

Report to Council

Report Title:	Infrastructure Grant Opportunities for Recreation and Community Buildings		
Prepared By:	Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services		
Department:	Parks and Recreation		
Date:	May 25, 2021		
Report Number:	REC2021-12	File Number:	C11REC, F11
Attachments:	Canada Healthy Communities Initiative Round 2 application Guide Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Applicant Guide GMF- Community Buildings Retrofit Application Guide Save on Energy Retrofit Program Brochure		

Recommendation:

That the Council of the Municipality of Brockton hereby receives Report Number REC2021-12 – Infrastructure Grant Opportunities for Recreation and Community Buildings, prepared by Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services in doing so authorizes staff to apply to all the infrastructure and energy retrofit programs for the noted projects and provide progress reports back to Council at each stage of the approval process of the funding programs.

Report:

Background:

As a result of the current Federal and Provincial Government priorities and need to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, address infrastructure deficits and fight climate change, the following infrastructure grant programs are injecting record amounts of capital funding and are currently open to receiving applications in support of retrofitting and new building of recreation and community facilities.

Healthy Communities Initiative

Is a \$31 million investment from the Government of Canada to transform public spaces in response to COVID-19. Community projects that create and adapt public spaces, or programming and services for public spaces including parks, commercial main streets, and access to other amenities. Community projects that adapt public spaces to meet public health guidance.

Applications must be submitted by June 25, 2021, at 5:00 PM PST. Review committees will start meeting on July 23rd, 2021 and all applicants will receive results by September 16th, 2021, at the latest.

Safe and vibrant spaces examples:

- Purchasing equipment and building materials to create a multi-purpose shared community space and family play spaces in a publicly-owned parking lot in neighbourhoods lacking greenspace;
- A Business Improvement Association purchases equipment for a shared sidewalk patio on a town's main street for local cafes and restaurants to use;
- Creating mobile stalls for a night market festival in a public green space to allow businesses to operate safely outside;
- Planning and purchasing materials for green infrastructure projects (ie: urban greenery/forests, green roofs on public buildings for agriculture/growing food that community members can access, green parking lots);
- Commissioning artists to create art installations in a public space or public park to encourage community engagement safely during the pandemic;
- Transforming alleyways and laneways by introducing art, murals, plants, light fixtures, market stalls or regular cleaning practices to encourage;

Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB)

The Green and Inclusive Community Building program focuses on the places where Canadians gather, access essential services, learn and play.

Through Infrastructure Canada, the federal government is providing up to \$1.5 billion in funding over five years through the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program. With the objective of improving the availability and inclusivity of community buildings in areas that are currently underserved, the GICB program aims to stimulate the economy, create job opportunities, and align to the goals of Canada's strengthened climate plan.

Funding through this program will serve to build and adapt community buildings to reduce carbon emissions, advance best practices in reducing the release of greenhouse gases (GHGs), as well as foster awareness of, and alignment to, green building standards, and encourage best-in-class building design for climate change resilience.

Eligible Projects - The GICB program will fund two types of projects:

- Retrofits, repairs, and upgrades to existing community buildings
- The construction of new community buildings that are open and accessible to the public, and that will provide non-commercial services to the community.

Funding Details - The GICB program will provide funding up to the following limits:

- Retrofits up to \$9,999,999: 80%
- Retrofits over \$10,000,000: 60%
- New builds up to the first \$9,999,999 of costs: 60%
- New build costs of \$10,000,000+: 50%

Deadline:

Applicants with small and medium retrofit projects ranging in total eligible costs from \$100,000 to \$3 million will be accepted on a continuous basis and funded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Applicants with large retrofit projects or new community building projects with total eligible costs ranging from \$3 million to \$25 million will be accepted until July 6, 2021. Projects must be substantially complete by March 31, 2026.

Green Municipal Fund – Community Buildings Retrofit

The Federal Government and Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) launched the Community Buildings Retrofit program funded by a \$167M Federal Government investment into FCM's Green Municipal Fund, the new initiative will include grants and loans to support municipalities and non-profit organizations by undertaking retrofits and upgrades to lower emissions by improving energy efficiency. The funding for the program will be spread over six years with the first approval expected by the end of 2021-22. Application deadline – ongoing until funding allocated. Suggested plan is to move forward with feasibility study in 2022 and apply for subsequent capital retrofits in 2023.

Ontario Trillium Foundation - Community Building Fund – Capital stream

COVID-19 has had an overwhelming impact on the arts and culture, heritage, tourism, sport and recreation sectors. These sectors are critical to the social and economic fabric of Ontario and its communities, and to support their broader recovery, the Ontario government is investing \$105 million through the Community Building Fund.

Support for the repair, renovation or retrofitting of existing sport and recreation infrastructure to address public health requirements related to COVID 19 and community need.

Information will be available later in 2021.

Save on Energy - 2021-2024 Conservation Demand Management (CDM) Framework.

In the Retrofit program you can receive incentives for a variety of energy efficient measures available under three streams: Lighting, HVAC, and Manufacturing and other equipment. To participate, your project must be pre-approved with a minimum incentive of \$500.

Eligibility:

Retrofit incentives are available to owners or lessees* of:

- Commercial spaces or buildings, such as offices, retail and grocery stores, restaurants, hotels and warehouses
- Industrial facilities in sectors such as food and beverage, automotive, plastics, steel, mining, paper and chemical industries
- Institutional buildings, including hospitals, universities, municipal facilities
- Multi-family buildings, such as apartments (including social housing) or condominiums
- Agricultural facilities, including dairy, swine and poultry farms, greenhouses and nurseries.

What types of projects are eligible?

Projects eligible for the Retrofit program are generally those that provide sustainable, measurable and verifiable reductions in peak electricity demand and electricity consumption.

Examples of eligible projects include:

- Lighting retrofits
- Lighting controls
- HVAC redesign
- Variable-speed drive installations

Application deadline – ongoing until funding allocated. Suggested plan is to obtain quotes and submit applications to supplement 2021 electrical repair projects and include in 2022 budget for conversion to LED lighting. Projects must be completed within 6 months of approval.

Analysis:

With the record amount of debt taken on by both Federal and Provincial levels of government in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is highly likely and probable that fiscal restraint and a curtailing of infrastructure funding will occur following the current slate of programs ending in 2026. Also, the majority of funding programs are typically directed at roads, bridges, water, sewer and internet broadband services. Historically funding for recreation infrastructure comes few and far between.

Staff feel that now is the opportune time to intensively apply to these grants in hopes of securing significant funding to support the present and near term needs to make Brockton recreation facilities more sustainable and accessible, to provide for life cycle replacement and meet growth demands with the housing boom we are experiencing. The current Brockton Action Plan process and the Recreation and Leisure Services Master Plan strongly suggest and support recreation infrastructure development as a priority and is an essential component if we want to continue to be a community of choice.

Under the GICB program, buildings that serve as Emergency Operation Centres and support disaster recovery receive additional consideration in the evaluation process. Multiple applications can be submitted to a stream, however they must be priority listed by the municipality. Retrofit stream \$860 million. New Build Stream \$430 million.

The Durham Street Park Development Committee, Brockton Recreation Committee and the Elmwood Community Centre Board have recently met, reviewed and considered various current grant programs and strongly recommend that Council support and authorize staff to apply to the following infrastructure programs and streams for:

1. **Canada Healthy Community Initiatives** - Creating Safe public Space Stream – Durham St (Wong) Park - money for Park materials and furnishings pending design plan. Construction estimated to start in September 2021. Funding recipients must incur expenses between April 1, 2020, and June 30, 2022. Eligible expenditures will vary depending on the project. Up to 100% funding between \$5,000 and \$250,000. All projects will be reviewed by Regional Hubs and

projects requesting funding over \$100,000 up to \$250,000 will also be reviewed at the national level. Estimating up to a \$75,000 application, pending concept plan elements.

2. **Green and Inclusive Buildings Program – Retrofit Stream - Elmwood Community Centre - Energy Efficiency and Accessibility Improvements - \$100,000 + per facility long term capital plan. . Up to 80% funding for eligible work. Estimating a \$150,000 application, if successful resulting in upwards of \$120,000 funding.**
3. **Green and Inclusive Buildings Program (GICB)- New Build Stream - Net Zero ready design and construction of New Walkerton Community Centre and Arena – application for up to \$25 million.** This grant program and stream is one of the few that does not require a full design, detailed budget or Council commitment at time of application. Staff recommend a project application for a new 65,000 sq .ft. twin-pad arena and community facility to be built on municipal lands in the East Ridge Business Park per the recommendations of previous reports and studies. Repurposing or reconfiguring existing facility is suggested to host other indoor recreation, fitness, sport and cultural programming opportunities including day camp and indoor walking track. It is possible to complete such a new facility within the next term of Council upon securing significant grant funding and establishing a solid fund-raising campaign. If we wait for the current calendar of 2028 to 2030 to design and build a new Community Centre/Arena in Walkerton it will not align with potential funding opportunities. While this will take ambitious planning and fundraising, it is still very possible for the project to be substantially complete by March 31, 2026. 60% funding on first \$10 million, 50% on balance up to \$25 million, if successful. This amount of grant funding is substantial and would be an immense benefit to this substantial project in the community.
4. **Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) - Green Municipal Fund - Community Buildings Retrofit Stream** -current Walkerton Community Centre and Arena - GHG reduction pathway feasibility study and retrofit capital applications to support a reconfigured recreation facility at the current site. 80% funding for feasibility study and 25% funding for capital retrofits, if successful. Estimating a \$20,000 application for feasibility study, if successful resulting in upwards of \$16,000 funding. Capital retrofitting applications/funding to be determined.
5. **Ontario Trillium Foundation - Community Buildings Fund - Capital Stream - Centennial Park Tennis Court Rehabilitation and Pool Slide Installation - \$150,000 (part of 2021 approved budget plan).** Estimating a \$150,000 application.
6. **Ontario Save on Energy Program – energy conservations incentives – multiple applications to convert lighting to LED at current Walkerton and Cargill Community Centres and installation of Variable Frequency Drive controls (VFD’s) on pump and fan motors. 20% to 50% funding, \$ per unit upon approval. Westario Power to submit applications on our behalf upon receiving an eligible project request, project location and single quote per project. Estimating applications for 2022 budget calendar totalling \$45,000, if successful resulting in the range of \$20,000 funding.**

Specific resolutions of Council support are not required at this time to be submitted along with the grant applications. Staff will seek specific resolutions of Council as required, typically in time for entering into approved funding agreements. Due to some of the upcoming grant application deadlines, time is of the essence. We have nothing to lose or commit to at this time and everything to gain in potentially securing

millions of dollars in grant funding to redevelop, renew and improve our aging infrastructure for the benefit of current and future residents.

Sustainability Checklist:

What aspect of the Brockton Sustainable Strategic Plan does the content/recommendations in this report help advance?

- Do the recommendations help move the Municipality closer to its Vision? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Cultural Vibrancy? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to achieving Economic Prosperity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to Environmental Integrity? Yes
- Do the recommendations contribute to the Social Equity? Yes

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding:

- Do the recommendations represent a sound financial investment from a sustainability perspective? Yes

Funding and incentives depend on the program and stream. 80%, 60%, 50%, 25%, \$ per unit. Some costs yet to be determined. Staff are currently reviewing options in relation to grant writing/review services to assist staff with the completion of the applications. Staff will proceed with the ones we can accomplish ourselves and will proceed with the most financially efficient path forward for grant writing services for the remaining applications to ensure a high level of success. This is a lot of information to get together in a short amount of time.

Reviewed By:



Trish Serratore, Chief Financial Officer

Respectfully Submitted by:



Mark Coleman, Director of Community Services

Reviewed By:



Sonya Watson, Chief Administrative Officer