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NEW FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE POLICY CONTINUES TO INVEST \$2.9 MILLION IN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS **City is committed to working with organizations ahead of policy implementation, which will not take place until 2026.**

The City of Campbell River (the City) has approved a new Financial Assistance Policy to streamline the grant process, increasing transparency and accountability to Campbell River taxpayers.

Currently, the City funds \$3.3 million in grants, leases and permissive tax exemptions per year for non-profit organizations under various programs and policies. If the City were to tax for this entire amount, it would be equivalent to an approximate eight per cent property tax increase. The newly adopted policy governs all financial assistance under one holistic policy and will continue to award \$2.87 million in grants, leases and facility rentals to non-profit organizations. This includes \$700,000 in grant funding — down from \$931,000 in 2024.

“Council received many emails about the Financial Assistance Policy, and based on some of the feedback, there is a lack of understanding of the significant levels of funding the City currently provides and what changes have been adopted. This policy continues to support the work that so many organizations do across the city with a total of \$2.87 million continuing to be awarded to non-profits through grants, leases and facility rentals,” said Mayor Kermit Dahl. *“Like non-profits, taxpayers and the City are facing financial pressures; Council recently made \$1.2 million in budget reductions to stay within our financial stability policy, which limits tax increases to under 3.5 per cent. Although Council have adopted the policy and taxpayers will see an immediate benefit – organizations will not be impacted until 2026. We understand how important these groups are to the community, and I assure everyone that they are just as important to us on Council.”*

The Financial Assistance Policy was developed after consideration of existing policies, its practicalities, best practices, and governing legislation. It incorporates feedback from Council, staff and the Community Partnership Committee, as well as research on nine communities across B.C.

Under the new policy, eligible non-profit organizations have been expanded from just the arts and culture sector making it more inclusive. Clear evaluation criteria will also ensure decision-making is less subjective for organizations, staff and taxpayers.

“Our community, like many others, is facing increasing pressures to maintain service levels, meet the needs of the growing community, and keep taxes affordable,” said Alaina Maher, Director of Financial Services. *“This policy continues to deliver grant funding, but brings Campbell River in line with comparable communities, keeping costs more affordable for residents while also supporting organizations through a lengthy transition period. The City will work with each organization throughout 2025, to help them prepare for the changes that will come into effect in 2026.”*

The City understands this change will be impactful for some non-profit organizations in the community. The City notified organizations that changes were being considered in 2023 and is committed to working with non-profits moving forward. Steps will be taken to connect with and prepare organizations for the new approach and funding availability, including a staged implementation schedule and plans to host workshops to assist organizations in seeking additional funding sources. These workshops may identify opportunities to collaborate, do things differently or be more efficient in service-delivery, and the City will be happy to explore all of the opportunities that come from these discussions. Support allocated through 2025 permissive tax exemptions will not be affected. The policy will be fully implemented in 2026.

To watch the Financial Assistance Policy presentation, visit www.campbellriver.ca/webcast. To read the Financial Assistance Policy staff report, visit campbellriver.civicweb.net.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who does the policy apply to?

The policy governs all financial assistance provided by the City of Campbell River to non-profit organizations.

What is being changed?

The City is streamlining the policies which overlook grants in aid, permissive tax exemptions and leases to non-profit organizations in the city of Campbell River.

The new Financial Assistance Policy will see more groups (outside of the arts and culture sector) eligible for grants, while clearer evaluation criteria will ensure all organizations are aware of how funding decisions are made.

The policy also limits the amount of funding available to 1.4 per cent of the prior year's tax levy.

Why was the policy changed?

The new policy streamlines the grant process and ensures that the funding aligns with the City's strategic priorities.

It clarifies the City's total investment in non-profit organizations, while increasing transparency and accountability to taxpayers about how and where money is spent.

The revised funding level (at 1.4 per cent of the prior year's tax levy) is closer to the average for communities our size.

When will the policy be implemented?

The policy will be fully implemented in 2026. Support allocated through 2025 permissive tax exemptions will not be affected.

How will non-profit organizations be affected?

Non-profit groups in the city will continue to receive grant funding, only the amount and approach will change.

The City has committed to phasing in policy changes so that non-profit organizations have time to source additional funds. It is also supporting the sector with workshops and events.