



building communities together

2023 Business Plan North Cariboo Economic Development (1026)

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Working in partnership with communities large and small to offer local, sub-regional, and regional services to ensure that the Cariboo Chilcotin is a socially, economically, and environmentally desirable region.

Department/Function Services

The North Cariboo Economic Development function was established through Bylaw No. 2586 in 1992. The purpose of the service is to provide funding support through contributions for economic development activities in the service area, including Electoral Areas A, B, C and I.

This service supports tourism infrastructure, including public outhouses at Bouchie Lake and Milburn Lake west of Quesnel. It also supports a tourism and project-based agreement with the City of Quesnel for the Quesnel Visitor Information Centre (2021-2023) and provides support to the Cariboo Agricultural Development Advisory Committee.

Currently, there is a contribution to the McLeese Lake Farmers Market Association (2022-2024) to support the promotion and operation of the Farmers Market at Alexandria. This contribution is shared between the Central and North Cariboo Economic Development functions.

This function also leads Regional Economic Development Roundtables to share resources, initiatives, strategies, challenges, and best practices.

Electoral Areas A, B, C and I participate in the service and taxation is based on the assessed value of land and improvements. The maximum requisition is the greater of \$10,000 or \$0.0257/\$1,000 of assessment.

The Directors of Electoral Areas A, B, C and I are responsible for the governance of this service.

Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

2023 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Review the contribution agreement in place with the Quesnel Visitor Information Centre.

Rationale: The current three-year agreement will expire December 31, 2023.

Strategy: The current agreement will be reviewed by City and CRD staff and renewed if there are no material changes to terms and conditions.
- 2. Goal:** Develop a contribution agreement with Barkerville Heritage Trust to maintain the sites and outhouses for both the Blessings Grave Site and Stanley Cemetery.

Rationale: These sites are popular stops along the route to Barkerville and an important tourism asset. They must be maintained throughout the tourist season for a positive visitor experience.

Strategy: Work with Barkerville Heritage Trust to create a contribution agreement.
- 3. Goal:** Continue to encourage partnerships for economic development projects and activities.

Rationale: Maintaining existing and creating new partnerships is an efficient and cost-effective way to deliver economic development services.

Strategy: As projects and strategies are brought forward, appropriate partners, such as senior governments, municipalities, non-profit groups, and First Nations, will be identified.
- 4. Goal:** Sponsor conferences and events in the service area.

Rationale: Conferences and events draw visitors to the North Cariboo and encourage economic development in the area.

Strategy: The resources necessary to provide limited sponsorship to conferences and events is included in the function financial plan.
- 5. Goal:** Investigate the idea of organized heritage tours.

Rationale: Heritage societies and community groups maintain and develop heritage sites which attract tourists. Linking sites through tours may offer increased tourism and business opportunities, especially in rural areas.

Strategy: Work with historic societies and community groups to determine feasible sites and strategies.
- 6. Goal:** Market the economic development landing pages 'Make the Move' to attract new residents in key labour sectors.

Rationale: To help fill labour gaps in key sectors the Cariboo Regional District has developed webpages to provide regional information including resources, education, lifestyle, and opportunities. A marketing campaign is necessary to engage and drive potential new residents to the site.

Strategy: Work with regional stakeholders to allocate funding and execute a unique marketing campaign.

- 7. Goal:** Support the Explore Cariboo marketing tactics and explore developing a multi-year contribution agreement.

Rationale: Now entering its fifth year, the Explore Cariboo marketing campaign has built momentum and proved to be a strong marketing tactic. It includes a website, social media posts, media influencers, published content, and advertising. Developing a multi-year agreement provides ongoing support and allows for long term planning.

Strategy: Provide both financial and strategic support to the project ensuring communities, attractions, and businesses from throughout the region are included resulting in enhanced increased tourism. Work with stakeholders to develop a multi year agreement.
- 8. Goal:** Develop an agritourism study.

Rationale: The Cariboo is home to diverse large to small scale agricultural businesses. With a growing demand for farm-to-table products and services and experiential tourism, there is potential for these businesses to diversify their revenue by offering agritourism experiences. This will result in a stronger regional tourism sector and economy.

Strategy: Engage with ADAC and regional agricultural businesses via survey, interview and/or in person to develop a document containing inventory and opportunities within the sector.

Overall Financial Impact

The 2023 requisition remain unchanged from the 2022 requisition of \$40,000 and this level is maintained through a five-year financial plan.

Significant Issues & Trends

Covid-19 has significantly impacted the ability for organizations to host events and tournaments throughout the region but with decreased restrictions, 2022 saw the return of many events including Billy Barker Days. This has resulted in increased tourism. Labour shortages across key sectors continues to impact regional businesses and employers are searching for solutions to stand out to attracted skilled workers.

Barkerville Gold Mine, a large-scale employer and operation in the north Cariboo, went into care and maintenance mode in July resulting in laying off more than 80 full time employees and halted business with 12 regional suppliers. Due to the labour climate most were able to find work.

The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter and has committed to continuing work towards carbon neutrality in respect of corporate operations.

Measuring Previous Years Performance

Goal: Continue to encourage partnerships for economic development projects and activities.

- Completed. Worked with Barkerville Heritage Trust to discuss potential economic development projects.

Goal: Sponsor conferences and events in the service area.

- Not Completed. No projects were brought forward.

Goal: Coordinate the roundtable session of the Economic Development Officers within the region.

- Completed. Meetings were held via Teams, and in person in Quesnel and in 100 Mile House.

Goal: Monitor and market new economic development landing pages 'Make the Move.'

- Completed. Administered an online marketing campaign that revealed key market demographics.

Goal: Support the Explore Cariboo marketing tactics.

- Completed. Contributed towards joint marketing efforts.

Goal: Review the Species at Risk Act for potential impacts to the regional economy.

- Completed. Reviewed the annual report. Both Chilcotin Steelhead and salmon stocks are low.

Other Accomplishments

Throughout 2022 the Economic & Community Development Officer supported grant writing and reporting in the North Cariboo including Northern Development Initiative Trust grants for Lightning Creek Ski Club, Cariboo Ski Touring Club, and Parkland Recreation Commission, and submitted a UBCM grant to build a new North Cariboo Gymnastics facility. Reporting for the Bouchie Lake NDIT grant was completed and the midterm reporting for Troll Mountain Resort CERIP grant was submitted.