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# City of Nanaimo – Community Watershed Restoration Grant Program

## Guidelines and Criteria

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## **Community Watershed Restoration Grant — Guidelines and Criteria**

### **Introduction**

On 2020-DEC-14, Council allocated \$20,000 to support a 'Community Watershed Restoration Grant Program'. The program is available to community organizations, environmental non-profits, or individual residents in order to provide financial support for community watershed restoration projects.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Community Watershed Restoration Grant is to assist property owners and organizations in supporting the City of Nanaimo's Environmental Responsibility objectives by providing annual funding to support community restoration projects. Funding will be available annually to community organizations, environmental non-profits, and individual residents that aim to carry out watershed restoration projects focusing on urban stream and riparian restoration enhancement, and/or natural environment protection.

### **Ineligible Projects**

Funds from the Community Watershed Restoration Grants may not be used for the following purposes:

- Ongoing operational expenses incurred during the normal course of business;
- Projects occurring outside the City of Nanaimo;
- Projects that would not be in compliance with Federal and/or Provincial law or City of Nanaimo Bylaws;
- Payment of pre-existing debts; and
- Proposed development projects that require environmental restoration as a condition of development approval.

### **Eligible Project Expenses**

Grant funding may be used to support the following project expenses:

- Project planning and design studies completed by a qualified professional including but not limited environmental assessments, restoration plans, site plan or surveys, landscape plans, slope/erosion stabilization study, and/or an archeological assessment.
- Plant and landscape material purchase and installation
- Disposal costs (e.g. bins to store and dispose of invasive material, waste removal, landfill fees)
- Construction equipment rental and labor costs

### **Project Criteria**

- Where the proposed project is on land not owned by the applicant, landowner permission is required. This includes property owned by the City of Nanaimo and other levels of government.
- All proposed expenses must be used to support a proposed community environmental restoration project.

## **Eligible Applicant Criteria**

Organizations and individuals applying for funding must be based in Nanaimo and/or be proposing a project that primarily serves Nanaimo residents. Eligible applicants include:

- Individual property owners (proof of ownership required) who own property that includes or is adjacent to a watercourse or other environmentally sensitive area where they wish to do environmental restoration or enhancement work that is not required as a condition of a development approval;
- A non-profit society incorporated under the BC Provincial Societies Act or federally designated as a registered charity;
- A recognized religious group with ongoing activities and a congregation; and
- A neighbourhood association recognized by the City of Nanaimo.

## **Ineligible Applicants**

- Groups, organizations, or individuals with outstanding balances owed to the City of Nanaimo.
- Groups, organizations, or individuals that are subject to active enforcement with the City of Nanaimo or not in good standing with the City of Nanaimo, Federal, or Provincial Governments.
- Organizations or individuals may not be eligible for Community Environment Grant funding if they have received other funding assistance through the City of Nanaimo within the same grant year period.

## **Funding amount**

A total of \$20,000 in funding is available. Individual applications for up to \$20,000 in funding will be accepted; however, funding of less than \$20,000 may also be split between more than one successful applicant.

## **Strategic Priorities**

The City's strategic funding priorities for the Community Watershed Restoration Grant are as follows and are aligned with the Green Goals in City Plan – Nanaimo ReImagined as follows:

- Watershed Protection (e.g. projects that protect/enhance or restore the riparian environments, sustainably manage stormwater (including daylighting piped systems), recognize the natural capital value of a wetland, river or other watercourses, and/or improve the water quality and fish habitats in City rivers, lakes, and wetlands.
- Urban Tree Canopy, Natural Areas, and Greenways (e.g. projects that protect and/or enhance the City's natural environment including the urban tree canopy, marine foreshore, environmentally sensitive areas, nature parks, and green corridors).
- Climate Adaptation (e.g. projects that support people, the environment, buildings, and/or infrastructure adapting to the impacts of climate change).

Project proposals should respond to one or more of the above categories. Overall projects should support the "Environmental Responsibility" theme within the City's Strategic Plan including projects that "will protect and enhance Nanaimo's natural environment by looking after the community's biological diversity and adapt the way we live, work, recreate, and move."

## **Application Review Criteria**

### 30% - Merit

- What is the overall quality of the proposal?
- Is the project aligned with the applicant organization's mandate and/or individual stewardship goals?
- Is there any community support and partnership with other organizations, including First Nations?
- Has the applicant shown a commitment and history of environmental restoration and/or land stewardship?

### 40% - Relevance/Feasibility

- Does the project reflect the City's identified strategic priorities and Green and Blue Network objectives as identified within City Plan?
- Is the project supported by the City's Environmental Responsibility theme with the City's Strategic Plan?
- Does the project potentially impact Snuneymuxw First Nation interests? If so, would it be supported by Snuneymuxw?
- What is the capacity and demonstrated ability of the applicant?
- Does the applicant have the budget and capacity to carry out the project? Have the applicants' partners and/or consultants been identified?
- Has the applicant leveraged other funding sources available?

### 30% - Potential Impact

- What area will be impacted?
- How great is the impact?
- Is the anticipated impact measurable?
- How critical is the issue being addressed?

## **Grant Process**

Applications will be received by the City of Nanaimo and reviewed by a cross section of Staff from a number of relevant departments. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Finance and Audit Committee and then to Nanaimo's City Council for approval. Once disbursed, funding must be spent within the next twelve (12) months and a report (including copies of studies and reports funded by the grant) must be provided at project completion or at the end of the twelve-month period, whichever comes first. If the applicant chooses to submit an application for the following year, a report regarding the previous project-funding grant must be received prior to the submission of the new grant.