



**City of Nanaimo – Community
Environmental Sustainability Project
Grant**

Guidelines and Criteria

2026

City of Nanaimo – Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant

How to Submit your Application

In Person:

Hardcopy applications will be accepted until 4:00 PM on March 9, 2026, at the Service and Resource Centre located at 411 Dunsmuir Street, Nanaimo, BC. Please ensure your package is clearly marked with the applicable grant name care of Sustainability. Staff will receive and date-stamp your application.

A confirmation email will be sent to all applicants using the email address provided in your application form to confirm that we have received your submission.

Email:

Please send your full application to sustainability@nanaimo.ca

Important Notes:

- Late applications will not be reviewed.
- Applicant (or representative) may plan to attend an optional online information session on February 10 at 5:00 PM to answer any questions about the application process. Staff will send the link to interested parties upon request.

For more information, contact:

Dave Stewart, Environmental Planner

Email: sustainability@nanaimo.ca

Phone: 250-755-4491

Community Environmental Sustainability Project Grant — Guidelines and Criteria

Introduction

In 2023, the City of Nanaimo launched a new grant program to support small environmental sustainability and climate projects to help improve environmental health of natural systems, enhance residents' connections to nature, provide educational values, and contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation. The program is available to community organizations, environmental non-profits, or participants in the Acting for Climate Together (ACT) program to provide financial support for small environmental projects.

Purpose

The purpose of the Community Environmental Sustainability Grant is to support small and creative environmental projects that are not already covered by an existing City of Nanaimo grant. Program funding will be used to support community based projects intended to support the Green Nanaimo policies and described outcomes included in [City Plan: Nanaimo ReImagined](#). Funding will be available annually to community organizations and groups, non-profit organizations, and groups that have either established or plan to establish a program or project to tackle critical environmental and climate issues locally and help raise awareness of these issues in the community.

Ineligible Projects

Funds from the Community Environment Sustainability Project Grant may not be used for the following purposes:

- Ongoing operational expenses incurred during the normal course of business.
- Projects occurring outside the City of Nanaimo.
- Projects that would not be in compliance with Federal and/or Provincial law or City of Nanaimo Bylaws.
- Payment of pre-existing debts.
- Projects that already received funding assistance from another City of Nanaimo grant within the same grant year period.

Eligible Applicant Criteria

Organizations applying for funding must be based in Nanaimo and/or be proposing a project that primarily serves Nanaimo residents and benefits the local environment. Eligible applicants include:

- A non-profit society incorporated under the BC Provincial Societies Act or federally designated as a registered charity.
- A recognized religious group with ongoing activities and a congregation.
- A neighbourhood association recognized by the City of Nanaimo.
- School groups, classes or clubs recognized by the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District (District 68).
- Established stewardship groups working with the City of Nanaimo.
- A team registered and participating in the City of Nanaimo/Regional District of Nanaimo [Acting for Climate Together \(ACT\)](#) program.

Ineligible Applicants

- Groups or organizations with outstanding balances owed to the City of Nanaimo.
- Groups or organizations, or individuals that are subject to active bylaw enforcement with the City of Nanaimo or not in good standing with the City of Nanaimo, Federal, or Provincial Governments.

Annual Program Funding

A total of \$20,000 in funding is available for 2026.

Maximum Grants Amount

Eligible organizations may submit one application per project annually for a maximum of \$5,000 in funding. If an organization wishes to submit multiple projects, they will be asked to identify which project they wish to consider as their primary project. If the grant funding is oversubscribed, priority consideration will be given to primary projects and awarded to only one project per eligible organization.

City Plan Priorities

The City's funding priorities for the Community Environmental Sustainability Grant are aligned with the [Green Goals in City Plan – Nanaimo Reimagined](#) as follows:

- **Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction (C1)** - Projects that will result in a measurable reduction in community greenhouse gas emissions and/or educate residents about how they can reduce emissions.

Example Projects:

- Organize or host a sustainable buildings tour.
- Organize a neighbourhood bulk heat pump purchase.
- Create a walking school bus program to encourage students to walk to school together.

- **Climate Adaptation (C2)** – Projects that support people, the environment, buildings, and/or infrastructure adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Example projects:

- A public art project to educate residents about climate impacts.
- Create a program to prevent overheating during extreme heat events.
- Create or support a neighbours' helping neighbours' program to support residents during an extreme event.

- **Urban Tree Canopy, Nature Areas, and Greenways (C3)** - Projects that protect or enhance local wildlife habitat and ecological services.

Example projects:

- Convert a lawn to a pollinator friendly garden.
- Host a tree planting event (consider four-year maintenance).
- Organize a native plant workshop or tour.
- Bird habitat boxes (consider maintenance).

- **Solid Waste Management (C6)** - Projects that support waste reduction and diversion by reducing consumption of materials and aim to maximize the use of finite resources, transition to renewable resources, and recovery of materials and products to minimize waste generation.

Example projects:

- Create a tool library, share shed or other sharing resource to share items that would otherwise need to be individually owned.
- Host a repair café to reduce waste and educate residents on how to repair an item before throwing it away.
- Organize a waste diversion program in a multiple-family residential complex, organization, business, or other area not normally supported by City of Nanaimo waste pickup.

Project proposals will be evaluated with how well they meet and align with the above priorities. Projects do not have to align with the example projects provided. Overall projects should support the Green Goals of City Plan: Nanaimo ReImagine by “advancing climate knowledge, living in harmony with our environment, and responding to and reducing the impacts of climate change, while protecting natural systems.”

Application Review Criteria

30% - Merit/ Project Team

- What is the overall quality of the proposal?
- Does the project align with the applicant organization’s mandate and/or individual stewardship goals?
- Is there any community support and partnership with other organizations, including First Nations?
- Has the applicant shown a commitment and history of environmental restoration and/or land stewardship?
- Is the applicant an active participant in a recognized City of Nanaimo environmental program, such as Acting for Climate Together.
- What is the capacity and demonstrated ability of the applicant?

35% - Relevance/Feasibility

- Does the project reflect City Plan priorities?
- Does the project potentially impact Snuneymuxw First Nation interests? If so, would it be supported by Snuneymuxw?
- Does the applicant have the budget and capacity to carry out the project? Have the applicants’ partners and/or consultants been identified?
- Has the applicant leveraged other funding sources (including in-kind) available?
- Does the project address a unique gap not addressed by other projects or programs in the region?
- Does the project include a maintenance plan (if relevant)?
- Does the project provide a unique or creative solution to an environmental problem?

35% - Potential Impact

- What area will be impacted?
- How great is the impact?
- Is the anticipated impact measurable? What statistics/indicators are being proposed to measure the impact?
- How critical is the issue being addressed?
- How well are resources utilized?

Grant Process

Applications will be received by the City of Nanaimo and reviewed by a cross section of Staff from a number of relevant departments. Recommendations will be forwarded to the Finance and Audit Committee and then to Nanaimo’s City Council for approval. Once disbursed, funding must be spent within the next twelve (12) months.

Terms & Conditions of Funding	
General Terms and Conditions	<p>The awarding of a grant is at the sole and absolute discretion of the City of Nanaimo. The City of Nanaimo retains the right to rescind or reduce any grant previously awarded. The circumstances for rescinding a grant include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failure to meet the terms and conditions of the grant • failure to comply with legal obligations • failure to respect the commitment to provide a workplace free from harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct • unapproved changes to funded activities • significant risk of insolvency or bankruptcy
Project Kick-Off Meeting	<p>Prior to receiving grant funding, the grant recipient is required to contact the City to arrange a project kickoff meeting. Funding will not be disbursed until after the kickoff meeting. The purpose of the kickoff meeting is to ensure a shared understanding of the project scope, goals, and limitations between the recipient and the City and ensure the recipient is aware of all City requirements and permissions.</p>
Final Reports and Submissions	<p>Grant recipients must submit their final report by the due date specified in the results letter. Final reports must detail any substantial changes to your original proposal and must include an accounting of spent and unspent funds. Failure to provide a final report will result in the rejection of all new funding applications. Videos and photos are also desired as part of the final report submission further to raise awareness about the grant and the works carried out within the community. Unless otherwise specified, the City of Nanaimo reserves the right to use photos and the report submitted for publication and promotion of the grant and related activities. The final report should include a description of what activities were completed, how many people participated, and the results of the activities (ie: acres of land restored, number of trees planted, estimated greenhouse gases reduced)</p>
Grant Repayment	<p>If for any reason you cannot use the grant at the expected time, decide not to carry out the plans described in your grant application or refuse the grant conditions, you must notify us immediately. If you are unable to complete your project or event any unspent funds must be returned to the City of Nanaimo. Unused grant funds cannot be carried over to the next calendar year without written permission from the City of Nanaimo. If you do not use the entire grant amount, any unused portion belongs to the City of Nanaimo.</p>

Payment	The City of Nanaimo prefers to deliver awarded funds by direct deposit. To receive funds via electronic funds transfer (EFT), the recipient must fill out and return the EFT form, along with VOID cheque or verified account information printout from banking institution. Alternatively, please let us know if you prefer a cheque. Please ensure your “Legal Name of Organization” matches the legal name on the bank account that will receive the funds.
Statement of Inclusivity	<p>Recipients of City of the Grant funding must demonstrate commitment to City of Nanaimo Policy C4.2 Equity and Inclusivity:</p> <p><i>“Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates resources and opportunities to support more positive outcomes for all regardless of age, ability, gender, sexual orientation, faith practice, ancestry, or background. By identifying inequities and targeting investment in prevention and intervention, the wellbeing and inclusion of the diversity of people that make up our entire community can be enhanced, creating a city that puts people first and supports a sense of belonging.”</i></p> <p>Funding is provided with the expectation that recipients will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere where all people feel safe, comfortable and represented (Policy C4.2.1) • Encourage diversity awareness and build a culture of compassion for people of all cultures, genders, orientations, ages, and abilities (Policy C4.2.8)
Changes to Activities	Changes to the scope of your original proposal must be approved by the City of Nanaimo. You must notify the City of Nanaimo immediately if you cannot use part or the entire grant during the period stated in your application or if there are changes to your proposed activities.
Acknowledgement of the City of Nanaimo and Logo Use	Public acknowledgement of support is required for all grant recipients. Please ensure that all materials (including copies of reports, advertising, oral presentations, and publicity relating to the project(s) or programming credit the support of the grant. Please ensure proper logo use when crediting the City of Nanaimo’s support. You can request logo files by contacting sustainability@nanaimo.ca .
Permits, Fees, Applications	The approval of this grant does not indicate approval of associated required permits for public events or environmental restoration work or activities in public space. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all necessary permits and permission have been obtained prior to commencing the project and or event, and ensure compliance with all required permits.

Confidentiality	Documents submitted by applicants become the property of the City of Nanaimo. 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 the committee for the purpose of evaluation and analysis. The City will not release this information to the public except when required under the Province of BC's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act or other legal disclosure process. Project information, including event photos and project reports, may be shared on the City's website and social media.
Tax Implications (if applicable)	Non-profit societies, in good standing, can receive payment in the society name.