# 2025 Active Living & Culture Grants
# Strong Neighbourhood Grant Guidelines

Deadline: last Monday of January, May and August | 8:00am

These guidelines have been revised for 2025 – previous versions no longer apply.

If you have questions after reviewing these guidelines, you can obtain more information from Active Living & Culture staff. Please contact staff well in advance of the application deadline:

**Mandy Pollard**
Community Development Coordinator
250-469-8684
mpollard@kelowna.ca

Grant funding provided by

CENTRAL OKANAGAN
FOUNDATION
*empowering generations to give.*

2025 Neighbourhood Grants
Active Living & Culture Division
Strong Neighbourhoods
101-1360 Ellis Street
Kelowna, BC, V1Y 2A2
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm

**CITY OF KELOWNA ACTIVE LIVING & CULTURE DIVISION**

**CORE PRINCIPLES:**

The City of Kelowna's Active Living & Culture Division administers several grant programs and services for the community which:

- Encourage active healthy lifestyles.
- Build strong neighbourhoods.
- Nurture lifelong participation in sport.
- Enhance cultural vibrancy.
- Facilitate development of events.
- Enhance social sustainability.
- Support effective management and operation of sport, recreation and cultural facilities.

Residents seeking funding support from the City of Kelowna through any of the grant programs administered by the Active Living & Culture Division should be aware of and aligned with one or more of these core principles.

**VALUES:**

Residents supported by the City of Kelowna will commit to the following values:
- **Accessibility, diversity and inclusion:** We welcome everyone to engage in quality experiences that showcase the unique identity of our community.
- **Accountability and fiscal responsibility:** We use resources effectively to leverage opportunities that optimize value and create impact.
- **Innovative**: We support forward-thinking solutions that anticipate needs and bring together a range of experiences to see the future in a different way.
- **Partnerships and collaboration**: Working with others to share energy, skills and resources.

**STRONG NEIGHBOURHOOD GRANT GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

The Strong Neighbourhood Grant is guided by the following principles:
- **Small is powerful:** Micro-grants can spark community unity, creating connected, resilient, and safe neighbourhoods.
- **Everyone contributes:** Everyone has something to offer - whether through heart, hands, or mind – to strengthen the community.
- **Connection fosters attachment:** Engaged communities develop a stronger sense of belonging and attachment.
- **Residents know best:** Motivated residents who are inspired and involved drive meaningful change in their neighbourhoods.

**1.0     NEIGHBOURHOOD GRANT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION, OBJECTIVES & ELIGIBILITY**

### 1.1  What is the Strong Neighbourhood Grant?

The Strong Neighbourhood Grant offers matching grants of up to $1,500 to support activities that connect neighbours, improve the neighbourhood, or encourage skill-sharing. Projects must be planned and led by the residents. Successful applicants match the grant with volunteer work, donated materials, or cash contributions.

### 1.2 Objectives:

This program helps residents create small, neighbourhood-based projects or events that:

- Build community and improve quality of life.
- Encourage connections and relationships among neighbours.
- Tap into local knowledge and expertise.
- Inspire residents to actively improve their neighbourhoods.
- Support neighbourhood solutions to everyday challenges.

### 1.3 Applicant Eligibility:

Groups of three or more neighbours from separate households with an inclusive, neighbourhood-based project are eligible to apply. The project must be completed according to the seasonal schedule, with completion dates dependent on intake period.

To apply, the applicant must:

- Live within Kelowna's geographic boundaries.
- Live within the neighbourhood of the proposed project.
- Involve at least two other neighbours from separate households.

### 1.4 Eligible Activities and Expenses:

Neighbourhood *projects* can receive up to **$1,500** in matching grant funds for activities such as:

| Creating a neighbourhood garden | Enhancing an alleyway | Beautification projects | Painting a mural |
|---|---|---|---|
| Building a story walk | Painting a mural | Building a little free library | Leading a cooking lesson |

Neighbourhood *events* and *celebrations* can receive up to **$500** in matching grant funds for activities such as:

| Organizing a block party | Screening an outdoor movie night | Hosting a festival | Planning a talent show | Arranging a porch concert |
|---|---|---|---|---|

Eligible expenses include:

- Equipment rentals
- Promotional material and translation services
- Items accessible to the entire neighbourhood (not just the applicant or working group)
- Contractor payments for performers or service providers
- Honorariums (max $200 per volunteer)
- Food costs (up to 50% of the grant request, with exceptions for food-related skill-sharing projects)

### 1.5 Ineligible Activities and Expenses:

The following are not eligible for funding:

- Ongoing operating costs
- Projects not aligned with program objectives
- For-profit businesses or non-neighbourhood-based projects
- Retroactive expenses
- Items that revert to private ownership
- Travel, trade shows, commercial activities, fundraising, or donations

- Projects already funded by other City of Kelowna sources
- Political or religious activities
- Projects violating City of Kelowna bylaws
- Block parties where funds are only used for food, drink, or prizes

### *2.0*    **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Applications must be submitted via the City of Kelowna Survey Monkey Apply site: https://cityofkelownagrants.smapply.ca/. If you have trouble accessing the site, contact Strong Neighbourhoods at neighbourhoods@kelowna.ca. Applicants will complete an eligibility screening before proceeding to the official application.

The application must:

- Describe the project or event and how it will enhance the neighbourhood and connections among neighbours.
- Explain how it will improve one or more aspects of the neighbourhood attachment (e.g., aesthetics, leadership, safety, social offerings, relationships).
- Detail how it will encourage neighbour participation and connection.
- Provide project logistics (date, time, location).
- Include a project budget with quotes.
- Outline the matching grant plan, including volunteer hours (valued at the British Columbia minimum wage), donations and in-kind contributions.

Additional Considerations:
- Applicants are responsible for insurance and permits.
- For projects within a Strata, a letter of approval from the Strata is required, and a ¾ owner vote may be needed for physical changes to common property.

Please note: Applying does not guarantee funding, as the grant process is competitive and demand often exceeds available resources.

### 3.0    **ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**
Each project is unique, and there is no expectation that a resident group will excel in all areas to receive funding. The assessment criteria provide an objective framework to evaluate the feasibility and impact of the project, forming the basis for constructive feedback.

Applications will be assessed based on the following:
- Neighbourhood connection, participation and impact
- Sharing of skills and knowledge
- Feasibility and sustainability of the project

Additional Notes:
- Priority will be given to applicants who meet the criteria and have not previously received grant funds.
- Applicants are limited to one Strong Neighbourhood Grant per 12-month period.
- Previously supported projects are not eligible for recurring funding.

### 3.1  *Drivers of Neighbourhood Attachment*

The project or event must enhance at least one of the following five drivers of neighbourhood attachment: aesthetics, leadership, safety, social offerings, or relationships.

| Focus Area | Objective | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Aesthetics | Improve the neighbourhood's appearance, or environment. | Nectar trail, neighbourhood garden, mural, sidewalk art |
| Leadership | Involve multiple neighbours in planning and/or implementation, with skill-sharing opportunities. | Teaching cooking lessons, starting a knitting circle |
| Safety | Enhance neighbourhood safety or promote neighbour safety. | Neighbourhood Evacuation Toolkit, AED training |
| Social Offerings | Create spaces for neighbours to gather and have fun. | Holiday street decorations, little free library or pantry, play box |
| Relationships | Foster connections, especially among new or less-engaged neighbours. | Neighbourhood concert, outdoor movie night, buddy bench, festival, block party, neighbourhood cleanup |

## 4.0    GRANT REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

### 4.1  Staff Review:

A grant review committee, made up of City staff from various departments, will review applications within 2 weeks of the deadline.

### 4.2  Notification and Distribution:

Applicants will be notified of the decision via email within 4 weeks of the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive a confirmation letter with next steps, terms, and conditions.

### 4.3  Clarification and Reconsideration:

Applicants who disagree with the funding decision may request clarification. If still unsatisfied, they can formally request reconsideration by the Director of Active Living & Culture. This may delay the distribution of funds until all decisions are resolved.

## 5.0    SUPPORT AND PROJECT DELIVERY

Approved applicants will be connected to a Community Development Coordinator for guidance in:

- Developing the project concept and plan
- Implementing the project
- Evaluating project impact

During implementation:

- Recipients will regularly update the Community Development Coordinator (in person, by phone, or email) and troubleshoot project goals.
- All promotions and communications must acknowledge the financial support of the City of Kelowna and Central Okanagan Foundation.
- The project lead will sign a letter of agreement outlining grant terms and conditions.
- The lead or co-lead is responsible for project funds and reporting.

- Proof of insurance coverage may be required.
- A timeline for fund release will be set after receipt of the signed agreement.

## *6.0* **FINAL REPORTING**

Successful applicants must submit a Final Report via the Survey Monkey Apply site https://cityofkelownagrants.smapply.ca/ within 15 days of project completion, unless alternative arrangements are made. The report is required for future eligibility in any City of Kelowna grant program.

Final Reporting Requirements:
- Complete a project evaluation form detailing the project's neighbourhood impact.
- Submit a final budget, including receipts and proof of volunteer hours, in-kind donations, and monetary contributions.
- Provide a summary paragraph and at least three project photos with signed release forms for publication on the kelowna.ca/neighbourhoods website.
- Return any unused funds to the City of Kelowna.

## 7.0 **TIMELINE**

Applications must be submitted by 8:00 AM on the intake deadline (last Monday of January, May or August). The timeline below is typical, but subject to change.

|  | Spring | Summer | Fall |
|---|---|---|---|
| Application Deadline* | Last Monday in January | Last Monday in May | Last Monday in August |
| Decisions Announced | Last Monday in February | Last Monday in June | Last Monday in September |
| Implementation Phase | March to June | July to September | October to December |
| Project Completion By | June 30 | September 30 | December 31 |
| Final Report Due | Fifteen days after project is completed | | |

*Should a deadline fall on a statutory holiday, the deadline will be adjusted to the following business day.

## 8.0 **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All documents submitted by applicants to the City become the property of the City. The City will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of each application and the information contained therein except to the extent necessary to communicate information to staff and assessors for the purposes of evaluation, administration and analysis. General information about the project, including the funded amount and the organization being funded under the program may also be released.  The City will not release any additional information to the public except as required under the Province of British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or other legal disclosure process.