

Forsyth County Government



Community Grant (CG) Funding Policy

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote partnerships between Forsyth County and nonprofit organizations for the benefit of Forsyth County residents to cooperatively support and maintain a community which is safe and healthy, convenient and pleasant to live in, with educational, cultural and economic opportunities for all.

II. Coverage

The policy, upon adoption by the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners, shall be applicable to all requests for support from nonprofit organizations that align with County services and serve the citizens of Forsyth County.

III. Policy

a. Eligibility

Organizations serving Forsyth County are defined as those having 501(c) designations and meeting the legal requirements of the State of North Carolina, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and the County of Forsyth *and* will use locations within Forsyth County limits for requested project’s primary service place, have an office in Forsyth County, serve Forsyth County residents, and conduct requested project’s activities and programs in Forsyth County.

b. General Funding Assistance

The Community Grant (CG) Funding Policy is intended to provide time-limited funding for qualified agencies that provide services the County is legally permitted to fund. Funding awarded in one year is not a guarantee of future funding. Agencies should refrain from requesting support for indirect, administrative, or ongoing expenses. Requested funding should align to a *direct* project or program expense. The requested funding cycle must be noted on the original application.

Priority will be given to applications that most closely align with Board of Commissioner priorities established in each funding cycle. Board priorities are limited to the following County Policy and Goals:

- (i) Safety - Create a community that is safe.
- (ii) Health - Create a community that is healthy.
- (iii) Education - Create a community with educational opportunities for everyone.
- (iv) Cultural - Create a community that enhances the knowledge, beliefs and customs of everyone.
- (v) Economic Opportunities - Create a community with economic opportunities for everyone.

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c. Funding Amount

As part of budget planning, a percentage of the General Fund budget may be set aside for Community Grant investments. The Board of Commissioners will finalize funding amounts upon adoption of a budget ordinance prior to the start of the fiscal year. Agencies should note that Community Grant funding is not guaranteed and even a slight economic downturn might require a reduction or withdrawal of County support.

d. Application Process

Applications will be available October through November of each fiscal year on the Forsyth County website and advertised through the county’s various media platforms. Grants will be approved during an April/May Board of Commissioners meeting with awards effective July 1.

Not less than two weeks prior to the application opening, staff will conduct an orientation and training session with potential applicants to ensure understanding of and adherence to County funding and applications requirements.

The applications will collect information related to the following:

- (i) How well the mission and services of the organization match those of Forsyth County.
- (ii) A tax I.D. number is required.
- (iii) The application must also include tax exempt documentation, current annual certified audit if application is over \$100,000, and a board member roster to ensure compliance with applicable laws.
- (iv) Applicants will be required to list other sources of revenue that have been requested to support the project.
- (v) The type of service(s) provided, the estimated number of residents to be served, the general socio-economic characteristics of residents to be served, outcomes to be achieved, and specific metrics that can be used by the County to evaluate the success of the service(s) funded by the County and their desired outcomes.
- (vi) Summary of applicant’s experience level with the proposed program or service to provide, including key achievements and milestones with specific quantitative outcomes, as well as the impact on the target audience supported by quantitative data.

An application will not be considered if the applicant is determined ineligible based on requirements stated in Section III(a), the application packet is incomplete, and/or is submitted after the established due date. An organization’s receipt of funding in a prior year will not be a determining factor in the recommendation process. Each year is

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evaluated independently of any prior year funding decisions. Therefore, an award of one year is not a guarantee of funding in any future year(s).

IV. **The Recommendation Process**

The recommendation process will be managed and scheduled as part of the County’s annual budget preparation cycle. All applications that pass the Completion Review and Eligibility Review phases move forward. Applicant must answer “yes” and show proof for the following:

- a. *Completion Review*
 - (i) Was the application submitted on time (on or before the due date)?
 - (ii) Is the application complete (all required fields answered)?

- b. *Eligibility Review*
 - (i) Does the organization have a 501(c) designation?
 - (ii) Is the Organization registered with North Carolina Secretary or State?
 - (iii) Did the organization file its most recent Form 990 with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)?
 - (iv) Will the organization use locations within Forsyth County limits for requested project’s primary service place?
 - (v) Does the organization have an office in Forsyth County?
 - (vi) Do all grant funds serve Forsyth County residents?
 - (vii) Does the organization conduct requested project’s activities and programs in Forsyth County?

After staff reviews applications that successfully meet the Completion Review and Eligibility Review requirements, recommendations will be made by Subject Matter Experts. Subject Matter Experts are typically representatives of the department most closely affiliated with the services proposed by each organization.

The Subject Matter Expert’s recommendation is reviewed by the County Manager and presented to the Board of County Commissioners for their consideration.

V. **Distribution of Funds, Reporting and Compliance**

An agency must enter into a contract with the County prior to receiving funding approved by the Board of Commissioners. The contract will describe, among other items, the services to be provided, the funding distribution schedule, the expenditure and performance reporting requirements, and other terms and conditions. Funds distributed by Forsyth County may only be spent as indicated in the nonprofit application for which the funds were awarded, or as otherwise approved by the Board of County Commissioners. Forsyth County funding distributed to nonprofit organizations may not be used for political activities. Funded organizations will require

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on-site monitoring visits by County Staff as well as subjected to a comprehensive County internal audit.

Funding distribution and expenditure and performance reporting will be based on the following:

- a. Payment of funds will be distributed on a monthly reimbursement basis for costs actually incurred and paid in accordance with the approved budget and for performance of the approved activities.

- b. If an organization is facing economic hardships and unable to operate on a reimbursement basis, they may qualify for an advancement. To be considered for advancement, a Financial Hardship Letter is required and Proof of Hardship.
 - (i) The following items will be reviewed by staff for Proof of Hardship:
 - Current Income Statement
 - Current Bank Statements
 - Most Recent 990 Form

 - (ii) Forsyth County staff will review documents received and provide a recommendation to the County Manager who will approve or deny requests based on need. If approved for Financial Hardship, an Addendum will be added to the recipient agreement allowing for a one-month payment in advance. Additional payouts will require receipts (and/or other necessary documents) and expected performance reports for the advance payout, before the next month's payout.

- c. Use of funds will be reported through monthly Performance and Expenditure Reports
 - (i) Performance Reports should prove Measures and Outcomes (Examples: Surveys, Assessments, Evaluations, News Articles, Event Flyers, Sign-in Sheets, Enrollment Forms, Client Data Reports).

 - (ii) Expenditure Reports will include: Invoice to County, Receipts totaling to Invoice, Financial Statement showing revenue and the source, and line-item expenditures compared with the approved budget.

- d. Reports may be reviewed by the Internal Audit Department.

- e. Forsyth County reserves the right to recapture funds not utilized according to this policy.