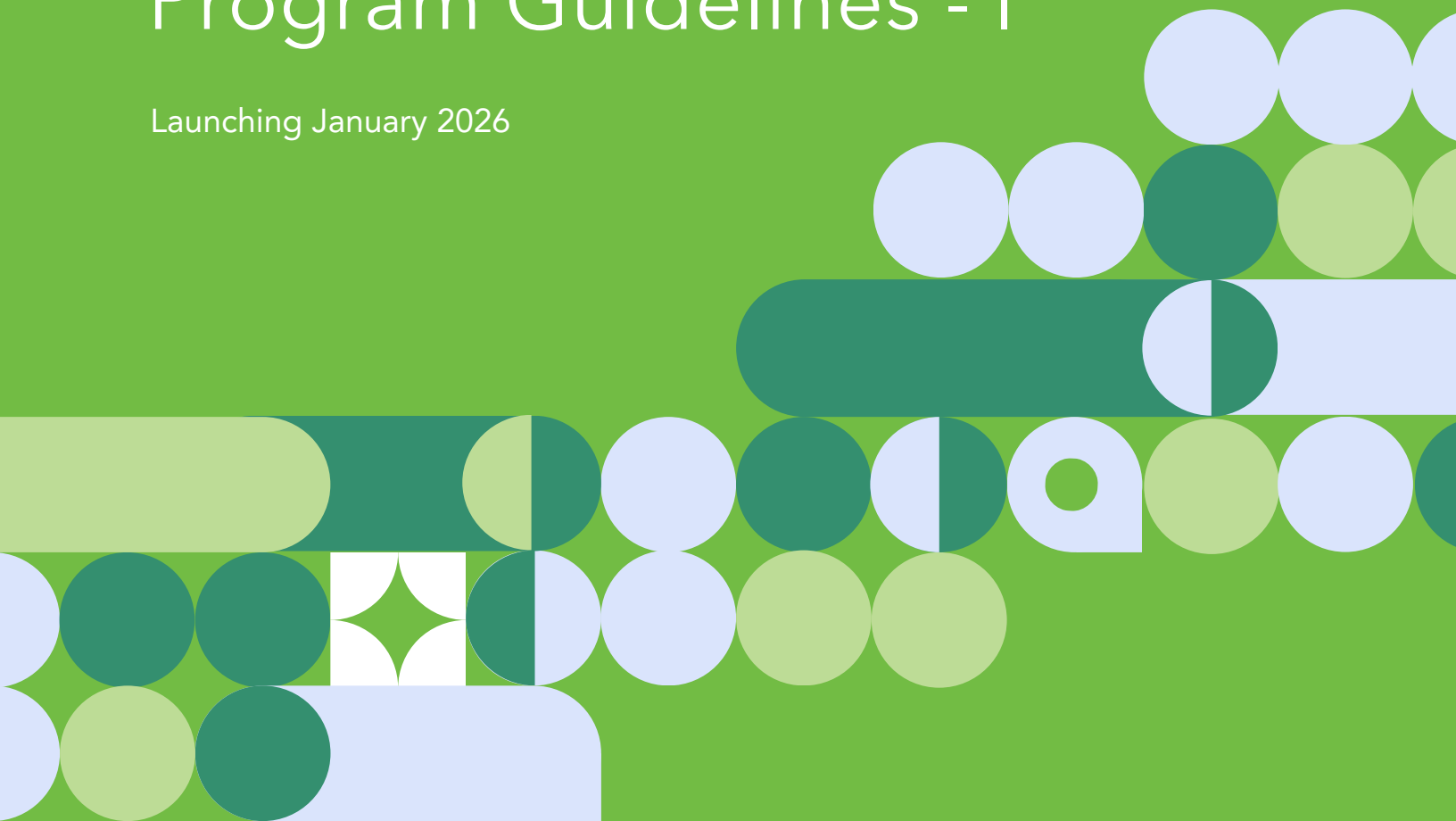




# Good Places Grant

## Program Guidelines - I

Launching January 2026





# Contents

- Overview
- Background
- Funding
- Organization Eligibility
- Eligible & Ineligible Expenses
- Application Process
- Placemaking Workshops
- Application Deliverables
- Application Scoring Criteria
- Reporting Deliverables

# Overview

The Good Places Grant program, operated by the Federation of Calgary Communities, funds both the physical transformation of public spaces—like adding seating, lighting, or murals—and the ongoing programming that keeps them active, such as events and community gatherings.

Building on the success of ActivateYYC, which supported over 180 community-led projects since 2017, this program expands this impact by offering more robust funding, mentorship, and capacity-building opportunities.

The program empowers Community Associations, non-profits, and local citizens to create inclusive, vibrant, and well-used public spaces that reflect their community's identity and needs. The program will distribute \$400k/yr over 3 years (2026-2029).

## \$500-\$15,000 Grants

For placemaking initiatives, community-building projects and engaging programming—like murals, seating, lighting, concerts, markets, and gatherings—that activate and bring life to publicly accessible spaces.

## Who is Eligible?

- Community Associations (CA's)
- Business Improvement areas (BIA's)
- Non-profit Organizations
- Charitable groups
- Social Rec Organizations (SRO's)

## Placemaking Workshops

Open to all potential applicants and placemakers, we are offering placemaking workshops during application periods to strengthen your project plan and applications! The workshops take place every second Wednesday night during application cycles, and are available online or in-person.

## Application Periods

### Winter

Open January 1, due February 28

### Spring

Open April 1, due May 30

### Fall

Open September 1, due October 30

**Need more info? Ready to apply?**



[goodplaces.calgarycommunities.com](https://goodplaces.calgarycommunities.com)



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# Background

The Good Places Project, run by the Federation of Calgary Communities, helps community groups, non-profits, and local organizations bring new life to public spaces. The program offers funding for both physical improvements—like seating, lighting, murals, and planters—and the activities that keep these spaces lively and welcoming year-round. By supporting both infrastructure and ongoing programming, the Good Places Project helps create inclusive, vibrant places where everyone feels at home.

Building on the success of ActivateYYC, which has supported more than 180 local placemaking projects since 2017, the Good Places Project goes a step further—offering more support, mentorship, and learning opportunities to help projects thrive long-term.

Through placemaking, neighbours gain hands-on experience while making their communities stronger, safer, and more connected. The Good Places Project is more than a grant—it's a way to build pride, creativity, and lasting change in Calgary's neighbourhoods.



Artist: Alisha Ingbrigton & Crossroads CA, '18

# Funding

The Good Places Grant program has an annual budget of \$400,000 per year, for 3 years (2026-2029), funded by the generous allocation from 2025 Enmax dividends on behalf of the City of Calgary. This grant supports community-led projects and programs that help make public spaces more welcoming, active, and inclusive. We're looking for ideas that bring people together, improve public spaces, and make Calgary's communities stronger.

**Groups can apply for \$500-\$15,000 towards initiatives that physically improve public spaces through community-led projects and/or inclusive activities and programming that engage with the public realm.**

**Note that 80% of the awarded funds are given up front or in installments based on the project's activities and timelines. The remaining 20% of awarded funds are reimbursed upon project completion.**

## **All projects must:**

- Be Publicly Accessible: Must be in a public space open to everyone.
- Engage with Community: Must involve community (volunteers, participants).
- Be Free: Must be freely accessible for public participants.
- Ensure Safety: Must ensure public safety and follow local regulations.
- Think about Sustainability: Must be able to be operated by project applicants.
- Align with Placemaking: Must align with grant program goals.
- Be Executed Efficiently: Must be completed within the grant timeframe (12 months).
- Comply with Guidelines: Must follow all grant terms and conditions.

## Who is eligible?

Community Associations (CA's), Business Improvement Areas (BIA's), Charitable Groups, Social Rec Organizations (SRO's), and any Non-Profit Organizations incorporated under Societies Act are eligible to apply.

Any other groups (schools, businesses, individuals, artists, etc.) are encouraged to reach out to a Community Association or non-profit to collaborate on a project idea!

# Eligible Expenses

You can use this grant for a wide range of project and program-related costs, including but not limited to:

## Public Space Improvements

- Seating & Tables – Benches, picnic tables, or movable public seating
- Lighting – Solar or permanent decorative lighting
- Murals & Public Art – Artist fees, paint, and supplies for murals or installations
- Landscaping & Greening – Planters, soil, trees, shrubs, and flowers
- Shade & Shelter – Pergolas, shade, or awnings
- Signage & Wayfinding – Directional signs, interpretive panels, or community message boards
- Recreation & Play – Basketball hoops, chess tables, small play features
- Construction Materials – Paint, hardware, tool rentals, and materials for semi-permanent features
- Contractor or Builder Fees – Design, building, or installation costs.
  - \*Maximum 25% of overall application budget
  - Remember to think local!

\*We encourage engaging volunteers wherever possible. However, if your project requires professional contractors or builders for safety or compliance reasons, please outline this in your application

## Programs & Events

- Event Supplies – Craft materials, sports gear, gardening tools, etc.
- Program Materials – Handouts, worksheets, or printed guides
- Space rental
- Promotions & Marketing – Posters, flyers, social media ads, signage
- Rental Equipment – Tents, tables, chairs, sound systems, etc.
- Food & Refreshments – Snacks or drinks (no alcohol) for event participants

## People & Support

- Facilitator or Instructor Fees – Payments for those leading workshops or activities
- Honorariums – For guest speakers, or volunteers (up to \$500 per person).
- Local artist fees (refer to CARFAC rates).
- Entertainment – Musicians, performers, or other live entertainment
- Ceremonial Tobacco, honoraria to Indigenous Elders.

## Operational Costs

- Permits & Licensing – Required permits for public events or construction.
- Insurance – Coverage for events or installations
- Admin or Staffing Support – Up to 15% of the total project budget

# Ineligible Expenses

**Grant funding cannot be used for:**

- Staffing not directly involved in running the program or project
- Fundraising or marketing that isn't tied to the initiative
- Rent, utilities, or overhead not directly related to the project
- Travel, accommodation, or meal costs (unless essential to the program)
- Debt payments or covering past deficits
- Capital purchases like office equipment, computers, or power tools
- Permanent infrastructure or major construction not part of the proposed project
- Prize money, trophies, or giveaways
- Alcohol or cannabis
- Expenses already funded through other sources
- Costs incurred before approval of the application
- Unreasonable or unrelated expenses, as determined by the Federation of Calgary Communities

If you have any questions or need clarification on any items listed eligible/ineligible, please reach out to our grants team before purchasing or expensing items.



Renfrew CA, Edmonton Trail Day, 2017

# Application Process

The Good Places Grant program will include 3 cycles annually, each with a 2 month application window, and a 4 part application support workshop series to enhance the capacity and quality of applications.

## **Winter Intake**

Applications Open: January 1 - February 28

Workshops: Every second Wednesday evening of application period.

Review Period: March 1 - 14

Approval Notification: End of March

## **Spring Intake**

Applications Open: April 1 - May 30

Workshops: Every second Wednesday evening of application period.

Review Period: June 1 - 14

Approval Notification: End of June

\*\*\*SUMMER BREAK\*\*\*

## **Fall Intake**

Applications Open: September 1 - October 31

Workshops: Every second Wednesday evening of application period.

Review Period: November 1 - 14

Approval Notification: End of November

# Placemaking Workshops

Support Workshops are hosted throughout the application period, to support in the process of ideating and planning a placemaking initiative. These workshops are centered around sharing, networking and collaborating on best practices between communities. The proposed workshop themes are (but may not be limited to):

## **IDEATION & VISIONING**

Participants will explore placemaking principles, identify their community needs, and co-develop bold ideas that reflect local identity and aspirations. This workshop focuses on how to enhance existing ideas, or build ideas based on observations, transforming them into a clear project vision.

## **CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT & ENGAGEMENT**

This session will explore ways to develop a broad project idea into a more detailed depiction using visual tools and precedents. Discover how to use visuals to aid in storytelling as you meaningfully engage neighbours, volunteers, and interested parties.

## **BUDGET & PROJECT MANAGEMENT:**

Practice building a simple project plan, including identifying project scope, listing key milestones and developing a project budget. This session will cover outreach strategies, task delegation, and tools for managing timelines and logistics.

## **PROJECT MAINTENANCE & REPORTING:**

Participants will learn how to evaluate their project's impact, prepare final reports for funders, and explore ways to maintain momentum beyond the initial project. This workshop emphasizes storytelling, documentation, and sustaining long-term community benefit.

# Application Deliverables

Applications will look to gain a holistic overview of the project/program,

## 1. Contact & Applicant Info

- Name of applicant/group/organization
- Contact name, email, and phone number
- Are you a :
  - CA
  - BIA.....
  - Other.

## 2. Initiative Overview

- What is the title of your project or program?
- Are you applying for:
  - a project (i.e. benches, murals, planters)
  - a program (i.e. events, festivals, markets, workshops)
  - a bit of both
- Describe your project/program in 1-2 sentences (a sticky note pitch).
- What need or opportunity does this idea respond to in your community?

## 3. Goals & Impact

- What are you hoping to achieve with this initiative?
- How will this project/program benefit your community?
- Who is your target audience or primary participants?

## 4. Creativity & Community Identity

- What makes your idea unique or creative?
- How does it reflect or celebrate your neighbourhood's identity?
- On a scale of 10, currently how strong is the sense of belonging in your community?

\*this does not effect application score, will be used to inform pre/post project data.

## 5. Location

- Where will your project/program take place? (Include address or general location)
- Why did you choose this space?

## 6. Community Collaboration

- Who will be involved in planning or implementing this initiative?
- How will you engage community members, partners, or volunteers?
- As of today, what is your community's capacity to effectively deliver a placemaking project, on a scale of 1-10?

\*this does not effect application score, will be used to inform pre/post project data.

## 7. Budget & Resources (Template Provided)

- What is your total estimated budget?
- Are you receiving any in-kind or cash contributions from other sources?

## 8. Timeline

- What is your anticipated start and end date?
- List key milestones and planning steps for implementation.

## 9. Feasibility

- Do you foresee any immediate challenges, and how will you address them?
- Do you have any required permissions or permits in place (or a plan to get them)?
- Who will be the stewards of this project?

## 10. Sustainability & Follow-Up

- Will this initiative continue or evolve after the funding period?
- How do you plan to share or report back on your project/program outcomes?

Successful applicants must complete their programs/projects within 12 months\* of acceptance, followed by the submission of a final report within 1 month of completion of their project and program delivery.

\*Projects or programs requiring more than 12 months are encouraged to reach out to our grants team!

# Application Scoring

**Grant Committee:** The Good Places Grant program will annually form a grant committee (8-10 members) to serve as a member for a term of 1 calendar year. The committee will be formed with a variety of community interested parties, City of Calgary staff, students, citizens, artists, etc. that can bring both positive reinforcement and constructive criticism to the selection of applications. They may also be able to offer resources, suggestions for improvement, or directional feedback for applications regardless of application outcome.

**Scoring:** Applications (both projects and programs) will be ranked using a series of indicators relevant to public space placemaking projects. There are also three additional opportunities to gain bonus scoring in order to promote both the equity and quality of projects.

Projects are scored in four main categories:

- **Choice of Space** (1-10): Does the selected location have strong potential to benefit from activation? Ideal projects make thoughtful use of underused or meaningful spaces in the community.
- **Community Collaboration** (1-10): How well does the initiative invite participation, partnerships, or input from neighbours, groups, or organizations? How well does this idea reflect/celebrate/enhance community identity? Strong proposals show how they'll bring people together.
- **Project Planning and Feasibility** (1-10): Is the initiative realistic in scope, timeline, and budget? Are the necessary permits, approvals, and partnerships feasible? We're assessing whether the team has a clear, practical plan to carry out their idea successfully.
- **Impact and Outcomes** (1-10): Does the application clearly describe how this project will benefit the community? Will there be lasting benefits once the initiative is complete? How well does the proposed idea respond to a problem or opportunity in the community?

Each of these categories is ranked on a scale from 1 to 10, with clear criteria to help reviewers assess the strength of the proposal.

In addition to the main criteria, bonus points (*subject to weight change*) are available for projects led by a registered Community Association (+2), and for those located in areas with high need, as identified through the lower 50% of the Calgary Equity Index (+2).

Applications with the highest overall scores—based on a combination of these core and bonus criteria—are prioritized for funding. However, the panel also ensures a fair distribution across different neighborhoods and project types. Final decisions take into account both the numerical score, idea creativity, and the broader impact a project might have on the community and Calgary's public realm.

# Example Scoring

**Community:** Apple Bay NE

**Organization:** Apple Bay CA

**Idea:** Pop-up bike park, with bike repair days throughout summer, on Community Association land (LOC - License of Occupation).

**Budget:** \$8,500

CATEGORY	Score (/10)	Comments
Idea Creativity	9	The bike park precedents attached on file are super unique, safe and easy to build with community volunteers.
Choice of Space	8	Would be great to see this field used more creatively, good choice!
Community Collaboration	7	Could we find more ways to integrate volunteer opportunities, or collaborate with local schools?
Initiative Feasibility	8	All necessary permits and approvals are outlined .
Reviewer Score Average	32	The final score will be calculated using the average score across all reviewers on committee.
Bonus: Equity Score (+2)	0	No
Bonus: Community Association Led (+2)	2	Yes
Total Score	36	Max score: 40 Max Score, bonuses included: 46

# Reporting Deliverables

Successful applicants must complete their programs/projects within 12 months of acceptance, followed by the submission of a **final report** within 1 month of completion of their project/program delivery. The report includes:

- **Grant Overview:** Brief summary of the project/program, its goals, and timeline.
- **Achievements & Outcomes:** Key deliverables completed and their impact on the community (e.g., public space improvements, engagement).
- **Financial Summary:** Budget breakdown, actual expenditures, and supporting documentation (invoices/receipts).
- **Challenges & Successes:** Key challenges faced and how they were addressed, along with successes and what worked well.
- **Community Feedback:** Feedback from participants, interested parties, and the community on the project/program's impact. Number of volunteers involved.
- **Sustainability:** Plans for maintaining the project/program beyond the grant period and any continued programming.
- **Lessons & Recommendations:** Insights learned, suggestions for future projects/programs, and potential improvements.
- **Documentation and Visuals:** Photos and Visual Evidence: Before-and-after photos (for projects), or photos documenting program events and activities. Any relevant media (news articles, flyers, promotional materials) or records that showcase the program/project's visibility or community involvement.

## City of Calgary Scope/Report Questions:

- Post project how strong is the sense of belonging for neighbours within your community after the project, on a scale of 1-10?
- Post-project, what is your community's capacity to effectively deliver a placemaking project on a scale of 1-10?
- Will you or your organization continue to do placemaking work in your community, continuing on this initiative to taking on new initiatives? Y/N
- Did you feel supported throughout your project by the placemaking program? Y/N
- Were you satisfied with the level of resources provided to you (i.e. online, workshops, printouts?) Y/N
- Did you, project organizers, or volunteers make new connections in your community? Y/N
- Did you attend any workshops or events at the placemaking innovation lab throughout your project planning process? Y/N
- I found the innovation lab to be an inclusive, welcoming, and useful place. Y/N
- I learned something new or made new connections within this space. Y/N

## Fund Distribution

Once projects are approved, groups will sign a grant agreement and provide their banking information, and receive 80% of their funds up front.

Projects should be completed within 12 months of grant approval, followed by a final report no later than 30 days after project completion. After submitting the final report, groups will receive the final 20% of their grant.

# BECOME A PLACEMAKER AND APPLY TODAY!

We encourage all community members, groups, and organizations—whether you have a fully formed idea or just the seed of one—to apply and get involved. As part of the Federation of Calgary Communities, this placemaking program is more than just funding; it's about empowering residents to lead meaningful change in the spaces they care about. We're here to support you every step of the way, from brainstorming to budgeting. If you have questions or ideas, don't hesitate to reach out.

Together, we can create a more vibrant, connected, and community-driven Calgary—one project at a time.

REACH OUT!

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Southwood Paint the Pavement, 2023

