



Date: 16/08/2019

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

To: Chair and Directors, Cariboo Regional District Board

And To: John MacLean, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services

Date of Meeting: Cariboo Regional District Board_Aug23_2019

File: 7100-02

Short Summary:

Low Mobility Wilderness Trails Network Expansion Project Grant Application to the BC Rural Dividend Program

Voting:

Corporate Vote – Unweighted

Memorandum:

The Cariboo Regional District received an advisory and guidelines that applications are now being accepted for the BC Rural Dividend provincial grant funding program's sixth intake.

The BC Rural Dividend Program assists rural communities with a population of 25,000 or less in strengthening their community resilience and supporting their social, cultural and economic viability.

The deadline for applications was August 15, 2019 and a preliminary application was submitted subject to the necessary approving resolution from the Regional District Board on August 23.

The Project Categories for the Rural Dividend grant include: i) Community Capacity Building ii) Workforce Development iii) Community and Economic Development iv) Business Sector Development.

The Regional District may submit one application under the Project Development funding stream and one application under the Single Applicant or Partnership funding stream per electoral area or unincorporated community in each intake. Projects may be destination trails projects, for which Rural Dividend's limit on infrastructure costs (restricted to 35% of total project costs) will not apply.

The Cariboo Regional District has embraced creating a wheelchair accessible wilderness trails network in the Cariboo Chilcotin to increase outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all mobility levels and to advance this niche market for diversification of the regional tourism economy.

Through grant funding primarily from the province and the Northern Development Initiative Trust, 22 wheelchair accessible trail projects have been completed since 2008 and three more are currently in development.

Three additional trail sites have been selected to be developed in 2020, which will involve partnerships with local community groups. The trail sites recommended for development are:

- Sulphurous Lake Community Trail (Mountain Spruce Community Centre Society)
- Valentine Lake Recreation Site (Recreation Sites and Trails BC and Canim Lake Band)
- Forest Grove Community Trail (Forest Grove Recreation Society)

The application is based on site plans and partnerships with these community groups, but if during the course of project delivery a particular trail is unable to be completed or additional funding is secured then other new trail opportunities may be explored.

A project coordinator retained on a contract basis will be necessary to assist the groups, provide guidance on standards, suppliers, and grant program requirements. The project coordinator position is part of the grant funding application.

Attachments:

None

Financial Implications:

The BC Rural Dividend program requires that projects include a minimum of 20% matching funding.

Other funding for the project, which has a total value of \$130,000, is proposed to come from the Northern Development Initiative Trust (\$30,000), which has been successfully obtained for the last two wheelchair trail projects.

However; NDIT has advised that the low mobility trail projects may not qualify under its program criteria for future intakes. If this is the case, there is the potential for utilization of the Cariboo Strong trail project funding allocation which is available and would be brought forward to the South Cariboo Joint Committee for consideration if necessary.

Policy Implications:

The Low Mobility Wilderness Trails Network Expansion Project is a continuation of an ongoing regional initiative to upgrade recreation trails for wheelchair-accessibility. The proposed trail sites for this application are in Electoral Areas G, H and L, which have a combined population of 10,741, fulfilling the program's requirement for the project to benefit communities of 25,000 or less.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☐ Ensuring Sufficient and Sustainable Funding
- ☒ Building on our Relationships
- ☐ Providing Cost Effective High Quality Services
- ☐ Focusing on Being Well Governed

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CAO Comments:

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Options:

- 1) Endorse recommendation
- 2) Receipt
- 3) Defer

Recommendation:

That the agenda item summary from Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services, dated August 16, 2019, regarding the BC Rural Dividend grant program be received. Further that an application for \$100,000 be submitted under the Single Applicant funding stream for development of low mobility, wheelchair-accessible wilderness trails at the Sulphurous Lake community trail site, Valentine Lake recreation site, and the Forest Grove community trail site.