



Community Services

SUBJECT: Community Partnership Policy

Policy #:	CMS-202401
Effective date:	December 17, 2024
Amendment date:	
Replaces:	

PURPOSE

The Community Partnership Policy is designed to identify, and support, established, new and emerging County of Brant non-sanctioned and sanctioned not-for-profit community volunteer groups in the delivery of their programs and services. The Policy is established to enhance leadership, communication, and engagement of community groups. The Policy provides a mechanism to assist staff in determining what resources are available and how the resources should be allocated.

SCOPE

The Community Partnership Policy will help to strengthen community groups, build on their capacity and sustainability as well as connect groups across the County.

Capacity building is the process by which we strengthen a community group’s ability to fulfill its mission. This process includes providing community groups with access to space, resources, best practices, and guidance. It is important to note that the County is not responsible and will not be liable for any actions, directions, or decisions, whether interim or final, of any community group, their executive, or their membership.

The Community Services Department uses a community development approach to build the capacity of community groups, engage local volunteers, and sustain programs that the department does not have the resources to implement. Community Services staff support community groups on an ongoing basis and cultivate relationships to respond to the unique needs of new and established organizations.

DEFINITIONS

Community Partner – a volunteer-based group established to fill a void in service or provide a priority community service. The Community Partner will support and enhance the County of Brant’s strategic priorities by offering programming, services, information, and community events to the County of Brant residents.

County of Brant Facility Space - refers to County-owned and County-administered recreational facilities and spaces that are available for rent.

Emerging Community Group – newly formed Community Partner (6 months or less) providing programs and/or services currently not offered by the department or any established Community Partner.

Executive – an appointed liaison from the Community Partner, board of directors or established and appointed/elected committee chair role.

Government Sponsored Program - recreational, educational, and/or other programs intended to support social, physical, and/or mental benefits to residents (e.g., Early ON, Safe Zone, Brant County Health Unit Programs).

Non-Sanctioned Community Group – non-registered, not-for-profit community group with no formal structure and/or financial accountability (i.e., Neighbourhood Associations).

One-time Community Group – Community Partner that provides a program, event and/or service currently not offered by the department or established Community Partner (e.g., a one-time partnership for parks, facilities, and/or recreational services).

Sanctioned Community Group – registered not-for-profit community group or agency with an organizational and financial accountability structure (i.e., Minor Sports Group)

Service Club - a voluntary not-for-profit organization where members meet regularly to perform charitable works either by direct hands-on efforts or by raising money for other organizations. A service club is defined firstly by its service mission, and secondly, its membership benefits, such as social occasions, networking and personal growth opportunities that encourage involvement within our communities.

Staff Liaison – responsible for the management and administration of the Community Partnership Policy and to act as a facilitator between the County of Brant and the community partner(s) as it relates to the supports outlined within the Community Partnership Policy.

POLICY DETAILS

Community Partnership Supports:

The full list of potential supports outlined below varies on the availability of County of Brant Facility Space, availability of staff liaison(s), status of community group applicants, the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, and available department resources. The provision of such supports remains solely within the discretion of the County as there is no guarantee that these supports will be available or provided:

- a. Staff liaison(s) to assist Executive in a facilitating capacity;

- b. Access to Council-approved discounted rates for use in County of Brant Facility Space; and in the case of groups offering community events and programs that are within the mandate of the Community Services Department, such discounted rates are only available at the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation;
- c. Information on provincial and federal funding resources and local opportunities, which may include County of Brant community grant program funding;
- d. Marketing and publicity assistance through the Community Contact Listing, access to indoor display boards, outdoor signage and the County's website at nominal or no cost;
- e. Discounted rates for Community Service Guide advertising;
- f. Cost sharing opportunities;
- g. Priority booking of County ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sport fields in accordance with Council approved 'Sport Allocation' policy and Community Services Fees & Charges By-Law;
- h. Access to priority bookings through the County of Brant's Joint Use Facilities Agreement with both the Grand Erie District School Board and the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board;
- i. Access to County of Brant Facility Space excluding ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sports fields (when available for public use) free of charge for up to;
 - Once per month for a maximum of four hours for the purpose of an executive/membership meeting which only addresses the business of the community group;
 - Once per year for a maximum of four hours for the purpose of an annual general meeting which includes attendance of a staff liaison(s);
 - Twice per program session (Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer) for a maximum of four hours for the purpose of registrations for those sessions;
 - Discounts for County of Brant Facility Space for special event fundraising initiatives annually, that does not exceed the maximum value.
- j. Partnership(s) with Community Services staff to establish service delivery arrangements to facilitate program development (for programs not currently offered by the department or established community group).
- k. Access to the Community Services Department Volunteer Management Program to assist with recruitment of volunteers in the community.

Emerging and Non-Sanctioned Community Group Supports:

Emerging Community Groups and Non-Sanctioned Community Group(s) need to be supported in a different capacity than Sanctioned Community Groups. To reflect this,

and in addition to the Community Partnership Supports, the list below is available to Emerging Community Groups and Non-Sanctioned Community Group(s), designed to facilitate them through the development of their organization/group.

The full list of potential supports outlined below varies on the availability of County of Brant Facility Space, availability of staff liaison(s), status of community group applicants, the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, and available department resources. The provision of such supports remains solely within the discretion of the County as there is no guarantee that these supports will be available or provided:

- a. Staff liaison(s) to assist with board development, policies and procedures, and incorporation of a not-for-profit community group;
- b. Access to County of Brant Facility Space, excluding ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sports fields (when available for public use) with:
 - 35% discount off County of Brant Facility Space rentals for the first year and 20% for the second year;
 - Free access to County of Brant Facility Space rental for community fundraising initiatives annually with a maximum value that does not exceed \$750.00.

Emerging Community Group and Non-Sanctioned Community Group support is available for a maximum of 2 years from when the application is approved, unless otherwise approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

One-Time Community Group Supports:

One-Time Community Group(s) need to be supported in a different capacity than other community groups. To reflect this, the list of supports below, in addition to the Community Partnership Supports, is available to One-Time Community Groups and varies on the availability of County of Brant Facility Space, availability of staff liaison(s), status of community group applicants, the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, and available department resources. The provision of such supports remains solely within the discretion of the County as there is no guarantee that these supports will be available or provided:

- a. Access to County of Brant Facility Space excluding ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sports fields (when available for public use) with:
 - 35% discount off County of Brant Facility Space rentals;
 - Free access to County of Brant Facility Space rental for community fundraising initiative annually with a maximum value that does not exceed \$750.00.
- b. Potential assistance in connecting and benchmarking with other community groups.

One-time Community Group support is available for a maximum of 1 year from when the application is approved unless otherwise approved by the Director of Parks and Recreation.

Sanctioned Community Group Supports:

Sanctioned Community Groups are recognized by the County as valuable partners in meeting community needs for organized programs, community events, and activities. To reflect the responsibility and commitment required to run an incorporated not-for-profit community group, and which responsibility and commitment rests with the Sanctioned Community Group, the supports listed below, in addition to the Community Partnership Supports, will help groups foster their sport, recreation and/or culture mandate and varies on the availability of County of Brant Facility Space, availability of staff liaison(s), status of community group applicants, the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, and available department resources. The provision of such supports remains solely within the discretion of the County as there is no guarantee that these will be available or provided:

- a. Access to County of Brant Facility Space excluding ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sports fields (when available for public use) with:
 - 25% discount off County of Brant Facility Space rental for community fundraising initiative annually with a maximum value that does not exceed \$750.00.
- b. Joint-fundraising initiatives for capital projects, subject to inclusion of a staff liaison(s), Council approval for the project, and inclusion in the County Capital Budget.

Service Club Supports:

Service Clubs are recognized by the County as valuable partners where members meet regularly to perform charitable work, meeting community needs for fundraising, organized programs, community events, and activities. To reflect the responsibility and commitment required to operate a Service Club, the supports listed below, in addition to the Community Partnership Supports, will help Service Clubs achieve their mission, membership benefits, such as social occasions, networking and personal growth opportunities that encourage involvement within each community.

- a. Access to County of Brant Facility Space excluding ice, turf, gymnasium, outdoor pool, arena floor, and outdoor sports fields (when available for public use) with:
 - 25% discount off County of Brant Facility Space rental for community events and fundraising initiatives. Annual events will have priority booking and permitted to book 12 months in advance.
- b. Joint-fundraising initiatives for capital projects may include use of County Facility Space for specific events at no charge, subject to inclusion of a staff liaison(s), Council approval for the project, and inclusion in the County Capital Budget.

- c. Staff Liaison to assist with scheduling and chairing semi-annual meeting with County of Brant Service Clubs for the purpose of aligning priorities, coordinating programming and timing with facility booking bookings and production of the Community Services Guide.
- d. Staff Liaison to assist in managing existing or newly negotiated agreements between the County of Brant and Service Club(s).
- e. Staff Liaison to assist with governance and grant applications which may be jointly submitted.

Opportunities for Government Sponsored Program(s):

Government Sponsored Agency(s) are recognized by the County as valuable partners in meeting community needs for organized recreational, educational, and/or other programs intended to support social, physical, and/or mental benefits to residents.

The support listed below, in addition to Community Partnership Supports, outlines the County's commitment to ensuring these Government Sponsored Programs are available to residents within the County of Brant. These supports will vary on the availability of County of Brant Facility Space, availability of staff liaison(s), status of community group applicants, the discretion of the Director of Parks and Recreation, and available department resources. The provision of such supports remains solely within the discretion of the County as there is no guarantee that these supports will be available or provided:

- a. Access to Council-approved Government Sponsored Program rate for use in County owned/administered facilities for a maximum of 3 hours per week;
- b. For existing and historical Government Sponsored Program(s) offering programs not currently delivered by the Community Services Department or an established Community Partner will be permitted access to up to two no charge weekly County of Brant Facility Space rental that have designated staff scheduled for a maximum of four hours, subject to cancellation if a paid rental opportunity emerges or County event requires access to the County of Brant Facility Space.

Groups that are Ineligible for Community Partnership:

The following groups are not eligible for community partnerships with the County:

- a. Groups whose goals, purpose and/or objectives are, or appear to be, in conflict or otherwise not consistent with The Corporation of the County of Brant's values and strategic plan. The determination of this issue rests solely within the discretion of the County of Brant.

- b. Political parties or other groups with a political, social, or religious doctrine primarily designed to persuade the public to adopt a particular view, as determined by the County of Brant, in its sole and absolute discretion.
- c. Groups or organizations that are geared to obtaining profit or pursuing sales of any goods or services, as determined by the County of Brant, in its sole and absolute discretion.
- d. Groups that duplicate the services of other community groups, unless it can be shown that an existing community group cannot meet the needs of residents and additional facilities/locations/groups are required, as determined by the County of Brant, in its sole and absolute discretion.
- e. Any group or organization which may bring the reputation of the County of Brant into disrepute, as determined by the County of Brant in its sole or absolute discretion.

Application for Supports:

To be considered for supports, applications must be submitted with the following documentation:

- a. Evidence of the groups primary mandate to provide recreational, art/cultural, social and/or sport program or service that meets community needs;
- b. Contact telephone number/website/email address for public inquiries;
- c. Where applicable, confirmation of Articles of Incorporation (Not-for-Profit) or Registration Letter verifying charitable status or charter membership of a Provincial/National/International not-for-profit organization;
- d. Where applicable, Executive (minimum of three) including names, addresses and telephone numbers (submitted to staff liaison after each Annual General Meeting);
- e. Certificate of Insurance as per the requirements of The Corporation of the County of Brant;
- f. Schedule of programs, events and services the group currently provides or is planning on providing;
- g. Letter of intent and/or a business/operational plan outlining the intended program/project;
- h. Where applicable, evidence demonstrating the right to operate the program from a Provincial or National Governing body;
- i. Other information may be requested or required by the Community Services Department.

Approval of Community Partnership Status:

Applications for Community Partnership will be approved by the staff liaison(s) or designate. Upon approval, Community Partners are required to sign a Community Partnership contract with the County. This contract requires each group to adhere to the requirements and stipulations outlined in the Policy and any changes deemed necessary, and such other terms as the County of Brant may consider reasonable or necessary.

Approvals for partnership status are granted for a maximum of two years from the date of approval. Community Partners must re-apply to renew their status – approval is not guaranteed in subsequent years. As a condition of approval, all outstanding debts to the County must be paid in full or an agreement regarding retirement of the debt must be in place.

New community groups and existing Community Partners that require additional support in successfully adhering to the requirements of this policy may be offered community partnership status on a probationary period. The staff liaison(s), or designate, may attend the Board of Directors/Executive board meetings of the community group under probation in a non-voting capacity.

Availability is subject to submission of applications by the established deadlines annually.

****Existing or newly negotiated agreements between the County of Brant and Service Club/Community Group(s) supersede administration of the Community Partnership Policy.***

Community Partner(s) Responsibilities:

All Community Partners must:

- a. Strictly adhere to this Community Partnership Policy, as may be amended from time to time;
- b. Ensure all members/participants adhere to the County's policies and procedures outlined in the contract(s) with the County of Brant;
- c. Provide immediate notice to staff liaison(s) of any changes in the group's executive/board or constitution;
- d. Maintain up-to-date membership lists;
- e. Provide the County with an updated insurance certificate prior to policy expiration date, where applicable;
- f. Respect the intent of the County of Brant Facility Booking Policy, as amended from time to time, and comply with both the County of Brant Sport Allocation Policy and County of Brant Facility Cancellation Policies;

- g. Promote and help build healthy and active communities in the County of Brant in an atmosphere of mutual respect, transparency, fairness, and open communication;
- h. Ensure that the actions of the group and its members do not bring the reputation of the County of Brant into disrepute.

The County of Brant's Responsibilities:

The County of Brant reserves the right to request additional information at any time, act as a liaison for the group, be present at the Annual General Meeting and monthly meetings if required at the direction of the Director of Parks and Recreation and allocate facilities according to the County of Brant Facility Booking Policy.

The County of Brant's relationship with volunteer community groups receiving support under the Community Partnership Policy is based on support and guidance. The County is not responsible for the decisions and/or actions of any group or its members. Accordingly, the County will not act as a review body for any such group, except to the extent that the actions of a group put the group in contravention of this policy.

Applications are assessed in accordance with the supports published by this Policy. Notification of acceptance or ineligibility will be sent in writing. The County will review applications and respond to the applicant group within a timely manner.

The County of Brant's relationship with volunteer community groups receiving support under the Community Partnership Policy is based on support and guidance. The County will act as a liaison and be present at Annual General meetings and/or monthly meetings as requested by groups and will allocate facilities according to the County of Brant Facility Booking Policy.

The County is not responsible for the decisions and/or actions of any group or its members. Accordingly, the County will not act as a review body for any such group, except to the extent that the actions of a group put the group in contravention of this policy.

Applications are assessed in accordance with the supports published by this Policy. Notification of acceptance or ineligibility will be sent in writing. The County will review applications and respond to the applicant group within a timely manner.

Groups shall be notified six (6) months prior to any proposed changes to the Community Partnership Policy and can provide comments as part of the review process.

Appeal of Termination

In the event that the Director of Parks and Recreation rescinds an organizations Community Partnership Status, the organization may elect to appeal such rescission by submitting, in writing, a "Request for Review" to the General Manager of Community

Services by email to parksandrec@brant.ca, or in person or by mail to 944 Powerline Road, Paris, Ontario, N3L 0B2, which shall be submitted within 30 days of receiving notice of the rescission, and shall include the following information:

- (a) A copy of the Notice of Rescission, or such other documentation provided by the Director of Parks and Recreation to affect the rescission of the Community Partnership Status;
- (b) An identification of an error made by the Director of Parks and Recreation in the determination to rescind the Community Partnership Status;
- (c) The reasons for requesting a review;
- (d) The reasons why the General Manager of Community Services should overturn the decision of the Director of Parks and Recreation; and
- (e) Any other information or documentation that the General Manager of Community Services consider during the review.

Upon receipt of a "Request for Review", the General Manager of Community Services may do any one or more of the following:

- (a) Deny the request;
- (b) Request additional information from the Director of Parks and Recreation;
- (c) Request additional information from the organization that submitted the Request for Review;
- (d) Request a meeting with either the Director of Parks and Recreation and a representative of the Organization, or both of them;
- (e) Submit the matter to the Chief Administrative Officer and Council, for consideration;
- (f) Reinstate the Community Partnership Status.

The decision of the Chief Administrative Officer shall be final.

SCHEDULE “A”

Community Partnership Application Form