



**City of Kingston
Report to Council
Report Number 25-153**

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Community Development,
Wellbeing & IIDEA
Date of Meeting: August 12, 2025
Subject: Community Investment Fund 2025 – Funding
Recommendations

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 4. Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community

Goal: 4.1 Enhance community safety and well-being.

Executive Summary:

The Community Investment Fund (CIF) is a joint grant program between the City of Kingston and the United Way of Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington (United Way) based on the shared community priorities of both organizations.

A total of 23 eligible applications from 20 agencies were received in May 2025, with a total funding request of \$544,767. Following a volunteer panel review process, 14 applications are recommended to be funded through the City's 2025 municipal contribution of \$190,000.

Recommendation:

That Council approve the 14 Community Investment Fund grant recommendations, attached as Exhibit A to Report Number 25-153, for a total of a \$190,000 municipal contribution.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

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| Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services | Not required |
| Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services | Not required |
| David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston | Not required |
| Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer | |
| Ian Semple, Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services | Not required |

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Options/Discussion:

In 2011, City Council approved a new grant program that amalgamated the municipal Healthy Community Fund and the United Way's community grants into a single program called the "Community Investment Fund (CIF)".

There are three funding streams that align with the community impact areas defined by the United Way and the priorities of the City. These streams are: "Helping Kids Be All They Can Be", "Building Strong and Healthy Communities" and "Moving People from Poverty to Possibility".

A total of 23 eligible applications from 20 agencies were received in May 2025 with a total request of \$544,767.

Community volunteers, the United Way and City staff reviewed the requests in accordance with the CIF criteria. The process included a paper review of the applications and Zoom presentations to the review panels. Staff also shared proposed projects with internal departments managing grants and supports in the Arts, Heritage, Recreation, Social Services and Rural Development areas to ensure alignment and prevent duplication.

A total of 14 applications are recommended to be funded from the City of Kingston municipal contribution of \$190,000. Details of these awards are included in Exhibit A of this report. The United Way Board of Directors will approve the projects and amounts funded directly by the United Way. In total, between the City and the United Way, \$270,000 in Community Investment funding will be awarded to community agencies.

All grant applications were considered against the availability of funds, the quality of the application and the need for the proposed programs. They were additionally reviewed using an Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IIDEA) lens with a focus on the impact of services to vulnerable populations.

The next round of CIF grants will take place in the spring of 2026 pending budget approval.

Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations

Grant applications were reviewed using an IIDEA lens with a focus on the impact of services to vulnerable populations.

Financial Considerations

The approved 2025 operating budget allocated the annual \$190,000 for the Community Investment Fund Program.

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Contacts

Ruth Noordegraaf, Director, Community Development, Wellbeing & IIDEA, 613-546-2695 extension 4916

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Ben Leslie, Community Development Coordinator, Community Development, Wellbeing & IIDEA

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Community Investment Fund Summary Report 2025

**2025 City of Kingston and United Way KFL&A
Community Investment Grant Fund Summary Report**

Background:

Since 2011, United Way KFL&A and the City of Kingston have successfully collaborated to streamline the Community Investment Fund grant process. By implementing a single coordinated application, this joint approach reduces duplication and eases the workload for organizations seeking funding.

United Way manages the coordination of applications and oversees the volunteer review process at no cost to the City. This collaboration ensures alignment with both United Way and City of Kingston funding priorities, while maximizing community impact.

The City of Kingston has contributed \$190,000 of their annual grant budget to this year's process. City funds must be approved during the fiscal year (i.e. by December 31, 2025). United Way contributes to this granting process as well. The amount from United Way depends on the overall amounts that are recommended by volunteers, available funding, and considers the geographic region of program delivery.

The Community Investment Fund granting process includes a thorough review of online application submissions by trained volunteers. Applicant organizations make presentations to volunteer panels who have an opportunity to ask questions of the applicants and then discuss the requests and arrive at a consensus for funding recommendations. City of Kingston and United Way staff participate in the process as non-voting members at the panel meetings. The recommendations are then further reviewed at a special meeting of all the panel chairs to ensure there is sufficient funding to meet the recommendations. Final recommendations from panel volunteers for this year's process are included in this report.

2025 Community Investment Fund Grant Recommendations:

A total of 23 applications from 20 agencies were received. Volunteers were divided into five review panels and all applications were reviewed in accordance with the City of Kingston and United Way Community Investment Fund Guidelines.

The total amount requested through the Community Investment Fund process was \$544,767. This report summarizes grants recommended for **14 programs** for a total amount of **\$190,000** for approval by Kingston City Council.

Additionally, some requests have been forwarded to the United Way KFL&A Board of Directors for approval. Some grants are funded by both the City and United Way, others by one or the other. This report includes only the funding amounts recommended to Kingston City Council; the United Way Board of Directors will approve the amounts recommended to be funded by United Way.

All grants were prioritized on availability of funds, quality and need of the project, and reviewed using an Equity Diversity Inclusion & Indigenization lens, as well as the impact of services to vulnerable populations. As always there is not enough funding to approve all applications; and there are some applications that are not recommended for approval, based on volunteer reviews and the amount of funding available.

Volunteer panel members included: Sarah Beckstead, Don Campbell, Adam Clow, Lucille Groll, Joan Jardin, Keshiv Kaushal, Rebecca Kelly, Lindsay Kennedy, James Lighthart, Margaret McGowan, Julie McLachlan, Erin Nolan, Ade Oyebanji, Kim Peachey, Matthew Renaud, Eleanor Rogers, Jessica Schonewille, Abigail Smith, Karen Smith, Meghan Warring, Dominik Wechsler, and Shayi Yogeswaran.

City of Kingston and United Way staff participated and served as a resource to the process and at the panel meetings.

- Benjamin Leslie, Community Development Coordinator, Community Development, Wellbeing & IIDEA, for the City of Kingston.
- Kim Hockey, Vice President of Community Investment; Claire DesRoche, Community Investment Manager, for United Way KFL&A.

Helping Kids Be All They Can Be

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|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| # of Grants Recommended: | 4 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | \$51,600 |

| Organization | Project/Program | Funding Recommended |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| BGC South East | Innovation Pathways for Vulnerable Youth | \$11,000 |
| Big Brothers Big Sisters of KFL&A | Mentoring and Integration for Mental Health & Addictions Relief | \$14,000 |
| Girls Inc. Limestone | Girls Inc. Healthy Minds, Informed Choices Project | \$11,600 |
| Youth Diversion | Empowering Young Minds | \$15,000 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | | \$51,600 |

Grant Descriptions

BGC South East: \$11,000 is recommended for *Innovation Pathways for Vulnerable Youth*. This program will support underrepresented youth (ages 12–18) in gaining hands-on experience in STEM, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Delivered at the STEM & Robotics Centre, participants will identify local challenges and design solutions while learning business skills, working with professional tools, and receiving mentorship. It will address disengagement among marginalized youth and respond to the regional skilled trades shortage by fostering employability, confidence, and real-world problem-solving. Funding will support salaries for Education Instructors, the Manager of STEM, the Machine Shop Lead, and the Associate Director of STEM & Strategic Initiatives.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington: \$14,000 is recommended for *Mentoring and Integration for Mental Health & Addictions Relief*. This initiative will provide trauma-informed mentorship to high-risk youth on waitlists for community programs. Many participants face high adversity, including abuse, poverty, and family incarceration, and have been excluded from other programs. Mentors and staff will help youth build skills in emotional regulation, communication, and peer relationships creating safer, more supportive environments for long-term development. Funding will support salaries for Mentor Instructors and the Mentoring Coordinator.

Girls Inc. Limestone: \$11,600 is recommended for *Girls Inc. Healthy Minds, Informed Choices Project*. This initiative will serve girls and gender-expansive youth across KFL&A through two integrated programs; Friendly PEERsuasion will build resistance to peer pressure around substance use, while Healthy Mind+Body will promote well-being through activities focused on nutrition, stress, body image, and physical health. These programs will equip participants with tools to make informed choices and support peers in doing the same. Funding will support salaries for the Program Manager, Coordinator, and Facilitator.

Youth Diversion: \$15,000 is recommended for *Empowering Young Minds*. This initiative will support children and youth aged 8–17 who are not in school, employment, or training. It will offer structured after-school programming three evenings a week, including mentorship, prosocial activities, and family engagement. The program will focus on addressing behaviors linked to criminal activity and social disengagement. As part of a broader intervention strategy aligned with the Intersections Program, it will respond to increased referrals for youth under 12 and rising rates of absenteeism and violence. Staff and trained volunteers will provide a safe, inclusive environment that encourages positive development and re-engagement with supports. Funding will support staff salaries, program supplies, transportation, guest speaker fees, and participant gift cards.

Building Strong and Healthy Communities

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|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| # of Grants Recommended: | 7 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | \$91,400 |

| Organization | Project/Program | Funding Recommended |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| Bloom Skills Centre | Bloom Program Expansion: Opportunities For Employment Development | \$11,000 |
| Family and Children's Services of Frontenac Lennox and Addington | Expansion of Services to Underserved Communities | \$10,300 |
| Maltby Centre | Close to Home | \$15,000 |
| Martha's Table Community Program | Martha's Community Navigator Program | \$7,500 |
| Ontario 211 Services | Racism Reporting Service | \$25,000 |
| Victim Services of Kingston and Frontenac | Breaking the Silence: Empowering Male Survivors | \$14,600 |
| Well Suited Kingston | WSK Suiting Operations & Peer Support | \$8,000 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | | \$91,400 |

Grant Descriptions

Bloom Skills Centre: \$11,000 is recommended for *Bloom Program Expansion: Opportunities for Employment Development*. This project will enhance year-round learning opportunities for young adults through entrepreneurship and employment training. Funding will support a greenhouse and permanent market stand for seasonal gardening education and purchase tools for eco-friendly landscaping. The program will offer adaptable work experiences that accommodate diverse learning and accessibility needs, preparing participants for independent employment through practical, skill-based learning.

Family and Children's Services of Frontenac Lennox and Addington: \$10,300 is recommended for *Expansion of Services to Underserved Communities*. This project will expand services at A Great Start for Families – Kahwà:tsire Ronwatiyenawá:se Centre by engaging underrepresented communities through Insight Gatherings. These events will invite feedback from Black, Newcomer, Francophone, 2SLGBTQ+, and rural families about their needs and barriers in accessing supports. Based on community input, new programs will be designed to offer culturally responsive, accessible services that better reflect and serve local populations. Funding will support meals and snacks, grocery gift cards, printing and advertising, travel and childminding for gatherings and program expansion, and volunteer honorariums for translation support.

Maltby Centre: \$15,000 is recommended for *Close to Home*. This initiative will address the shortage of live-in treatment options for children with complex mental health needs by developing local clinical pod models. These models will provide intensive support close to children's communities and families, reducing the need for placement in distant facilities. The program will offer a stepped care approach, combining professional treatment with strong family partnerships. Services will be trauma-informed and tailored to help children stabilize, strengthen relationships, and transition successfully back to family and school environments. Funding is for a consultant to design and structure the program.

Martha's Table Community Program: \$7,500 is recommended for *Martha's Community Navigator Program*. This program will have a Community Navigator help individuals connect with services, resources, and opportunities that support independence and well-being. Participants will receive guidance and support to navigate housing, employment, and basic needs while developing routines that encourage long-term self-sufficiency. The program will emphasize efficient service delivery and relationship-building as pathways toward reducing reliance on emergency supports. Funding will support Community Navigator salaries.

Ontario 211 Services: \$25,000 is recommended for *Racism Reporting Service*. This program will provide a community-based reporting mechanism for individuals affected by hate and racism. By offering a safe, accessible way to report incidents, it will encourage greater community participation and help ensure that victims are connected to appropriate support services. These will include local mental health resources and culturally relevant programs based in or serving their communities. Funding will support Navigator salaries, development of a data dashboard, program and project equipment, and printing and advertising costs.

Victim Services of Kingston and Frontenac: \$14,600 is recommended for *Breaking the Silence: Empowering Male Survivors*. This project will address stigma that prevents male-identified survivors of violence from seeking help. It will include a public awareness campaign, localized research on stigma, and confidential support services. The program will provide a safe, nonjudgmental environment for men to access resources, contributing to more inclusive victim support systems. Funding will go towards the part-time salary and benefits for a Project Coordinator and Male Identified Support Worker.

Well Suited Kingston: \$8,000 is recommended for *Suiting Operations & Peer Support*. This program will provide men in need of business attire with access to appropriate clothing for job interviews, graduations, work ceremonies, and other professional settings. Suiting sessions will take place at the office or by appointment at an alternate location for small groups. A trained staff member will assist participants in selecting suitable clothing and offer guidance on professional norms. These one-on-one sessions will also introduce basic workplace expectations, communication etiquette, and interview preparation. The aim will be to increase participants' confidence and readiness for employment-related events.

Moving People From Poverty to Possibility

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| # of Grants Recommended: | 3 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | \$47,000 |

| Organization | Project/Program | Funding Recommended |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Kingston Home Base Housing | Equipped to Thrive: Kitchen Tools for Youth Life Skills | \$11,000 |
| Kingston Home Base Housing | STEP: Skills for Transition, Empowerment, and Preparedness | \$16,000 |
| Tipi Moza (Iron Homes) | Affordable Housing Project: Windows 25 | \$20,000 |
| Total City \$s Recommended: | | \$47,000 |

Grant Descriptions

Kingston Home Base Housing: \$11,000 is recommended for *Equipped to Thrive: Kitchen Tools for Youth Life Skills*. This project will support youth experiencing homelessness by equipping a commercial teaching kitchen at the Kingston Youth Services Hub. Funding will support the purchase of tools such as prep sinks, refrigeration units, and food processors, and the kitchen will offer hands-on training in culinary skills and nutrition. This space will provide a practical learning environment that supports youth in developing life skills, fostering stability, and preparing for employment.

Kingston Home Base Housing: \$16,000 is recommended for *STEP: Skills for Training, Empowerment, and Preparedness*. Delivered at One Roof, the STEP program will support youth aged 16–24 who are homeless or at risk. Through structured, experiential learning, participants will gain life and employment skills. Activities will include cooking, budgeting, cleaning, and weekly community outings. Using trauma-informed, strength-based approaches, the program will build routines, emotional regulation, and social connections, helping youth prepare for stable housing and independent living. Funding will go towards the staff salary of a Community Worker to deliver the programming.

Tipi Moza (Iron Homes): \$20,000 is recommended for *Affordable Housing Project: Windows 25*. This request will seek external funding for capital repairs to affordable housing units. While rental income covers basic operations, it is insufficient for major renovations/maintenance. Additional support will ensure safe, sustainable housing remains available to low-income tenants. Funding will go towards the purchase and installation of windows.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Hockey
Vice President, Community Impact
United Way Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington