



County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Municipal Policy

Department:

Policy No.

Parks & Recreation

72.0.2

Title Annual Community Facilities Operating Grant Funding

1. Policy Statement:

- 1.1. The County recognizes Community Facilities such as community halls and agricultural society facilities as essential community assets that contribute to healthy, vibrant, and connected communities. These facilities provide gathering spaces that support recreation, culture, social events, educational opportunities, volunteerism, and emergency response, while fostering community pride and engagement.

2. Responsibilities:

- 2.1. Through the Annual Community Facilities Operating Grant Funding, the County is committed to providing financial assistance to eligible organizations that own and operate these facilities to help offset essential operating expenses. This funding is intended to support the long-term sustainability of these community assets and supplement, rather than replace, the organization's responsibility to generate revenue and maintain financial sustainability.

3. Guidelines:

- 3.1. Not-for-profit organizations registered under the Societies Act, Libraries Act or Agricultural Societies Act that provide social, recreational, and cultural programs, events and services accessible to the public within the County serving County residents.
- 3.2. Annual operating funding is limited to eligible community halls. Riding arenas, curling rinks, and other recreation facilities are not eligible for operational funding under this policy.
- 3.3. Council has identified the following community halls as eligible to participate in the Annual Community Facilities Operating Grant Funding based on their contribution to the well-being of County residents.
- 3.4. The following community halls are recognized under this policy:
 - a. Falun Community League - Hall
 - b. Lakedell Agricultural Society - Hall
 - c. Lone Ridge Community Hall Association - Hall
 - d. Mulhurst Bay Community League - Hall
 - e. Pipestone Community Society - Hall
 - f. Porto Bello Community Society - Hall
 - g. Usona Agricultural Society - Hall
- 3.5. The following Agricultural Societies are recognized under this policy for the operation of their community facilities:
 - a. Alder Flats Community Agricultural Society - Hall

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- b. Buck Lake Agricultural Society - Hall
- c. Winfield and District Agricultural Society - Hall
- d. Wetaskiwin Agricultural Society -
- e. Millet and District Recreational and Agricultural Society - Hall

3.6. Council may amend the list of designated facilities and organizations from time to time through resolution to reflect changes in community needs, facility ownership, or operational responsibilities.

4. Funding Amount Allocation:

4.1. The current funding allocation for all halls that currently receive operational funding through Recreation Zone 2 shall remain unchanged. The existing allocation of 60% of collected Recreation Zone 2 funding designated for hall operations, including the historical population-based distribution methodology, shall continue to apply to these halls unless otherwise amended by Council resolution.

4.2. If Council receives a written request from a new community facility for Annual Community Facilities Funding, Council shall review the following:

- a. Council shall first evaluate the application using the approved Scoring Matrix. If the application does not achieve the minimum score required to justify annual operating funding, the request shall be denied. If the application meets or exceeds the minimum score, Council shall proceed to Section 4.2.2.
- b. Review of the past three years of facility operational costs, excluding GST, for the following:
 - i. Sewer Servicing.
 - ii. Electricity.
 - iii. Natural Gas, Propane, Oil.
 - iv. Custodial costs.
 - v. Parking lot maintenance (ex. snow removal, grading gravel, etc.).
 - vi. Landscaping maintenance (ex. grass cutting, tree removal, etc.).
 - vii. Insurance Costs.

4.2.2 Council shall calculate the average of the facility's eligible operating expenses from the previous three completed fiscal years. Council may provide an Annual Community Facilities Funding for up to 50% of the three-year average of eligible operating expenses.

5. Additional Pages:

- 5.1. Schedule "A" Guidelines for Council Consideration of Additional Community Halls and Agricultural Society Facilities for Annual Community Facilities Funding.
- 5.2. Schedule "B" Scoring Matrix.

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6. Related Documents:

- 6.1. Recreation Zone Committee Structure Policy 72.0.1
- 6.2. Recreation, Event and Activity Grant Policy 72.0.3
- 6.3. Recreation Capital Grant Funding Policy 72.0.4
- 6.4. Recreation Operating Grant Funding Policy 72.0.5

Previously Signed

Scott MacDougall, CAO

CG20260915.025

Council Resolution

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Schedule “A”

Guidelines for Council Consideration of Additional Community Halls and Agricultural Society Facilities for Annual Community Facilities Funding.

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. These guidelines are intended to assist County Council in evaluating requests to recognize additional community halls or agricultural society facilities for eligibility under the County's Annual Hall Operating Grant Funding Program.
- 1.2. The guidelines are intended to provide Council with a consistent and transparent framework for consideration while recognizing that each community and facility has unique characteristics. These guidelines do not form part of the Annual Hall Operating Grant Funding Policy and are intended solely to assist Council in its decision-making process.
- 1.3. Recognition of a facility under these guidelines does not guarantee annual funding. Any funding remains subject to the eligibility requirements of the applicable policy, annual budget approval, and Council's discretion.

2. Council Consideration Criteria: When considering whether to recognize an additional community hall or agricultural society facility, Council may consider the following factors:

2.1. Geographic Location and Community Coverage

- a. Council may consider the geographical location of the facility and the area it provides. Consideration may be given to whether the facility:
 - i. Is located in an area of the County that is not adequately served by another recognized community hall.
 - ii. Serves residents across a broad geographic area.
 - iii. Provides a central gathering location for residents in surrounding rural areas.
 - iv. Helps ensure equitable access to community facilities throughout the County; and
 - v. It is strategically located to serve a distinct geographic area of the County.

2.2. Community Hub and Community Benefit

- a. Council may consider the extent to which the facility functions as a community hub and contributes to healthy, vibrant, and connected communities. Consideration may be given to whether the facility:
 - i. Provides a regular gathering place for local residents.
 - ii. Hosts community events and activities.
 - iii. Supports recreation and leisure opportunities.
 - iv. Provides space for cultural, social, or educational activities.
 - v. Supports volunteer organizations and community groups.
 - vi. Encourages social connection and community engagement.
 - vii. Provides a venue for activities that benefit residents of the County.

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2.3. Community Use and Accessibility

- i. Council may consider the frequency and level of public use of the facility. Consideration may include:
- ii. The number and frequency of community events held annually.
- iii. The number of residents and community groups using the facility.
- iv. Whether the facility is available for public rental or community use.
- v. Whether the facility is accessible to residents from surrounding communities,
- vi. Whether the facility provides opportunities for residents of different ages and backgrounds to participate in community activities.

2.4. Community and Regional Service Area

- a. Council may consider whether the facility serves a broader population than the immediate community in which it is located. Consideration may be given to facilities that:
- b. Serve multiple rural communities.
- c. Attract residents from outside the immediate area.
- d. Provide services or programming that are not available elsewhere in the region.
- e. Act as a central gathering location for multiple surrounding communities.

2.5. Financial Sustainability and Operating Need

- a. Council may consider the financial circumstances of the organization responsible for operating the facility. Consideration may include:
 - i. The organization's ability to generate revenue through rentals, fundraising, memberships, or other activities.
 - ii. The facility's annual operating costs.
 - iii. The organization's demonstrated need for financial assistance.
 - iv. The organization's efforts to maintain the facility and generate revenue.
 - v. Whether the organization has demonstrated responsible financial management.
 - vi. County funding should be considered supplemental to the organization's own fundraising, revenue generation, volunteer contributions, and other sources of funding.

2.6. Volunteer and Community Contributions

- a. Council may consider the level of volunteer involvement and community support demonstrated by the organization. Consideration may include:
- b. The number of active volunteers.
- c. The contribution of volunteer hours toward facility operations and maintenance.
- d. Community fundraising efforts.
- e. Local financial contributions.
- f. Partnerships with other community organizations.

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- g. The organization's demonstrated commitment to maintaining the facility as a long-term community asset.

2.7. Facility Condition and Long-Term Viability

- a. Council may consider the overall condition and anticipated longevity of the facility. Consideration may include:
 - b. The age and condition of the building.
 - c. Whether the facility is adequately maintained.
 - d. Whether the organization has a plan for ongoing maintenance.
 - e. Whether significant capital improvements are required.
 - f. Whether the facility is expected to remain operational and available to the community for the foreseeable future.
- g. Annual Hall Operating Funding is intended to support eligible operating expenses and is not intended to replace capital funding or address significant infrastructure deficiencies

2.8. Alignment with County Priorities

- a. Council may consider whether recognizing the facility aligns with the County's strategic priorities and objectives, including the development of:
 - b. Strong and connected communities.
 - c. Accessible recreation and leisure opportunities.
 - d. Rural community sustainability.
 - e. Volunteerism and community engagement.
 - f. Partnerships with local organizations.
 - g. Equitable access to community services and facilities.

3. Council Discretion

- 3.1. These guidelines are intended to support consistent decision-making but do not restrict Council's discretion.
- 3.2. Council may consider additional information or circumstances that it believes are relevant when determining whether to recognize a community hall or agricultural society facility for Annual Hall Operating Funding.
- 3.3. Council may also periodically review the list of recognized facilities to ensure that it continues to reflect the geographic, recreational, social, and community needs of the County of Wetaskiwin.
- 3.4. Recognition of a facility should be based on the overall contribution of the organization and facility to the County, rather than on any single criterion outlined in these guidelines.

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Schedule “B” Hall Operating Funding Scoring Matrix

Purpose:

This scoring matrix is intended to assist County Council in evaluating requests from community halls and Agricultural Society facilities seeking recognition under the County's Annual Hall Operating Grant Funding Program.

The matrix is intended as a decision-support tool only and does not replace Council's discretion. Council may consider additional information or circumstances that are not captured within the scoring matrix.

A maximum of 100 points is available.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
1. Geographic Location and Community Coverage	20
2. Community Hub and Community Benefit	20
3. Community Use and Accessibility	15
4. Community and Regional Service Area	10
5. Financial Sustainability and Operating Need	10
6. Volunteer and Community Contributions	10
7. Facility Condition and Long-Term Viability	10
8. Alignment with County Priorities	5
Total	100

1. Geographic Location and Community Coverage – 20 Points

Purpose: To assess the geographic importance of the facility and whether it provides community services in an area that may otherwise have limited access to

Score	Description
16–20	Facility is strategically located in an underserved geographic area and serves as a primary community hub for a broad rural area or multiple surrounding communities.
11–15	Facility serves a distinct geographic area and provides important access to community services and activities for surrounding residents.
6–10	Facility serves a defined local area, but other community facilities are available within a reasonable distance.
1–5	Facility primarily serves a small or localized area with limited geographic reach.
0	Facility provides little demonstrated geographic benefit beyond its immediate organization or membership.

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2. Community Hub and Community Benefit – 20 Points

Purpose: To assess how significantly the facility contributes to healthy, vibrant, and connected communities.

Score Description

- 16–20** Facility is a significant community hub hosting a broad range of recreation, cultural, social, agricultural, educational, and community activities.
- 11–15** Facility provides regular and meaningful community programming and serves as an important gathering place.
- 6–10** Facility provides some community activities and events but has a more limited community role.
- 1–5** Facility has limited community programming or primarily serves private or organizational functions.
- 0** No demonstrated community benefit.

3. Community Use and Accessibility – 15 Points

Purpose: To assess the frequency of use and accessibility of the facility to the broader community.

Score Description

- 12–15** Facility is regularly used by the public, community groups, recreation organizations, and residents throughout the year and is readily available for community use.
- 8–11** Facility is regularly used by the community and is available for public rentals or events.
- 4–7** Facility has moderate use but limited public availability or seasonal operations.
- 1–3** Facility has limited community use or availability.
- 0** Facility is not meaningfully available for community use.

4. Community and Regional Service Area – 10 Points

Purpose: To recognize facilities that serve residents beyond the immediate community where they are located.

Score Description

- 9–10** Facility serves multiple communities or a significant regional population and attracts regular users from throughout the County or surrounding areas.
- 6–8** Facility serves residents from several surrounding communities.
- 3–5** Facility primarily serves its local community but has some broader use.
- 1–2** Facility primarily serves a small local population.
- 0** No demonstrated broader community service area.

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5. Financial Sustainability and Operating Need – 10 Points

Purpose: To assess the organization's demonstrated need for operating assistance and its efforts to maintain financial sustainability.

Score	Description
9–10	Significant demonstrated operating need; organization has limited revenue sources but demonstrates strong financial management and ongoing efforts to generate revenue.
6–8	Demonstrated operating pressures and reasonable efforts to maintain financial sustainability.
3–5	Moderate operating need with reasonable access to other revenue sources.
1–2	Limited demonstrated financial need or significant alternative funding sources.
0	No demonstrated financial need or insufficient financial information provided.

6. Volunteer and Community Contributions – 10 Points

Purpose: To recognize the importance of volunteerism and local community investment in maintaining the facility.

Score	Description
5	Strong and sustained volunteer involvement, fundraising, partnerships, and community financial contributions.
4	Significant volunteer involvement and ongoing community fundraising.
2–3	Moderate volunteer and community support.
1	Limited volunteer or community contribution.
0	No demonstrated volunteer or community contribution.

7. Facility Condition and Long-Term Viability – 10 Points

Purpose: To assess whether the facility is being responsibly maintained and is likely to remain a viable community asset.

Score	Description
5	Facility is well maintained, financially viable, and has a demonstrated long-term maintenance plan.
4	Facility is adequately maintained with reasonable plans for future upkeep.
2–3	Facility has some maintenance concerns but remains operational and viable.
1	Significant maintenance concerns or uncertainty regarding long-term viability.
0	Facility is not adequately maintained or there is significant uncertainty regarding its continued operation.

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8. Alignment with County Priorities – 5 Points

Purpose: To assess how well recognition of the facility aligns with the County's strategic priorities and community objectives.

Score Description

- 5** Strongly supports County priorities related to strong communities, recreation, accessibility, volunteerism, partnerships, and rural community sustainability.
- 4** Supports several County priorities and demonstrates clear community value.
- 2–3** Generally, aligns with County priorities.
- 1** Limited alignment with County priorities.
- 0** Does not demonstrate alignment with County priorities.

Recommended Council Decision Thresholds

The following thresholds assist Council in interpreting the overall score:

Total Score Recommendation

- 80–100** **Strong Candidate** – Facility demonstrates significant County-wide or regional community benefit and should be strongly considered for recognition.
- 65–79** **Good Candidate** – Facility demonstrates meaningful community benefit and should be considered for recognition, subject to Council's discretion.
- 50–64** **Moderate Candidate** – Facility provides some community benefit; Council may require additional information or consider other factors before making a decision.
- Below 50** **Limited Candidate** – Facility does not currently demonstrate sufficient benefit or need to support recognition under the program.

Council Consideration

The scoring matrix is intended to provide a consistent framework for evaluating requests, but the final decision to recognize a community hall or Agricultural Society facility remains with County Council.

Council may consider circumstances that are not fully reflected in the scoring matrix, including unique geographic considerations, historical community significance, emerging community needs, regional partnerships, or other factors Council considers relevant.

A high score does not automatically guarantee recognition or funding, and a lower score does not prevent Council from exercising its discretion where exceptional circumstances exist.