2026 City of Barrie Recreation & Sport Community Grant Guidelines

Grant Application Window:
Friday, May 22 - Friday, June 12, 2026

INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, and PRINCIPLES

The Community Grant program provides annual grants to stakeholder organizations that support City Council's strategic priorities of *Thriving Community* and *Infrastructure Investments* and are aligned with the strategic objectives of the Recreation & Culture Services department at the City of Barrie.

Equity Statement

The City of Barrie is committed to equity and inclusion. We welcome and encourage applications from all qualified organizations. We continuously seek to improve access to our programs and ensure grant applications are received from diverse and under-represented Barrie communities. We recognize the diversity of the people of Barrie and encourage communities to provide feedback on how this grant program can better meet the needs of Barrie residents.

Purpose

To provide funding support for programming, events, workshops, activities, and facilities which focus on building participation and engagement in recreation and sport to enhance the broader health and well-being of the community.

The total amount of funding dispersed through the Community Grant will vary from year to year depending on the annual budget allocation from Barrie City Council.

Guiding Principles in Administering Funds

The awarding of funding to successful applicants through the Community Grant is guided by four key principles:

1. Health and Well-being of Residents

The betterment of the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the community will be used as a guiding principle in evaluating applications. As such, applicants will be encouraged to show how their proposal supports the health and wellbeing of residents as measured by the application's positive impact on the social determinants of health established by Public Health Canada. These determinants include personal health practices and coping skills, education, healthy child development, social environments, gender, and culture.

2. Inclusiveness and Diversity

This principle aims to ensure that all populations within the City of Barrie are provided improved access to recreational and sport activities. Successful applications must have, as one of their goals, improved access to these opportunities and services that support betterment of their health and general well-being. Consideration will be given to the breaking down of accessibility barriers for underserved and marginalized populations within the City.

3. Innovative and Collaborative Thinking

This principle's goal is to encourage applicants to collaborate in new and innovative ways with other organizations in the development and delivery of recreational and sport opportunities. Applicants will be encouraged to deliver existing, emerging, and new opportunities for recreation and sport using innovative methodologies and outside-the-box thinking.

4. Operating at Arm's Length

The grant process will operate at arm's length from all levels of government in awarding funds. It has full authority to make funding decisions within the priorities reflected in City Council's strategic objectives of *Thriving Community* and *Infrastructure Investments*. Funding decisions are directed to supporting and building capacity within recreation and sport as stated in the grant's purpose. This will ensure that decisions made are based on maximizing the benefit to the broader health and well-being of the community which will ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability.

FUNDING CATEGORIES

Community Grant funding provides support for programming, events, workshops, activities, and facilities. Funding granted in any year should not be considered a guarantee of funding in the next or any subsequent year. This grant is not intended to be a source of ongoing funding. Multi-year funding would only be awarded in exceptional cases.

Grant applicants will have a choice of funding streams: Programming and Events or Capital Improvements.

Programming and Events

Provides funding to support new or innovative recreational and sport programming opportunities, special one-time events, public workshops, or activities that address the general purpose of the Community Grant initiative.

Eligibility:

- Must be an incorporated not-for-profit organization or community association operating as a not-for-profit
- Registered charitable organizations
- Applicant shall demonstrate that it does not, in the absence of the grant request, have the financial resources necessary to undertake the project for which the grant is requesting
- The City of Barrie expects other financial or in-kind support through contributions from other levels of government, additional community support, and/or self-generated financial support. The City of Barrie is never to be the sole source of revenue for any applicant.
- For-profit enterprises may apply in collaboration with an eligible not-for-profit provided there is no direct financial benefit to the for-profit enterprise
- The applicant's planned programming, event, or activity must occur within the City of Barrie
- Grant funding awarded must be spent in the calendar year in which awarded
- Must have a demonstrated record of offering recreational and sport programs and services that are open to the public

Ineligible Organizations:

- For-profit organizations and ventures applying on their own behalf
- Individuals acting on their own behalf
- Provincial or Federal sport funding bodies or organizations
- Business Improvement Associations
- Political parties
- Hospitals
- Foundations
- Religious organizations
- Organizations whose activities are deemed to come under the jurisdiction of other levels, divisions, departments or agencies of the City of Barrie or other governments, i.e., school boards, post-secondary institutions, social service organizations

- Applicants who have submitted grant applications under any other City of Barrie grant fund in this calendar year

Ineligible Expenses:

- Programs or events that promote the Corporation of the City of Barrie
- Activities that take place outside of the City of Barrie except on City-owned properties such as the Barrie Community Sports Complex
- Capital-related expenses including renovations and large asset purchases
- Purchasing of buildings/real estate
- Travel-related expenses
- Funding being used to reduce/eliminate an operating deficit or to pay off liabilities
- Expenses for consulting fees
- Related to activities that occurred prior to grant approval
- Alcohol and cannabis intended for resale or distribution
- Religious activities
- HST related to eligible expenses

Capital Improvements

Provides funding to support capital projects that build capacity in recreation and sport initiatives which engage more residents and/or provide better access to recreation and sport. This funding is designed to contribute to major asset purchases or improvements such as building renovations and upgrades, infrastructure repairs and improvements, major equipment purchases including installation, and major purchases or upgrades to technology systems.

Eligibility:

- Must be an incorporated not-for-profit organization or community association operating as a not-for-profit
- Registered charitable organizations
- Applicant shall demonstrate that it does not, in the absence of the grant request, have the financial resources necessary to undertake the operational or capital project for which the grant is requesting.
- The City of Barrie expects other financial or in-kind support through contributions from other levels of government, additional community support, and/or self-generated financial support. The City of Barrie is never to be the sole source of revenue for any applicant.
- For-profit enterprises may apply in collaboration with an eligible not-for-profit provided there is no direct financial benefit to the for-profit enterprise
- The applicant's planned programming, event, or activity must occur within the City of Barrie
- Grant funding awarded must be spent within 12 months of being awarded
- Requests for funding in subsequent years for the same project will only be granted in exceptional cases
- Must have a demonstrated record of offering recreational and sport programs and services that are open to the public

Ineligible Organizations:

- For-profit organizations and ventures applying on their own behalf
- Individuals acting on their own behalf
- Provincial or Federal sport funding bodies or organizations
- Business Improvement Associations
- Political parties
- Hospitals
- Foundations
- Religious organizations

- Organizations whose activities are deemed to come under the jurisdiction of other levels, divisions, departments or agencies of the City of Barrie or other governments, i.e., school boards, post-secondary institutions, social service organizations
- Applicants who have submitted grant applications under any other City of Barrie grant fund in this calendar year

Ineligible Expenses:

- Incurred prior to the approval of grant funding by the adjudication panel
- Incurred after the project completion date as stated in the grant funding agreement
- Related to developing a business case or proposal for funding including consulting fees, engineering fees, and overhead costs normally associated with regular activities
- Required training expenses related to the operation of a capital equipment purchase
- Minor repairs and maintenance unless they increase the value or extend the useful life of the asset
- Permit fees associated with the capital project
- HST related to eligible expenses

Other Eligibility Notes for Both Funding Streams:

- The acceptance of an organization's application is not a guarantee of funding.
- Organizations that have received funding in the past are not guaranteed funding in the future. This grant is not a source of ongoing funding.
- Your application may be denied if your organization has any outstanding reporting requirements as set by the deadlines in any prior year's grant agreement.
- Your application may be denied if there are any outstanding payments due to the City of Barrie of any kind.
- Funding applications must not be signed by City of Barrie employees or City Councillors
- Organizations that receive a grant under the Programming and Events funding stream may not apply for a grant under the Capital Improvement funding stream and vice versa

EVALUATION CRITERIA and WEIGHTING

The following criteria recognize that all applications are examined in the context of the following criteria and weighting:

- 40% - Community Participation and Overall Impact
- 25% - Community Collaboration and Engagement
- 20% - Alignment with the City's Strategic Priorities
- 15% - Health and Well-Being of Residents

Community Participation and Overall Impact could be demonstrated by:

- Recreational and sport programming, special events, activities, and workshops that encourage public participation
- Clear objectives that reflect the applicant's mandate and/or mission.
- A clear plan to evaluate the success of the project.
- Recreational and sport programming and activities that promote equity and inclusion by engaging with and providing access to recreational and sport opportunities to under-represented communities
- Provides financial/non-financial incentives specifically to marginalized populations within Barrie to increase engagement in recreation and sport
- Application is to bring provincial, national and/or international events or expertise to Barrie.

- Provides training/learning opportunities that will create a lasting impact within the recreational and sport industry in Barrie
- Has clearly stated financial impact related to direct and/or indirect spending in Barrie
- Effective plan including all necessary resources to allow the project to take place such as a balanced and realistic budget, volunteers, staff, time management, etc.
- Appropriate and effective marketing and promotion of the project and identifies a target audience

Community Collaboration and Engagement could be demonstrated by:

- Activities that build partnerships/relationships within the broader recreational and sport community and/or with the Barrie business community by fostering a sense of place/community.
- Provides meaningful opportunities for volunteering.
- Activities and workshops that provide learning/educational opportunities for participants
- Proposal includes resources/tools to measure the effects of public engagement
- Proposal involves a new methodology or innovation to existing programs that has a long-term engagement strategy

Alignment with City Strategic Priorities could be demonstrated by:

- Growing Our Economy
  - Does the application support sport tourism industry growth?
  - How much of the funding will be spent directly in Barrie?
  - Does the application build strong partnerships with the local business community?
  - Does the project demonstrate good use of public funds?

- Fostering a Safe and Healthy City
  - Will this program improve access to marginalized or underserved populations?
  - Does it promote recreation opportunities for all ages and abilities?
  - Does it promote gender and racial equality?
  - Does it contribute to the mental and/or physical health and wellbeing of residents?

Health and Wellbeing of Residents could be demonstrated by:

- Impacts the development of or strengthening of broad social relationships within an area of the City or a segment of the population
- Development and/or enhancement of personal life skills that promote healthy lifestyle choices
- Improved access for youth and children to physical recreation, nutrition, and social connectivity
- Improve safe access to recreational and sport facilities and amenities

APPLICATION PROCESS

All applicants are strongly encouraged to contact staff prior to applying to discuss their program details.

Application Forms

All application forms will be available on barrie.ca, on May 15, 2026. Please use the checklist provided at the start of your application form. This will ensure you have submitted a complete application.

There are two mandatory forms: the application and the financial form.

Formulas have been entered into these documents for subtotals, totals, and carry-overs from one year to the next. The formulas along with the line items cannot be changed. Altered forms will not be accepted.

When to Apply

For the 2026 application window, applications will be accepted starting Friday, May 22, 2026. The grant application deadline will be Friday June 12, 2026. Assessment and awarding of grants will occur in June.

What to Submit

Grant Application Form

The application form can be downloaded from the City's website within our Recreation & Sport Community Grant pages. Please ensure all areas are filled out with as much detail as possible as the quality of the information will be evaluated as part of your application.

Important: Please check to ensure that your application is complete, signed, accurate, legible and submitted with the correct supplementary forms. We will not automatically notify you when we have received your application package, nor will we notify you if your package is incomplete.

Financial Form

The financial form can be downloaded from the City's website within our Recreation & Sport Community Grant pages. It contains detailed lines to show how grant funding is to be spent in support of the application's stated objective. Please be as detailed as possible as the quality of information submitted will be evaluated as part of your application.

Financial Reporting Requirements

- For requests over $50,000, audited financial statements are required for the applicant's previous two fiscal years.
- For requests between $20,000 and $50,000, financial statements are required for the applicant's previous two fiscal years consisting of, at a minimum, a review engagement report.
- For requests between $10,000 and $20,000, financial statements are required for the applicant's last fiscal year consisting of, at a minimum, a review engagement report.
- For requests under $10,000, unaudited financial statements for the applicant's last fiscal year must be provided.
- All financial statements must be submitted with your application.

How to Submit Your Application

Applications and required forms and documents must be submitted via the online submission link at www.barrie.ca/CommunityGrant. It is recommended that you complete all of your forms in advance of the submission process as applicants can not save their progress and return at a later date. It is the applicant's responsibility to send their application in on time and fully completed. We will accept applications starting Friday, May 22. Applications must be submitted **no later than 4:30 pm on Friday, June 12, 2026. Incomplete or late applications will not be reviewed.**

Support Materials

It is **NOT** mandatory to submit support materials, however, they can enhance your application and provide insight to the adjudication panel. Support materials can include manuscripts, slides, audio and video, brochures, or posters.

Please attach support materials no larger than 10 MB total to the submission. You may also include a link to support materials in the submission form.

Assistance with Forms & Application

The City of Barrie's Recreation & Culture Services staff can support you if you are unclear with any part of your application. Please do not hesitate to call Chris Gillard, Manager of Recreation & Culture Business Services, at 705-794-6635.

Application Information Use

In addition to providing important information for the assessment of the funding application, both the financial and supplementary information contained within the application provide the City with valuable information enabling them to effectively plan for the future of recreation and sport within the City of Barrie to enhance the health and well-being of residents.

All information will be kept confidential for the purpose of awarding grant funding. Successful applicants must agree that their organization's name, grant award amount, and what the grant is for will be made public once the grant awarding process concludes.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Adjudication Panel

The 2026 adjudication panel is comprised of the following individuals:

- The Director, Recreation & Culture Services
- A representative from Economic Development
- A representative from Tourism Barrie
- Two community representatives

The composition of the adjudication panel may change as deemed necessary.

Role of Adjudicators

Prior to the meeting to assess the applications, adjudicators are required to read all applications and to make notes about each application and grade them accordingly. At the assessment meeting, in a group decision-making environment, the adjudication panel will review the audio/visual support material together and discuss the applications. Using their knowledge and expertise, the adjudicators will identify funding priorities and make recommendations to City staff.

Confidentiality

Adjudicators are required to keep the contents of all applications and discussions during the assessment meeting confidential.

Conflict of Interest

The City of Barrie is particularly concerned with potential conflicts of interest. There are two dimensions of conflict of interest – direct and indirect. There are also two kinds of direct conflict of interest – financial and private.

An adjudicator is in direct conflict of interest with a particular application if they, or a member of the adjudicator's immediate family (spouse or equivalent, son or daughter, parent, sibling or members of the immediate household), have a financial interest in the success or failure of the application.

An adjudicator is in direct conflict of interest with a particular application if they have a private interest in the success or failure of the application. A private interest also includes affiliations or activities that compromise or unduly influence decision making.

Any reason that makes it difficult for an adjudicator to evaluate an application objectively may create an indirect conflict of interest. If a direct conflict of interest becomes apparent, the City will ask the adjudicator to stand down from the panel and assign a replacement.

All adjudicators are asked to sign forms to identify conflicts of interest as a further means of documenting the integrity of the process. At the adjudication panel meeting, the City will answer questions and assist them with clarification of information on the applications being reviewed. Their role is to remain objective and facilitate decisions based on the adjudicators' impartiality.

ADJUDICATION OF APPLICATIONS

Decision Making Process

All applications are examined in the context of the City's strategic goals, the assessment criteria and program priorities. In each stream, applications will be evaluated using a scoring matrix unique to each stream.

Applications will be assessed by the adjudication panel based on the evaluation criteria specific to each funding category. The evaluation criteria and the weighting of the criteria as it relates to the application's final score is detailed in the *Evaluation Criteria & Weighting* section for each funding category. The final application score will have a direct impact on staff recommendations and funding outcomes.

Each member of the adjudication panel will use a 10-point scale to assign a score to the application to indicate how well it meets the evaluation criteria (9-10 = "excellent", 7-8 = "very good", 5-6 = "good", 3-4 = "fair", less than 3 = "poor"). An overall score out of 10 for each application is determined after multiplying each score by the % weighting for each criterion. This score will then be submitted to City staff prior to a meeting of the entire adjudication panel.

At the meeting of the adjudication panel, each application will be reviewed one by one. Each adjudicator will have an opportunity to share their score and their rationale behind it. The City staff member will serve as panel Chair and facilitate the conversation to ensure that the rationale presented is linked to the evaluation criteria. The adjudication panel will then have an opportunity to further evaluate and discuss each application as a whole. Each adjudicator will then have an opportunity to amend their individual application score based on the group conversation. City staff will document evaluation criteria related feedback and comments that emerged from the discussion back to the applicant. The application will then be assigned a final score out of 10 based on the average of each adjudicator's total score.

After all applications have been discussed by the adjudication panel, the applications will be ranked from highest to lowest. Funds will be allocated beginning with the top-ranked application and proceeding down the list until the allocated budget amount for the funding category is exhausted.

Excellent Application (Final score between 7 and 10): Applicant demonstrates strong merit across all evaluation criteria. Staff will be prioritizing these applicants for funding consideration.

Fair Application (Final score between 4 and 6.9): Applicant demonstrates good program merit across all evaluation criteria Staff will recommend funding to these applicants, prioritizing higher scoring applications until program area funds are exhausted.

Failed Application (Final score below 4): Applicant fails to demonstrate program merit and / or alignment with evaluation criteria. Staff will not recommend funding to these applicants.

Expectations for Grant Recipients

Organizations who receive funding are required to complete a post-grant report by August 31, 2027. If applying for grant funding the following year and the current grant funding is not spent at the time of application, an interim report on the status of the existing grant must be submitted at the time of application. City grants must be identified on the organization's financial statements, either in the body or as a note to the statement.

Grant recipients must acknowledge the support of the City by using City of Barrie's logo in all forms of communication related to the recreational and sport activity for which they were funded. When receiving their cheque, grant recipients are required to sign an agreement with the City to use the City logo on their printed materials.

All applicants will be notified of funding results by the Recreation & Culture Services Department once all applications have been reviewed, evaluated, and allocation of grant funds has been completed.