

Item No. 7.1.1

Special Advisory Committee on the 100th Anniversary of the Halifax Explosion Part 5. Designated Grant Program: Synopsis of Eligibility Criteria and Evaluation Criteria

Introduction

This briefing report seeks the Advisory Committee's confirmation of the intended outcomes to be realized through a designated grant program, clarification of core eligibility criteria, evaluation criteria, and the proposed role for the Advisory Committee with respect to award recommendations.

Background

December 10, 2013 – Regional Council, p. 3 – Rationale for a designated grant program: emphasis added:

“It is anticipated that a significant number of local non-profit organizations may seek municipal grants funding in relation to the Halifax Explosion 100th Anniversary and that **some of these interests might not conform to the eligibility criteria or funding priorities of existing programs**. HRM might consider (a) **one-time only, special project funding to avoid compromising existing grant programs and to broaden the scope of participation**, or (b) a **re-allocation of a portion of an existing program's budget capacity**. These discretionary grants could be used as an incentive to expand local historical accounts and/or commission original works. The participation of the local business community might be fostered through HRM's established funding relationship with local business improvement districts. It is anticipated that if any funding was allocated, it would be issued in 2016 to allow for completion and presentation in time for the 2017 anniversary.”

Who are the groups excluded that would be included under a designated program?

Public and private schools including special education; parent-teacher associations; post-secondary institutions; trade unions, professional and business organizations; institutions such as but not limited to medical institutions (eg. nursing home or a hospital); leisure clubs; faith-based and religious organizations that do not own a registered heritage property; international relations; aid organizations; unincorporated community groups; natural and applied sciences; non-commercial self-publishing initiatives, and possibly some 'umbrella organizations' that have a provincial or regional jurisdiction.

What type of project would be included that is not funded under an existing municipal grant program?

School-based projects; educational organizations; markers, monuments and memorials; ceremonial and dedication events specific to the Explosion centennial; conference or symposia; projects that include locations outside the geographic boundary of HRM (eg. marker, travelling exhibit, interpretation).

Designated Program: Key Criteria

- Two intakes: 2015 and 2016 with projects completed on or before December 6, 2017.
- One application per organization per intake.
- No multi-year funding commitments.
- Project-specific (no core recurring operating costs).

- **Open to non-profit organizations ineligible for consideration under an existing municipal grant program.**
- Organization is located within the geographic boundary of HRM.
- Launch in 2015 with second intake in 2016.
- **Registered 12 months prior to application deadline¹**; if not could be considered as per an unregistered group in collaboration with a registered organization. Joint projects accepted.

Possible confusion re: eligibility. The program is designated for groups excluded from consideration under another HRM program as per the initial rationale provided to Council (December 10, 2013). If the program was open to all, the following might have to be employed:

- Preference given to groups who do not have the option of applying to another municipal program.
- Preference may be given to applicants not otherwise in receipt of government funding (federal, provincial, municipal).
- Transfer of funding from existing municipal programs (a demonstration of commitment/priority).

The goal is not to increase funding overall to existing municipal grant programs but rather to broaden inclusion among non-profit groups/projects otherwise excluded from consideration.

Possible Alternative:

Eligibility could be expanded within specific funding categories for **projects** that are ineligible under another municipal program. For example, school-based, out-of-region, and events. This would expand participation but maintain the intended focus and manages uptake in relation to budget capacity (possible budget transfer might be required depending on scope of inclusion).

1. ***Advisory Committee asked to confirm eligibility.***
2. ***The organization must be located within HRM but are projects restricted to the geographic boundary of HRM²? For example, if a group wanted to place markers in locations that provided immediate assistance to residents (eg. aid that arrived by rail from Moncton, Windsor, Amherst, New Brunswick, or towns near USA border) or a travelling exhibit.***

Eligible Organizations

- Society, charity, not-for-profit business, non-profit cooperative, incorporated under an Act of the NS legislature.
- Unregistered groups and those not registered 12 months prior to application deadline accepted if party to a formal collaborative partnership with a registered non-profit or charity.

¹ The rationale for the criteria is that basic financial information is available (1 year start-up phase) and an indication of the group's membership and programming activities to date. Approach also discourages the formation of a non-profit for the purpose of grants funding.

² Under the Community Grants Program there has been only one exception made – the Juno Beach Memorial in France through the Royal Canadian Legion.

- Business improvement districts eligible.³
- Government and government agencies, including municipal, remain ineligible for consideration but could participate in a collaborative partnership with a local non-profit organization.

3. *Should government agencies, boards and commissions be excluded?*

Eligible Projects: Funding Categories

Categories are based on conventional commemorative programs with the exclusion of buildings and sites⁴ and public art commissions⁵, with the Advisory Committee’s guiding principles. Access to designated government funding (including municipal) also taken into consideration:

- Youth Engagement: excludes travel and admission fees.
- Exhibit or Display: not restricted to historical and includes natural and applied sciences, planning, medical etc
- Interpretation: an ‘interpretative feature’ has broad application and includes marker, commemorative garden, temporary installation etc.
- Ethno-cultural Research/Presentation: First Nations and African Nova Scotia focus.
- Ceremonial or Dedication Events: directly related to the Explosion centennial.

4. *Advisory Committee asked to confirm inclusion of children under Youth Engagement.*

5. *Require clarification re: eligibility to Anniversary Events category of Festivals & Events Grant Program to avoid duplication and provide direction to potential applicants.*

Award Threshold:

- Up to \$5,000. Does not require matching funds or proof of an inability to self-fund. Applicant will be asked to identify/confirm balance of funding so as to assess viability of the project proceeding/completion.
- Grant recipients may apply to successive year(s) to a combined total of up to \$10,000.

Designated Program: Weighting of Evaluation Criteria

Proposed scoring derived from grants practice and Advisory Committee’s guiding principles that identified specific measurable outcomes.

³ BID Contribution Fund is the only municipal program for non-profits that requires matching funding. Opportunity to engage business sector/occupational groups.

⁴ Heritage Incentives Grant Program (private property), Community Grants Program (non-profit owners), District Capital Fund.

⁵ Public art possibly incorporated into Needham Memorial Park Project and potential access to funding through Cultural Presentation Program (pending – content and priority to be confirmed).

Table 1. Proposed Weighted Scoring Criteria		
Outcome	Rationale	Score
Organizational and Project Viability	Probability of successful execution before or by December 6, 2017. Demonstrated commitment in relation to the centennial.	20
Knowledge and Awareness	Increase awareness, new knowledge, self-representation	20
Innovation and/or collaboration	Demonstrated planning, synergy, creative, niche or broad appeal	10
Incremental Impact	Project would not proceed in whole or in part without public funding	10
Public Engagement	Participation, accessibility, inclusion, public awareness of the initiative	20
Enduring Legacy	Probability of sustainability, anticipated duration of impact	20
TOTAL		100

Advisory Committee Role

Under Section 5(c) of Administrative Order 2014-005-GOV the Advisory Committee is tasked with providing advice in the development of a designated grant program and, if directed by Council, may make recommendations to the Grants Committee.

A review team would be convened to evaluate all submissions and submit a recommendation report for debate and approval. The report would include recommended awards, submissions not recommended for funding⁶, and those deemed ineligible for consideration. It is proposed that the report would be tabled with the Advisory Committee, who would debate the recommendations/vote and submit a report to the Grants Committee. The Grants Committee would then endorse or amend the Advisory Committee's recommendations and send a report to Regional Council for final approval.

Rationale

- The administrative order anticipated a role for the advisory committee in making recommendations as per s.5 (c).
- Section 9 of the administrative order identified specific accreditation and experience, plus two members-at-large.
- The advisory committee comprises eight (8) members, the same number of votes as the Grants Committee.

⁶ The program's eligibility criteria, if approved, allow for application to both intakes so an unsuccessful candidate in the first intake may elect to re-submit in the second.

- The advisory committee will have played an active role in the development of the objectives of a designated grant program, eligibility criteria and evaluation method. As such, the members should be well versed in the program's intent and how these goals may differ from those of existing municipal grant programs.
- Final decision-making authority resides with Regional Council.
- The program's policy and procedures will have been approved by Regional Council; the committee's primary task is to provide oversight in the application of these policies and procedures with consistency and through an open and accountable process.
- The designated grant program is of limited duration (ie. probably two intakes, one call for applications in each of two fiscal years).

If making recommendations with respect to awards, members of the Advisory Committee would not be reviewers but the committee could request a member serve as an observer. In this manner all eight (8) members of the Advisory Committee have a vote and those unable to devote the additional time required of a reviewer are not perceived to be at any disadvantage.

Note: Should the Advisory Committee, upon a motion and majority vote, amend a staff recommendation these amendments would be identified in the committee's report sent to the Grants Committee. However, this role is only in relation to the designated Halifax Explosion centennial grant program, not awards that may be considered under another municipal grant program (including those related to the Explosion centennial).

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The following diagram illustrates the proposed decision-making process.

