



**TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
REQUEST FOR DIRECTION**

MEETING DATE: January 18, 2021

ORIGINATED BY: Myron Thompson – Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Alberta Civil Society Fund – Letter of Support for IMAGINE Citizens

BACKGROUND:

The new Civil Society Fund (CSF) has been established to support an effective and sustainable recovery of the civil society sector. The CSF provides \$20 million to expand civil society's capacity to address social problems for Albertans, with \$7 million budgeted for 2020/21. The objective of this program is to support civil society's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Civil society includes non-profit and voluntary organizations, registered charities, informal groups or movements pursuing shared interests or values and private-sector organizations and individuals pursuing social good. Civil society plays a critical role in the well-being of Albertans and contributes significantly to Alberta's economy. This program funding will help build even more effective civil society organizations by leveraging the existing strengths of the sector and assist in the overall recovery for Alberta.

CSF funding is one-time only with the application deadline being January 20, 2021. Activities advanced through this program need to be completed with a 24-month period of endorsement of an agreement.

IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health is a formed society made up of a diverse group of citizens from all walks of life, most of whom have had some interaction with the healthcare system and are working together to influence decision making at all levels and to become recognized partners in improving our Province's healthcare system. IMAGINE Citizens have been established since 2015 and utilize their knowledge and experiences to assist in helping improve the healthcare system. More information on this group's activity can be sourced at www.imaginecitizens.ca

DISCUSSION:

IMAGINE Citizens is making application under the CSF program and are requesting support from the Town of Blackfalds in the form of a letter of endorsement for the proposal. If IMAGINE Citizens is successful in receiving funding for their proposed "Alberta Community Health Ambassador Program" the Town of Blackfalds will have ample opportunity to discuss whether to formally partner with IMAGINE Citizens or to act strictly in a support capacity and to advise the Blackfalds Health Professional Attraction and Retention Committee in deliberating about how they might partner with the organization.

At the most recent BHPARC Meeting held January 13th, the Committee endorsed a letter of support for the application (see attachment) for IMAGINE Citizens. The CSF



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Application summary is also included as an attachment and provides an overview of the project activity objectives.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Committee of Council direct Administration to develop and provide a letter of support from the Municipality for IMAGINE Citizens in support of their application under the Civil Society Fund (CSF) program.

ALTERNATIVES:

- A. That the Standing Committee of Council does not support the letter of support by the Municipality as requested.
- B. That the Standing Committee of Council refer back to Administration for more information.

ATTACHMENTS:

- *BHPARC Draft Letter of Support*
- *IMAGINE Citizens CSF Application Summary*
- *Letter of Support IMAGINE*

Approvals:



CAO Myron Thompson

Department Director/Author

Annamarie Fuchs
Blackfalds Health Professional
Attraction & Retention Committee.
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January 12, 2021

To: The Civil Society Fund
Government of Alberta, Civil Society Fund
<https://www.alberta.ca/civil-society-fund.aspx>

Good day;

The Town of Blackfalds is one of the fastest growing and youngest rural communities in Canada. We are centrally located near Red Deer Alberta and between the metropolitan cities of Calgary and Edmonton. And we have an interest in creating a community health system centered around innovation, diversity, interdependence, and longevity.

We have established a committee of residents whose focus is to attract and retain health professionals to the community as a means to build a robust and diverse health infrastructure for our community.

The Civil Society Fund (CSF) application presented by IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health is something that we wholeheartedly endorse. IMAGINE Citizens has the capability to work with a range of groups and communities to build and to strengthen a network of connectors who will drive innovation that will change the landscape of health in this province. If the IMAGINE Citizens proposal is funded, we look forward as a town and as a committee to exploring how we might participate with one or more of the CHA's

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support to IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health.

Sincerely,

Annamarie Fuchs, Chair
Blackfalds Health Professional Attraction & Retention Committee.

Fund purpose:

This fund is to build more effective civil society organizations by leveraging the existing strengths of the sector. An effective, sustainable recovery for civil society will play an important role in Alberta's overall COVID recovery.

Application Summary:

A pressing social issue in AB is that people are losing trust in critical pieces/elements of ABs traditional approaches to providing health services and information, as observed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, people continue to face multiple systemic challenges and barriers to accessing health information and services. Innovation and change are needed. This project will introduce an Alberta Community Health Ambassador Program (ACHAP) and Community Health Ambassadors (CHAs) across Alberta to drive change that works in communities for communities. Starting with rural and ethno-cultural communities, ACHAP will:

- 1) Build a network of visible, respected, trusted CHAs to act as connectors within and among communities, civil society and health organizations to drive and guide change and innovation informed by the voices of people in communities.
- 2) Build community capacity to engage and manage personal and family health concerns and interactions with the health system and organization and inform change and innovation priorities and directions.
- 3) Increase civil society's ability to identify and understand community concerns and challenges AND strengthen community and individual health.
- 4) Strengthen civil society's ability to contribute ideas to AND participate in organizational and system change and innovation efforts.

Project Activities:

A. Partnership and Project Development

- Project planning (expectations, roles & responsibilities, outcomes/deliverables, communications, stakeholders, and future partners (e.g., education, primary health, municipalities, FCSS).
- Governance framework and requirements (e.g., IP ownership; legal considerations).
- Sustainability model (e.g., Explore ACHAP delivery through partners, education; new partner recruitment; social enterprise for revenue generation; non-regulated health professional employment and volunteer honorariums for CHAs; compensation / recognition framework).
- Maturity model aligned with civil and health organizations and supported by a virtual knowledge management and networking platform.

B. ACHAP Co-design

- Identify CHA Cohort 1 and co-design CHA role and ACHAP education, training, and fieldwork materials, building on existing resources with partners and CHAs
- Identify ACHAP knowledge management and networking platform (leverage existing AB investments)

C. CHA Cohort 1 Fieldwork and ACHAP Improvements

- Support CHA Cohort 1 fieldwork and use feedback to improve ACHAP materials and delivery

D. Recruit, Train & Support Next CHA Cohorts & Continual Improvements

- Recruit, train, and support Cohorts 2 & 3; continue support for Cohort 1
- Use feedback from CHAs to improve ACHAP courses and materials
- Implement sustainability model and maturity model

E. Project Sustainability and Maturity Activities

- Formalize sustainability and maturity models and implement with partners and develop agreements.

F. Developmental Evaluation and Monitoring

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR/COUNCIL

January 18, 2020

Civil Society Fund
3rd Floor, 44 Capital Blvd
10044 108 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 5E6

Re: Letter of Support for IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health

I am writing this letter of support on behalf of Blackfalds Town Council in support of the IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health application for Civil Society Funding.

This opportunity for Civil Society funding, with the intentions of supporting transformational change, improving the organization's function, and building civil societies' capacity to work together, is an excellent fit for the IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health Initiative. The proposed Alberta Community Health Ambassador Program will work across Alberta to rebuild trust in provincial institutions by building network connections within and among communities. Community capacity will increase and strengthen due to Community Health Ambassadors working for their communities from within their communities.

The Town of Blackfalds is a young, dynamic, growing community that supports this innovative initiative. We look forward to participating together with IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health to increase our community and residents' health.

The opportunity to collaborate with IMAGINE: Citizens Collaborating for Health is an exciting one in line with our municipalities goals of being a progressive and growing family community, situated in an economically sustainable, collaborative, healthy, safe, and beautiful living environment, where opportunities are abundant and realized through partnerships and innovation.

Thank you for reviewing this letter of support. I welcome the opportunity to discuss our support for this initiative.

Sincerely,



Mayor Richard Poole
Town of Blackfalds



Town of Blackfalds Council 2017-2021

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