

Background

Council requested staff to review the application process for determining the allocation of the Transit Grant Fund (the grant), valued at \$25,000 annually. The grant was initially approved by Council in 2007 and formed as part of the “ridership growth initiatives” which was funded using the annual Provincial Gas Tax allocation. The original purpose of the grant was to provide financial support to the community to facilitate transportation that helps the community and its many worthwhile programs and events to thrive. Although the grant has been successful, there appeared to be a lack of clarity in terms of grant eligibility and communication of this opportunity to the broader Greater Sudbury community. At the January 12th City Council meeting, Council requested staff to draft a formal application form, outlining eligibility criteria along with expected approval process of the program. The intent was to ensure a fair and consistent approach to approvals and subsequent disbursement of the grant to eligible community organizations.

Proposed Application Form & Eligibility

The new application form (**appendix A**) has been organized into sections, as summarized below:

- Background (Purpose, Source of Funds, Amount, Objectives)
- Eligibility (Organizational Checklist, Explain Your Event)
- The Fine Print
- Organization Information
- Approval Status

The purpose of the application is to ensure that the submitter understands the intent of the grant, eligibility criteria and maximum award value. The application also gives the submitter the opportunity to explain the nature of their event and expected value to the Greater Sudbury community.

Proposed Criteria

In the new proposed criteria, only charitable, not for profit organizations or community groups receiving no other City funding could receive a grant of up to a maximum of \$500 per year. In order to fairly transition to the proposed grant application process, all current requests for 2016 will be accepted based on the existing process. As such, staff is recommending that the effective date for the application form, if approved, be January 1st, 2017. In the interim, staff is committed to increasing awareness through marketing/advertising (web, social media, print) to the broader Greater Sudbury community of this funding opportunity in order to attract organizations with events that suit the intent of the grant.

Summary

Staff has conceptualized a new application form that encompasses past and proposed criteria in order to provide a fair, consistent and equitable process to those awarded free transportation to carry out an

event or program. Staff are recommending that Council approve the attached application form and to enact the changes, commencing January 1st, 2017.