



**NEIGHBOURHOOD  
COMMUNITY  
MATCHING FUND**

Inspiring neighbourhood connections through community-led projects.

***What do you want to do for your  
community?***

Please send any inquiries to: [matchingfund@burlington.ca](mailto:matchingfund@burlington.ca)

**2025**

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## WHAT IS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY MATCHING FUND (NCMF)?

The Neighbourhood Community Matching Fund is a matching fund program that helps to inspire Burlington residents to improve, build and strengthen Burlington neighbourhood to enhance the quality of life for everyone. The goals of the program are to:

- Improve, build, and strengthen Burlington Neighbourhoods
- Inspire residents to become more actively involved in the community
- Create a greater sense of belonging
- Foster individual well-being and community pride
- Build stronger relationships

With the support of the City of Burlington, the Neighbourhood Community Matching Fund (NCMF) for 2025 will **focus on small projects that add to amenities within parks, gardens, or buildings on public or private lands that are accessible to the public and meet the goal of the fund.**

These projects will allow neighborhood and community groups to initiate, manage and implement projects that make a difference to the neighbourhood or community group. The projects are initiated, planned, and implemented by community members in partnership with the City of Burlington. Approved projects receive up to fifty per cent of the funding for the project from the City, up to a maximum of \$10,000. The neighbourhood or community group match this funding with an equal contribution made up through any combination of volunteer hours, donated services, donated materials and supplies or other funds raised, such as cash donations. The City of Burlington will support funding to pay for any out-of-pocket expenses up to a maximum of \$10,000.

More information is available at [www.burlington.ca/matchingfund](http://www.burlington.ca/matchingfund).

## WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WILL BE CONSIDERED?

Each project will be inspired by the unique needs and goals of local residents or community groups. Here are a few ideas for types of projects that may be eligible for the NCMF program.

- Enhance a park to create neighbourhood gathering or meeting spaces
- Convert a space for alternate use to meet a community need
- Plant a communal garden on lands that are accessible to public
- Protect, restore, or educate on natural resources and environmental initiatives

## FUNDING AMOUNT – HOW MUCH IS GRANTED?

**Up to \$10,000:** A maximum of \$10,000 for out-of-pocket expenses may be granted to match the equivalent contribution the neighbourhood community group made up through a combination of any of the following:

- Volunteer time
- Donated services
- Donated materials and supplies
- Other funds raised

Funds and resources from other City of Burlington departments and/or services can be listed but not counted as part of the group's match.

## WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

Application Deadline – Feb. 28, 2025

Notice of Decision – Early April 2025

Agreements Signed – One month from award notification

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

**Step 1:** Form a committee. Your committee may be comprised of community members or an already formed not-for-profit, community interest or informal/grassroots neighbourhood group.

**Step 2:** Show that your group has actively sought involvement from residents in your neighbourhood. Letters of Support are required to show that there is strong community support for your project.

**Step 3:** Be open to partnerships with other groups to leverage funding or resources.

**Step 4:** Develop a budget (template provided) and show how you will match the value of the grant you are requesting. Your matching amount can be reached through volunteer hours, donations and in-kind goods and services, in addition to cash.

**Step 5:** Develop a project plan to demonstrate that your project can be achieved in one year.

**Step 6:** Apply for the grant by providing the information required.

**Step 7:** A review team evaluates and approves or declines the project, based on criteria, guidelines and overall feasibility.

**Step 8:** Approved projects are given a listing of project condition(s) that may be needed to complete and support the project’s success. Examples include City building codes, insurance, and permit requirements.

**Step 9:** A project manager from the City is assigned to work with community neighbourhood groups. The City will provide up to \$10,000 for out-of-pocket expenses to match an equal contribution the neighbourhood group makes and can include volunteer hours, donated service, materials, supplies and other funds raised (cash).

**Step 10:** Applicants have one full year (365 days) from the date of the signed agreement to complete, celebrate and submit a final report on the project.

## WHAT ARE THE CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES?

### 1. CRITERIA: THE PROJECT SUBMISSION MUST MEET ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS

- Open and inclusive to the community
- Within the City of Burlington
- On lands owned or managed by the City of Burlington or on private lands that are accessible to public
- One-time funding request
- Be able to satisfy insurance requirements
- Follow municipal, provincial, and federal regulatory compliance standards (i.e., standards for playgrounds, building codes, etc.)
- **Clearly demonstrate:**
  - Neighbourhood community support
  - Neighbourhood community benefit
  - Community matching effort
  - How the project will be completed within one year

### 2. OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

#### Insurance:

- It is necessary for groups to provide proof of and maintain third party liability insurance throughout the project in the amount of not less than \$2 million before the funds will be released by the City. Some projects may need special insurance due to the risk exposure involved and will be subject to a review in order to make sure enough insurance coverage available.
- Applicants who do not have insurance to support the project will be able to apply for insurance coverage through the City.

- The funds provided by the City for the project can be used to cover the cost of insurance for the project.

**Neighbourhood Community Support:** As the project will impact people beyond those in the applicant group, support from the neighbourhood must be demonstrated at the application stage. Accordingly, applicants must submit a **minimum of three letters of support** from outside the applicant group with signatures and contact information for the proposed project. Letters can be from local community or neighbourhood groups, businesses or residents living in the neighborhood impacted by the project.

**Letter of Agreement:** By submitting an application, the applicants acknowledge and agree that in the event of being awarded City funding from the NCMF, the applicant will comply with any requirements set out in the funding guidelines accompanying their application. Upon project approval, applicants will be required to sign a letter of agreement outlining these details and any additional requirements that may need to be met to support the project (i.e., adherence to specific building codes, insurance, by-laws, etc.).

**Reporting Requirements:** All NCMF recipients must submit a final report describing the project outcomes and successes and verify the project expenses and resources. The final report will be sent to applicant once the project is completed, and copies of receipts must be submitted within 90 days from receiving the final report link. Successful applicants are encouraged to submit stories and photos of their activities to be shared as part of the project celebration.

NOTE: A successful applicant can only have one project operating at any one time.

## **2. PROJECTS WILL BE DESIGNED TO:**

- Build neighbourhood or community capacity
- Inspire community connections
- Enhance playability, walkability, or connectivity within neighbourhoods
- Improve parks, playgrounds, or green areas
- Advance arts and culture in the community
- Promote and encourage beautification, cleanliness, and naturalization
- Create places for community to gather (bumping places)
- Improve safety

## **3. FUNDS CANNOT BE USED TO/FOR:**

- Festivals, events, or Love My Neighbourhood program. Visit the [Community Support page](#) for more information.

- Staffing costs. Note: Funds can be used to support funding professional services or professional consultation services when the volunteer group does not have expertise necessary to support the project.
- Purchase of equipment unless the community group can demonstrate that equipment is required for the projects continued success.
- Existing programs and services are not eligible for funding.
- Duplicate an existing public or private project or fund projects that are already in the planning stages or will be implemented by another public or private group.
- Reimburse an organization's operating expenses, not directly linked to the awarded project.
- Pay for expenses or financial commitments made before matching fund approval.
- Cover alcohol, tobacco/vaping, or gambling expenses.
- Support fundraising for the project. Funds must go directly to the project.
- Fund projects on private property that do not allow for reasonable public access.
- Purchase land or buildings.
- Pay for travel or accommodation expenses.
- Replace lost funding or cover gaps from other funding sources.
- Pay for marketing or advertising.
- Educational projects (schoolteacher curriculum or train the trainers type activities).
- Health care projects.
- Website development or apps.

## WHO CAN APPLY?

### ELIGIBILITY:

#### The NCMF is available to:

- Any informal, unofficial, or formal community-based organizations, not-for-profit, and grassroots groups.
- School Boards or business groups may apply in partnership with a neighbourhood, community group or student group as a sponsor and the city will liaise with the project lead that must be from the community.

\* Priority for applications will be provided to new groups or groups that have not received funding within the last five years.

### INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

- Individuals.
- Projects that received funds through the City’s budget process or any other of the City’s grant programs.
- Social service agencies.
- For-profit companies (*Note: can sponsor a project or apply in partnership - see above*)
- Organizations outside of City of Burlington limits.
- Government agencies.
- Schools and School Boards (*Note: may apply in partnership - see above*).
- Political groups including Ward Councilors.

**HOW CAN I APPLY?**

Applicants must complete the NCMF application form and submit it online.

The form is divided into sections:

<p><b>WHO</b></p> <p><b>Applicant Information</b></p>	<p><b>WHAT</b></p> <p><b>Project Description and Information</b></p>	<p><u><b>HOW MUCH &amp; HOW</b></u></p> <p><b>Budget Worksheet</b></p> <p><b>Project Workplan</b></p>
<p>a. Name of neighbourhood community organization. If the applicant is an ad-hoc group of residents, two persons must also be documented as the project leads and must be from different families.</p> <p>b. Contact Information.</p>	<p>a. Project goal, expected outcomes and benefits to the community if the project is approved and completed.</p> <p>b. Project origin. What inspired the idea?</p> <p>c. Project location, neighbourhood, or area.</p> <p>d. Neighbourhood or community support for the project.</p> <p>e. Neighbourhood or community engagement,</p>	<p>a. Precise amount of funding that is being sought by the applicant (cannot exceed \$10,000).</p> <p>b. Summary of budget for how funds will be used.</p> <p>c. Summary of neighbourhood match contributions.</p> <p>d. Project plan, demonstrating how the project will be completed in one year.</p>



	<p>involvement, and participation.</p> <p>f. Demonstrate that it meets the criteria.</p> <p>g. Benefit to your group.</p>	
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## WHAT IS CONSIDERED FOR MATCHING?

There are four types of contributions that applicants can present to match the NCMF. They are as follows:

<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	Valued at Burlington’s living wage/hour. Individuals can contribute time to a project in many ways, including serving on the project committee, implementing steps from the work plan, attending community meetings and leading the group. Volunteer time spent on planning, fundraising, design, and organization will be tallied beginning on the application approval date.
<b>Donated Professional Services</b>	Donated professional services must be relevant to the project and proportionate to its needs. Examples include a contractor, landscape architect, trades, etc. Donors must document the hourly value of their professional services on their letterhead. Services are valued at fifty per cent of the services customary rate. An individual or business that will be <i>compensated</i> for any project-related work <i>cannot</i> also pledge their time as a volunteer nor donate other goods or services to the project.
<b>Donated Materials and Supplies</b>	All donated materials and supplies such as food, paper, flowers, wood, paint, tools, trees, lumber, etc., are valued at their retail prices. Donors of the materials and supplies must provide documentation on their letterhead of the value of the match. Borrowed equipment can also be considered as part of the match, valued at the standard rental fee.
<b>Cash Donations</b>	Cash donations can be secured from fundraising events, individuals, foundations, businesses, and the community.

## HOW ARE APPLICATIONS EVALUATED?

Each application will be evaluated based on key criteria:

1. The request meets all criteria for funding.
2. The overall feasibility of the project.
3. Visible benefits and outcomes from the project.
4. Neighbourhood letters of support (the more support the better for rating scores in the evaluation assessment).
5. A realistic budget that clearly outlines the neighbourhood/community match. The match should clearly reflect the neighbourhood or community group's capacity to contribute to the project.
6. Comprehensive workplan that is ready for implementation.

*\*Applications may be declined if submission is incomplete or does not clearly demonstrate all the required information on the application form.*

**Step 1:** A feasibility committee will review all applications to ensure that submissions meet criteria and are feasible. This will help to make sure that there are no issues related to the City of Burlington's by-laws, policies and legislative or contractual guidelines and procedures. The feasibility committee will be made up of employees from:

- Recreation, Community and Culture
- Roads, Parks, and Forestry
- Finance
- Engineering/Capital Works
- Transportation
- By-Law
- Planning
- Legal
- Clerks
- Other subject matter experts as deemed necessary for the feasibility review process.

**Step 2:** All applications that are deemed feasible will proceed to the evaluation stage. Project applications will be evaluated and scored independently by each member of the review committee. Scores will be added together to receive an overall combined score and ranked from highest to lowest. Projects with the highest ranking will be awarded funding based on annual funding availability. All applications will be told if they are/are not receiving funding.

The annual funding available for the NCMF is dependent on budget approval on an annual basis. Unsuccessful applications that do not receive funding in any given year are encouraged to reapply in following year(s). All applications will be evaluated and ranked against the project submissions received within each application period (see timelines section above).

#### HOW ARE FUNDS DISPERSED?

All projects will require a funding letter of agreement between the Applicant and the City of Burlington. Awarded groups will need to fulfill conditions to support regulatory compliance for projects.

Funding will be paid on an installment basis with fifty per cent of the approved amount issued after the agreement is signed and the balance upon substantial completion of the project. The City will work with successful applicants on a case-by-case basis to determine the timing of the payment for their project.

Funds will be made payable to the applicant, as a community group, and/or project lead. A bank account in the name of the applicant, as a community group, should be established to hold all the funds for the project.