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Executive Summary

Grossmont Healthcare District (GHD) is committed to strengthening the health and well-being of East County residents through strategic investments, partnerships, and programs that expand access to quality care, promote health and wellness, and elevate health education and healthcare workforce training. A vital component of that commitment is supporting our community partners as they pursue external funding and programmatic approval to advance projects aligned with our mission and strategic pillars.

Each year, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and other community partners seek GHD’s endorsement through letters of support to bolster their grant applications, funding requests, and programmatic growth initiatives. These letters often serve as a key signal to funders and approving agencies of the project’s merit, community alignment, and potential for impact.

However, without a clear policy framework, the process for evaluating and approving such requests can be inconsistent, time-sensitive decisions can be delayed, and staff authority can be unclear.

The **Grant and Program Support Letter Policy** establishes a consistent, transparent, and timely process for responding to these requests while ensuring they are fully aligned with the District’s vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities.

This policy delegates authority to the CEO and executive team to act swiftly within defined parameters while preserving the Board’s oversight on matters of financial commitment or formal partnership.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear, fair, and efficient pathway for reviewing and approving community partner requests for letters of support in connection with grant applications, funding opportunities, or other programmatic growth initiatives.

By establishing eligibility criteria, required requestor information, and a defined approval process, the policy ensures that GHD can respond quickly and consistently to qualified requests without compromising governance standards or Board authority.

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Eligibility Criteria

Under this policy, the CEO, on behalf of GHD, may issue a letter of support if the request meets all of the following criteria:

1. **Qualified Applicant** – The request originates from a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or public agency serving the East County region and is a current or previous grantee.
2. **Strategic Alignment** – The proposed project or initiative aligns with GHD’s vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities.
3. **Health Impact** – The project advances one or more of the District’s priority health needs or addresses key social determinants of health.
4. **No Unapproved Commitments** – The request does not obligate GHD to provide financial resources, enter into a formal partnership, or commit other significant resources without prior Board authorization.

Required Information from Requestor

To facilitate timely review, the requesting organization must provide:

- **Organization Name, Non-Profit Number or Other Relevant Identifier, and Project Name**
- **Funder and Application Deadline**
- **Description of the Project** and how it supports East County health goals
- **Draft Letter** (if available) or key points for inclusion

Approval Process

1. **Initial Review** – The CEO and executive team will review all requests to ensure eligibility and alignment with GHD’s strategic priorities.

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2. **CEO Approval** – If the request meets all policy criteria, the CEO may approve and sign the letter of support. A memo will be provided to the Board President noting the request, approval, and policy basis.
3. **Escalation for Exceptions** – Requests falling outside the policy guidelines will be referred to the Board President, the appropriate committee, or the full Board for consideration at a public meeting.

Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed at least annually by the CEO and Policies and Procedures Committee (or equivalent) to ensure it remains responsive to community needs and aligned with GHD’s strategic direction. Updates will be brought to the full Board for approval as needed.

Benefits of Adoption

- **Stronger Partner Support** – By enabling timely, policy-based approvals, GHD can better champion qualified community projects, increasing their competitiveness for funding and approval.
- **Clarity in Roles and Authority** – The policy delineates staff authority and Board oversight, reducing uncertainty and eliminating the need for ad hoc decision-making.
- **Alignment with Strategic Priorities** – Ensures all letters of support directly advance GHD’s vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities..
- **Governance Best Practice** – Establishes a transparent, documented process that supports both accountability and efficiency.

Conclusion

The **Grant and Program Support Letter Policy** provides GHD with a clear, board-endorsed framework for evaluating and responding to requests from community partners. By aligning authority with defined eligibility criteria and maintaining the Board’s oversight on commitments beyond letters of support, the policy ensures that decisions are made quickly,

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transparently, and in full alignment with GHD’s vision, mission, core values, and strategic priorities.

This approach strengthens our partnerships, increases the competitiveness of local projects for outside funding, and demonstrates to the community and our collaborators that GHD is both responsive and principled in its advocacy.

In doing so, it supports the Board’s role in setting strategic direction while delegating authority to executive staff to execute that direction consistently and effectively — ultimately advancing the health and well-being of the people we serve in East County.