

**RESORT MUNICIPALITY OF WHISTLER**

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STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

PRESENTED: January 23, 2024
FROM: Legislative Services
SUBJECT: COUNCIL POLICY A-7: COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM UPDATES REPORT

REPORT: 24-010
FILE: 0340-20

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

That the recommendation of the General Manager of Corporate and Community Services be endorsed.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council adopt *Council Policy A-7: Community Enrichment Program*, as amended and attached as Appendix A to Administrative Report No. 24-010; and

That Council direct staff to proceed to investigate amending the scholarship program to include scholarships for indigenous students from the Lil'wat Nation, the Squamish Nation and Whistler Waldorf high school graduates for the 2025 graduating class.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present amendments to *Council Policy A-7: Community Enrichment Program* (the CEP Policy) for Council review and approval, and to explore an amendment to the scholarship program.

☐ Information Report

☒ Administrative Report (Decision or Direction)

DISCUSSION

Background

The Community Enrichment Program (CEP) provides funding on an annual basis to not-for-profit organizations or societies with connections to the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) that are considered by Council to be contributing to the general interest and advantage of the Whistler community. The CEP Policy also includes scholarships for local students to pursue post-secondary education.

The CEP Policy was adopted on December 6, 2004 and has been amended four times since (2007, 2016, 2018 and 2021).

In May 2021, the CEP Policy was updated to increase the number of scholarships for Whistler Secondary students from two \$1,000 scholarships to six \$1,000 scholarships.

During the 2023 CEP intake process, staff again reviewed the CEP Policy and are now suggesting additional amendments to improve the clarity and efficiency of the CEP Program and to further refine the scholarship opportunities.

Analysis

CEP Policy Updates

Staff are recommending several updates to the CEP Policy for community organizations as follows:

- 1) Include an opportunity on the application form for organizations to describe any activities the organization is engaged in to promote and further truth and reconciliation with the Lílwat Nation and the Squamish Nation (section 1.6).
- 2) Update the application form to include the current Council Priorities and provide an opportunity for the organizations to provide information about how their organization supports the Council Priorities (section 1.7).
- 3) Standardize the funding for sporting organizations based on the number of Whistler based youth participants who are actively participating in their program (section 1.9).
- 4) Amend the application and reporting periods to avoid non-business days (various).
- 5) Clarify that the financial statement requirement can be audited or unaudited (section 2.9).
- 6) Include a requirement for applicants to report any other RMOW funding, including Value in Kind provision of municipal buildings and spaces for reduced or no cost (section 2.11).
- 7) Include a new requirement that applicants who have entered into a fee for service agreement with the RMOW are not eligible for CEP grant funding in the same year (section 1.5).
- 8) Clarify that receipts for CEP grant funding will no longer be included in the Council report and will be used for verification purposes by staff (section 3.3.3).

Scholarships

Staff reviewed the current scholarship criteria and have identified some potential changes to this program as well. Staff are recommending the following to the Scholarship section of the CEP Policy:

- 1) Provide some flexibility for Council to award additional scholarships and/or increase the amount of the scholarships if funds are available in the CEP Program each year (section 4.1).
- 2) Allow letters of recommendation to demonstrate community or volunteer participation to be included with the application (section 4.2.3).
- 3) Add a requirement that the scholarship must be used within two years of being awarded. If not used, funds will be returned to the RMOW to be included with the next scholarship intake period (section 4.5).

In addition, staff would like to explore the options available to expand the scholarship program to graduating students from the Lílwat Nation and Squamish Nation as well as the Whistler Waldorf School. Staff would consult with the parties to determine the most appropriate way to structure this work before presenting these outcomes to Council for future consideration. Therefore, staff is seeking a direction to proceed with this work.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Relevant Council Authority/Previous Decisions

Pursuant to section 8(2) of the *Community Charter*, Council may provide any service that the council considers necessary or desirable and may do this directly or through another organization. Council have previously decided that it is desirable to provide CEP funding to not-for-profit organizations or societies that provide services to the Whistler community in the areas of the Environment, Social Services, Community Service, Recreation and Sport, or Arts and Culture.

Council is guided by the CEP Policy A-7, which outlines the requirements of organizations wishing to apply for financial assistance, and when it may be provided to not-for-profit organizations or societies contributing to the general interest and advantage of the municipality of Whistler.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan outlines the high-level direction of the RMOW to help shape community progress during this term of Council. The Strategic Plan contains four priority areas with various associated initiatives that support them. This section identifies how this report links to the Strategic Plan.

Strategic Priorities

☐ Housing

Expedite the delivery of and longer-term planning for employee housing

☐ Climate Action

Mobilize municipal resources toward the implementation of the Big Moves Climate Action Plan

☒ Community Engagement

Strive to connect locals to each other and to the RMOW

☐ Smart Tourism

Preserve and protect Whistler's unique culture, natural assets and infrastructure

☒ Not Applicable

Aligns with core municipal work that falls outside the strategic priorities but improves, maintains, updates and/or protects existing and essential community infrastructure or programs

Community Vision and Official Community Plan

The Official Community Plan (OCP) is the RMOW's most important guiding document that sets the community vision and long-term community direction. This section identifies how this report applies to the OCP.

The RMOW values its relationships with the community members who play an important role in the achievement of the OCP's Vision. Whistler community's connections are strong and interactions with visitors are valued as an extension of the community. The RMOW has established meaningful partnerships at all levels, including with community stakeholders based on open dialogue, honesty, respect and collaboration, resulting in the achievement of mutual goals and shared benefits.

As per Chapter 9 of the OCP, the RMOW has established a solid foundation of education and learning opportunities. The RMOW is supportive of expanding education and learning initiatives and has the objective to collaborate with school administrations and the Ministry of Education to ensure that Whistler students can advance to post-secondary education.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

There are no budget considerations in respect to the proposed amendments to the CEP Council Policy A-7. Funding for the CEP Program has been included in the “Five-Year Financial Plan 2024 – 2028 Bylaw No. 2424, 2024” to be adopted on January 23, 2024.

The CEP Program has a planned 2024 budget of \$180,504.

LÍŁWAT NATION & SQUAMISH NATION CONSIDERATIONS

The RMOW is committed to working with the Lílwat People, known in their language as *L'il'wat7úl* and the Squamish People, known in their language as the *Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumíxw* to: create an enduring relationship; establish collaborative processes for Crown land planning; achieve mutual objectives; and enable participation in Whistler's resort economy.

Staff are requesting that the CEP application be updated to include a section for CEP applicants to add any information that demonstrates how that organization is approaching truth and reconciliation with the Lílwat Nation and the Squamish Nation.

Further, staff is seeking a direction to proceed to consult with the Lílwat Nation and the Squamish Nation on scholarship opportunities for graduating students.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Level of community engagement commitment for this project:

☒ Inform ☐ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Staff have engaged with the Whistler Secondary School Scholarship Committee to ensure that they can provide support for the administration of the scholarship program.

REFERENCES

Appendix A – *Council Policy A-7: Community Enrichment Program* with proposed amendments

SUMMARY

Staff requests that *Council adopt Council Policy A-7: Community Enrichment Program* as amended and attached as Appendix A to Administrative Report No. 24-010.

SIGN-OFFS

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Reviewed by:

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