

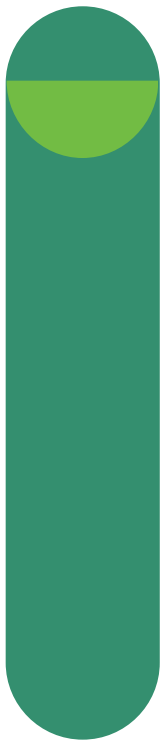


Good Places Grant

Program Guidelines

Calgary, Alberta | 2026

Updated - March 2026



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Overview

The Good Places Grant program, operated by the Federation of Calgary Communities, funds placemaking initiatives. **Placemaking** is defined as “a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value” (Project for Public Spaces, 2007) and involves both the physical transformation of public spaces—like adding seating, recreation, or murals—and the ongoing programming that keeps them active, such as events and community gatherings. By supporting both infrastructure and ongoing programming, it helps create inclusive, vibrant places where everyone feels at home.

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 \$400,000/year over 3 years (2026-2029).

\$500-\$15,000 Grants

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

Placemaking Workshops

Open to all, we offer placemaking workshops to help support and strengthen applications, and to build placemaking community.

The workshops take place every second Wednesday night during application periods, 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

Grant Program Goals

To support community-led creation and activation of inclusive, vibrant, and welcoming public spaces through physical transformation and ongoing programming.

We’re looking for ideas that bring people together, improve public spaces, and make Calgary’s communities stronger.

Who is Eligible?

- Community Associations (CA’s)*
- Business Improvement Areas (BIA’s)
- Non-profit Organizations (NPO’s)
- Charitable groups
- Social Rec Organizations (SRO’s)

*Please note that Community Association applicants will receive priority during application selection.

Background

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, robust funding, 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.

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



goodplaces.calgarycommunities.com



goodplaces@calgarycommunities.com



Artist: Alisha Ingbrigtson & 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.

Groups can apply for **\$500-\$15,000** towards initiatives that physically improve public spaces through community-led projects and/or support recurring programming in the public realm. We define recurring programming as occurring at least 3 times at the same location.

Please 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 located within City of Calgary boundaries
- Be in a public space (public parks, outdoor open spaces, community associations, libraries) and be publicly accessible (open to everyone).
- Must be a new initiative, or must introduce at least one new and significant project element.
- Engage with Community: Must involve some aspect of community participation and/or co-creation? (i.e. volunteer opportunities, partnership, feedback).
- 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 incorporated Non-Profit Organizations.

Any other groups in Calgary (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 range of 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, gazebos, or sheds (would likely require additional funding beyond the Good Places Grant and coordination with The City of Calgary)
- Signage & Wayfinding – Directional signs, interpretive panels, or community message boards
- Recreation & Play – Basketball hoops, chess tables, small play features (*playground projects not eligible)
- Construction Materials – Paint, hardware, tool rentals, and materials for semi-permanent features
- Contractor or Builder Fees – Design, building, or installation costs

*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 (excluding damage deposits)
- 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:

- Capital expenditures
- Playground projects
- Digital signage
- 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
- Damage deposits
- Travel, accommodation, or meal costs (unless essential to the program)
- Debt payments or covering past deficits
- Items for private use or those not directly involved in running the program or project
- 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
- Stampede breakfasts or neighbour day events
- 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: Mid-July

Fall Intake

Applications Open: September 1 - October 31

Workshops: Every second Wednesday evening of application period.

Review Period: November 1 - 14

Approval Notification: Mid-December



Southwood Paint the Pavement, 2023

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 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 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 on a scale from 1 to 10 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?

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.

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.

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 reach out. 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.

Together, we can create a more vibrant, connected, and community-driven Calgary.

REACH OUT!

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