, the approved and available funding is \$59,000.

Previous funding available and amount asked for through applications received for the Environmental Grant are summarized in the table below:

Year	Amount Available	Amount Requested	Total Project Budget
2023	\$59,000	\$132,738	\$274,284
2022	\$59,000	\$79,065	\$252,284
2021	\$54,000	\$79,749	\$200,083
2020	\$44,000	\$94,402	\$538,770

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

Thirteen projects were awarded funding in 2022, resulting in a variety of positive environmental outcomes addressing aspects of climate change mitigation, solid waste diversion, green infrastructure enhancement, and access to recreation and cultural activities. Five of these projects required an extension for various reasons. Appendix-1 summarizes the projects funded in 2022 and identifies those that are still in-progress.

The 2023 Environmental Grant applications were reviewed by a three-person committee composed of representatives from the Sustainability Department, the Transportation

Department, and the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee. Submissions were evaluated using criteria guided by City of Saskatoon (City) Policy C03-018.

Nineteen applications were received in 2023, with a combined request for funding of \$132,738. The total amount available through the 2023 Environmental Grant Program is \$59,000. Fifteen applicants are recommended to receive funding. Four applications are not recommended to receive funding due to being repeat applicants, operational rather than project applications, did not meet eligibility, or scored lower on environmental grant criteria. Appendix 2 summarizes the funding allocation for 2023.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocation for Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environment Category will utilize \$59,000 available from the following 2023 operating and capital budgets:

- Cost Centre – 100067 – Community Initiative Program - \$10,000;
- Cost Centre 100413 – Green Network Program - \$10,000;
- Cost Centre 100302 – Environmental Awareness - \$4,000;
- Capital Project No. P.02197 – Water Conservation Initiative - \$15,000;
- Capital Project No. P.01964 – Waste Reduction Initiatives - \$10,000; and
- Capital Project No. P.02468 – Active Transportation Plan Implementation. - \$10,000.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The projects recommended for allocation of the cash grant collectively meet the objectives of the program which are:

- Protection of the environment;
- Conservation of natural resources;
- Environmental communications, research, and education;
- Waste diversion; and
- Green network protection and enhancement.

The projects chosen specifically support the categories prioritized for funding in 2023, including initiatives that increase awareness and protection of our green network, reduce the amount of waste going to landfills, encourage active transportation, provide stewardship and education, focus on strategy to conserve water resources, and provide learning opportunities that support the City's environmental goals. The overall impacts on greenhouse gas emissions, water conservation, and waste diversion resulting from these projects have not been quantified at this time.

There are no policy, privacy or CPTED implications or considerations.

NEXT STEPS

The results achieved through the 2023 Environmental Grant will be reported with the recommendations of award for the 2024 Environmental Grant, in the second quarter of 2024.

2023 Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environment Category

A review of Assistance to Community Groups – Cash Grant – Environment Category City is planned to take place in 2023 and 2024, to assess the role of grants in implementing the Environmental Leadership section in the Strategic Plan, including:

- The Low Emissions Community Plan;
- Pathways for an Interconnected Green Network;
- The Water Conservation Strategy;
- Alternative Currents: An Implementation Plan for Saskatoon’s Renewable and Lower-Emission Energy Transition; and
- The Solid Waste Reduction and Diversion Plan.

This review will include a jurisdictional scan, engagement with past applicants, and analysis of opportunities to expand the grant program to other sectors.

The review will align with the work underway to develop a Council Policy on User Fees and Subsidies, as approved by City Council at their regular business meeting on November 21, 2022, in the report [Consideration and Options for Supporting Low-Income Households](#). In this planned policy development, grants will be looked at as a form of subsidy that the City offers.

APPENDICES

1. Summary of 2022 Funded Projects
2. Summary of 2023 Grant Applications

Report Approval

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