THE CITY OF Red Deer

GUIDE

COMMUNITY RECREATION ENHANCEMENT GRANT

A GRANT PROGRAM

*Updated February 2026

A INTRODUCTION

The City of Red Deer recognizes the important contribution made by organizations in the provision of sport and recreation opportunities in Red Deer. Through these offerings, individual lives are enhanced, communities come together, health and well-being are attained, diversity of community is fostered and appreciated, jobs are created, spending occurs, and the economy benefits.

This grant has been designed to augment and enhance inclusive sport and recreation activities that need a supportive boost.

The City of Red Deer has the responsibility, through this grant program, to sustain and support sport and recreation within the community. In areas where there are gaps in services and activities, the City may also use this grant program to encourage or seek out opportunities in under-represented areas to encourage diverse sport and recreation opportunities. The City also has the responsibility to administer the grant including the development of the grant process, the administrative systems, and tools that are involved in the program, as well as providing support to applicant groups through the grant process.

B A DEFINITION OF RECREATION

Recreation is important. Recreation remains a fundamental human need at all ages and stages in life. People participate in recreation activities for fun, enjoyment, fitness & health, social interaction, creative expression, a desire to connect with nature, relaxation, and to enhance their quality of life. Sport is included in this broad definition of recreation. Sport holds the distinct potential to build local skills, knowledge and resources while also increasing social cohesion, community dialogue, leadership development and civic participation.

"[Recreation is] the experience that results from freely chosen participation. In physical, social, intellectual, creative, and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being."
- Pathways to Well-being: a Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015).

C OUTCOMES

By investing City of Red Deer tax dollars in sport and recreation, The City has the responsibility to ensure that this money is invested in services that support researched Recreation & Sport outcomes for individual and community well-being. The City's Social Policy Framework (SPF) has a set of community goals that contribute to social well being. Recreation outcomes support these goals. For details on the SPF please visit the City's website.

1 *Community Cohesion and Engagement*

Recreation gatherings and pursuing interests in one's free time connects people to each other, to their neighbours and helps to build a sense of belonging for individuals, families and community. Pursuing and having access to varied recreation opportunities is fundamental to having a good quality of life.

2 *Educational Opportunity and Attainment*

Recreation creates opportunities both informally by bringing people together, developing new skills and aptitudes, as well as formal learning through certifications and training at levels across the spectrum.

3 *Equitable Services and Access*

The provision of recreation facilities and services is a shared commitment from the municipality and non-profit organizations throughout the community. There is broad access to a wide variety of recreation services in facilities and open spaces. Barriers are addressed to ensure equitable access.

4 *Health and Basic Needs*

Research demonstrates that recreation, active living and sport contribute to the physical, social and mental well-being of individuals, families and communities.

5 *Jobs and Wages*

Investment in recreation creates jobs, fosters tourism, and makes communities more attractive places to live, learn, work, play and visit. Jobs created include coaching, officiating, management and operation of facilities, and open spaces. This investment stimulates economic growth in our local tourism industry, supporting people travelling to compete, recreate in the outdoors, and spectate at events. Volunteering in recreation develops essential skills and interpersonal networks that can lead to employment.

C OUTCOMES

6 *Resilience*

Participation in recreation activities allows social connection, improves health & wellbeing, and provides meaningful interactions. All factors that support individual and community resiliency.

7 *Poverty Prevention and Reduction*

Access to free or low cost recreation activities is an important part of the recreation delivery in Red Deer. Programs and services provided to waive fees, subsidize fees, or provide additional supports to participants is a key part of the recreation delivery system. The contribution made by volunteers continues to reduce the actual costs of service delivery in diverse recreation programming. This contribution reduces the cost of delivery to Red Deer residents.

8 *Safety*

Bringing together people through recreation activities creates a social connection and builds a sense of belonging. When neighbours know each other, there is an increased likelihood of safety within the community.

9 *Social and Cultural Diversity*

People of all origins can benefit by becoming involved in recreation. Efforts to reduce social and cultural barriers and provide safe and encouraging access to recreation are crucial to supporting this diversity.

D THE RESOURCE

The City of Red Deer Recreation Department awards approximately $100,000 per year through the Community Recreation Enhancement Grant. Maximum application amount: $5,000 per application, per intake.

All applications will be considered together in a competitive process. There are no specific categories for funding. The City of Red Deer reserves the right to fund all, some or none of the submitted applications despite availability of funding. The City of Red Deer reserves the right to suspend, interrupt, cancel or reschedule this grant application process at any time.

Successful applicants will be expected to sign a funding Letter of Understanding in order to receive funds.

We encourage early application. Recreation staff are happy to review your package prior to the deadline to assess completeness. However, if we receive the request less than three business days prior to the deadline, there is no guarantee a review will occur.

E THE SUPPORT

For questions regarding this grant program, please contact:

Recreation

403.309.8411 | recreation@reddeer.ca

An information session will occur shortly after the opening of applications for each intake. Group representatives are encouraged to attend for general information with the ability for follow up to discuss specific questions as needed.

Visit www.reddeer.ca/grants for more details and to access the link to the application software.

F APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications will be received two times per year. Yearly application deadlines are available online:

- April

- October

To apply, please visit the Community Recreation Enhancement Grant web page, here. All applications will be considered together in a competitive process. There are no specific categories for funding. Early applications are encouraged and if received more than three days prior to the deadline, Recreation staff are happy to review your application to assess completeness.

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F RETURN OF FUNDING CLAUSE

Funding amounts over $500 awarded through this grant program, but not expended, will be returned to The City for re-investment through this grant via the reporting document. Unexpended funds under $500 may be reallocated with approval from The City.

G REPORTING

Successful applicants are required to expend grant funds and complete necessary reporting within six months after the grant is awarded.

Future funding may not be received if there are outstanding reports for previously granted projects, unless an approved extension request is on file.

Reporting must address the following:

1. Did the project proceed as planned?
Yes or No. If no, explain the variation.
2. How do you know the project contributed to at least one of the Social Policy Framework's nine Community Goals?
3. A completed form showing submitted budget compared to Actual budget.
4. Volunteers - provide a summary of volunteer hours involved in the project, and outline types of volunteer responsibilities.
5. Receipts - Provide proof of expenditure that will satisfy The City's audit requirements (i.e. invoice and bank statement or processed cheque, receipt).
6. At least two photos that illustrate the project's outcome i.e. new equipment, document, event participants etc. (Photo releases included in a Letter of Understanding with groups.)

COMMUNITY RECREATION ENHANCEMENT GRANT

PURPOSE	*This grant program is designed to support organizations that deliver recreation services and programs to Red Deer residents to enhance their ability to deliver these opportunities to Red Deer residents. For the purpose of this grant, the term "recreation" includes sport, fitness, play, activity and outdoor pursuits.*
AMOUNT	Up to $5,000 per application, per intake
FREQUENCY	• Two intakes occur per year, April and October
DEADLINES	Check www.reddeer.ca/RecreationGrant for the specific deadlines each year in April and October. Applicants can expect a decision within four weeks from application deadline. Visit www.reddeer.ca/grants for updates on available funding.
APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY	Applicants must: • Be a registered non-profit society in good standing serving Red Deer (i.e., provide proof that annual financials with the Province are up to date) • Be in good standing with the City (i.e., not be in arrears for municipal taxes or utilities, or failed to pay any other municipal charge or invoice) • Provide a current Certificate of Insurance • Demonstrate that at least 50% of those directly benefiting from the project are Red Deer residents • Contribute to at least one of the nine outcomes listed in Section C of this guide: and • Follow, and meet submission requirements (i.e., the application must be complete, received by the deadline, in the format required, etc.) • Organizations with outstanding past final reports without an extension request will not be considered.
ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	CREG funding supports one-time projects that should be completed within six months of receiving funds. Eligible projects increase: • Opportunities to participate in recreation and/or train volunteers. • The number of participants and/or volunteers such as instructors, board members, coaches and/or officials. • The number of diverse populations participating in inclusive programs (age, gender, ethnicity, family status, etc.). Projects can also: • Improve understanding of reconciliation, equity, accessibility, diversity, and inclusion with local recreation and sport organizations. • Promote awareness and knowledge of the importance of play, physical activity and physical literacy. • Enhance the profile of an organization, its services, or its programs. • Enhance governance of an organization, including renewed bylaws, succession plans for board members, developed policies for operation, and other administrative effectiveness strategies. • Provide specialized equipment that enhances recreation opportunities. • Improve facilities to enable enhanced recreation (barrier-free access).
ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	• Costs related to administrative activities that improve governance. i.e. policy development • Purchase of specialized equipment. • Program planning, marketing and promotions. • Facility enhancement and non-capital non-permanent structures.

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INELIGIBLE EXPENSES	• Any expenses not directly related to the project, or retroactive in nature. • Costs that have a recurring expense related to the operations, programs, services of the organization, insurance or facility rentals. • Direct support of individual athletes, elite athletes or coaching honorariums. • Costs charged by the City for expenditures for events, facility rentals, development, or service delivery. • Duplication from other City of Red Deer Grant opportunities. • Professional development for paid employees or coach certifications focused beyond the Training to Compete Stage of Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD). • Capital projects – construction or renovation of permanent structures that cannot be moved or removed.
REPORTING	Successful applicants are required to expend grant funds and complete necessary reporting within six months after the grant is awarded. Reporting must address the following: 1. Did the project proceed as planned? Yes or No. If no, explain the variation. 2. How do you know the project contributed to at least one of the Social Policy Framework's nine Community Goals? 3. A completed form showing submitted budget compared to actual budget. 4. Volunteers - provide a summary of volunteer hours involved in the project, and outline types of volunteer responsibilities. 5. Receipts - Provide proof of expenditure that will satisfy The City's audit requirements i.e. invoice and bank statement or processed cheque, receipt. 6. At least two photos that illustrate the project's outcome. i.e. new equipment, document, event participants etc. (Photo release included in Letter of Understanding with group.)
CRITERIA & EVALUATION	Applications will be weighted according to the degree the application demonstrates: **Project Feasibility:** The activity itself is relevant, well-planned, and resourced effectively to ensure success. **Budget:** Included in application and seems realistic to project success. An expectation that the project includes volunteer hours, sponsorship, other grants, or other forms of leveraging. **Outcomes Focus:** Ability to demonstrate contribution to any one or more of the nine stated outcomes listed in Section C. **Organizational Capacity:** Ability to effectively provide the services (i.e. experience, leadership, vision, financial experience, etc.).