



# Report

**City of Merritt**  
**REGULAR Council Meeting**  
**October 22, 2019**

**File Number: 1851**

**To:** Scott Hildebrand, Chief Administrative Officer  
**From:** Sheila Thiessen, Director of Finance & IT  
**Date:** October 17, 2019  
**Subject:** Grant in Aid Policy Revisions

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT Council approve Policy 4-01 Community Grant in Aid, as amended.**

## **Discussion:**

During the grant in aid deliberations early in 2019, Council requested that staff bring back a report that discusses the grant in aid policy. On October 16, 2019 at a Committee of the Whole, staff presented to Council a report that summarized information gathered from a variety of source. A discussion was held with Council on how to move forward with the grant in aid policy for 2020.

Council provided staff with several items to be updated. These items have been incorporated into the Draft Policy 4-01 attached to this report. The original Policy 4-01 is also attached for comparison purposes.

Items changed include;

1. Elimination of the 2 grant categories (Short Term and Community Initiative), all grants are to be considered Grant in Aids.

Reviewed by:			
Director, Corp. Services Not yet approved	Director, Finance & IT Not yet approved	Director, Engineering & Development Not yet approved	Chief Administrative Officer: Choose an item.

2. Removal of Sponsorships in the funding classes, these will be addressed in a separate policy to come to Council by the end of the year.
3. Establishment of an annual limit of \$50,000, plus individual limits of \$7,500 per organization and \$500 for Sports Teams or Individuals attending competitions.
4. Clarification of the language related to organizations funded by other levels of government.
5. Noting that Permissive Tax Exemptions may be considered during the application process.
6. Clarification that the funding is to be used by the organization itself and not to be used to fund raise for or given to other organizations.
7. Removed requirement for Council to set aside a portion for Extraordinary requests.
8. Firmer language on incomplete applications.
9. Requirement of a final report to Council.
10. The option for Council to request the return of any unspent funds.
11. The option for Council to require attendance at a workshop on financial stewardship and accountability.
12. Details on how the funding will be paid out.

In addition, staff was directed to simplify the application form, incorporating the requirements from the policy. This will be done before the call for applications is issued by the end of the month. There was also a discussion about the City's membership in organizations, these will be treated separately as a budget item and no longer included in the Grant in Aid process.

### **Options:**

The draft policy incorporates the research and discussion from the October 16, 2019 Committee of the Whole meeting. Council has the following options:

1. Approve the draft policy as presented with the October 22, 2019 revisions.
2. Recommend other revisions to the policy for staff to incorporate and bring the revised policy back at a subsequent Council meeting for approval.
3. Maintain the status quo and continue with the existing policy.

### **Financial / Risk Implications:**

Risks of a grant in aid program include ensuring the recipients are legitimate community groups that meet Council's criteria.

Good financial stewardship requires the City to make sure that the funding is used for the purposes intended and for the good of the community.

The proposed changes to the policy provide clarity for all involved in the Grant in Aid process.

**Strategic Plan Reference:**

Reviewing policies related to the Financial Plan process relates to the Long-Term Financial Planning identified in Council's Strategic Plan.

**Others Consulted:**

Staff consulted with other municipalities on process, amounts and other items and provided this information to Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting October 16, 2019.

**Attachments:**

Policy 4-01 Community Grant in Aid

Policy 4-01 Draft Community Grant in Aid with recommended revisions October 22, 2019

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Sheila Thiessen, CPA, CMA**  
**Director of Finance & IT**