



*building communities together*

## **2025 Business Plan South Cariboo Economic Development (1017)**

*Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services*

***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.***

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### **Department/Function Services**

The South Cariboo Economic Development service was originally established through Bylaw No. 3573 in 2000. In 2004, Bylaw No. 3878 limited the service to Electoral Areas G and L. In 2007, Bylaw No. 4312 added Electoral Area H back into the function.

The service was created to support and promote economic development in the South Cariboo. This service is provided through individual project support with various partner groups and service delivery-based agreements with the District of 100 Mile House and the 100 Mile Development Corporation.

Currently, there is a contribution agreement in place with the 100 Mile Development Corporation to support operation of the Visitor Information Centre (2023-2025) and the South Cariboo Tourism Marketing Strategy (2025-2027), Lone Butte Historical Society to support operation of the roadside tourism and heritage site on Highway 24 (2024-2026), as well as the 100 Mile and District Historical Society to support operation of 108 Mile Heritage Site on Highway 97 (2024 – 2026).

Agreements are also in place to make contributions to the 100 Mile House sani-dump (2025-2027), to support tourism infrastructure and an advertising agreement with the Rotary Club of 100 Mile House (2024-2026) for its mobile stage.

This function also leads Regional Economic Development Roundtables to share resources, initiatives, strategies, challenges, and best practices and supports the Cariboo Agricultural Development Advisory Committee.

Electoral Areas G, H, and L participate in the service and taxation is based on the assessed value of land and improvements. There is no requisition limit for this service.

The Directors for Electoral Areas G, H, and L are responsible for the governance of this service.

## Business Plan Goals, Rationale & Strategies

### 2025 Goals

- 1. Goal:** Measure the economic impact of events held in the South Cariboo.  
**Rational:** Although it is clear event hosting bolsters the local economy, it is beneficial to calculate the actual impact of events. These numbers can be useful for grant applications.  
**Strategy:** Invest in a Canadian Sports Tourism Alliance membership to access the Sports Tourism Economic Impact Assessment Tool. By entering event stats, the tool calculates local and provincial impact.
- 2. Goal:** Encourage the development of a cross-country ski the Cariboo brand and marketing.  
**Rational:** The 100 Mile Nordic Centre, Bull Mountain, and Hallis Lake have worked hard to build and maintain cross country ski facilities. Developing a regional brand and marketing campaign will showcase the area and encourage winter tourism.  
**Strategy:** Work with the regional cross-country ski organizations to develop and execute a brand and marketing project.
- 3. Goal:** Create a South Cariboo tourism working group.  
**Rational:** In 2024 the Cariboo Regional District worked with the District of 100 Mile House and the South Cariboo Visitors Centre to host the South Cariboo Tourism Forum. This event helped strategize subregional goals to improve the tourism sector. Continuing to meet regularly with this group will help strengthen the South Cariboo tourism sector.  
**Strategy:** Meet with the District of 100 Mile House and the South Cariboo Tourism Visitors Centre regularly to build on momentum generated at the 2024 event and work towards executing new strategies.
- 4. Goal:** Investigate the development of a circular economy in the Cariboo.  
**Rational:** A circular economy conserves resources, creates jobs, and reduces waste, fostering local resilience while minimizing environmental harm.  
**Strategy:** Research circular economy practices and strategies and identify businesses and organizations in the Cariboo that are already implementing them. This will enable the CRD to access provincial and federal funding to develop a comprehensive strategy for growing the regional circular economy.
- 5. Goal:** Investigate the idea of a pilot project heritage tour.  
**Rationale:** Heritage societies and community groups identify, maintain and develop heritage sites which attract tourists. Linking heritage sites within a small

area (i.e. Likely area, 108 Mile Heritage Site) may offer increased tourism and business opportunities for rural areas.

**Strategy:** Engage with community groups to determine if there is sufficient interest in undergoing a pilot project. Continue working with the Heritage Steering Committee. Further develop the Cariboo Chilcotin Historic Driving Tour Guide & Map.

6. **Goal:** Work with the Fishing Highway Tourism Association to develop a three-year contribution agreement to encourage tourism along the Highway 24 tourism corridor.

**Rational:** Highway 24 houses a tourism cluster of resorts and fishing opportunities that attract and benefit both tourists and residents. The CRD has similar agreements in place with other rural community groups to encourage economic activity.

**Strategy:** Staff will work with the Fishing Highway Tourism Association to develop and execute a three-year agreement.
7. **Goal:** Continue to encourage partnerships for economic development projects and activities.

**Rational:** 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.
8. **Goal:** Sponsor conferences and events in the South Cariboo.

**Rationale:** Conferences and events draw visitors to the South 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.
9. **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 the regional stakeholders to allocate funding and execute a unique marketing campaign.
10. **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.

**11. Goal:** Review the contribution agreement in place with the 100 Mile Development Corporation for the South Cariboo Tourism Marketing Strategy.

**Rationale:** The current three-year agreement will expire December 31, 2024.

**Strategy:** The current agreement will be reviewed by staff and renewed if there are no material changes to the terms and conditions.

### **Overall Financial Impact**

The 2025 requisition remains unchanged from the 2024 requisition at \$63,750 and this level is maintained through the five-year financial plan.

### **Significant Issues & Trends**

In 2024, the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) adjusted its Community Development programs, including the Northern Housing Incentive, to a tri-annual intake schedule. The new deadlines are January 31, April 30, and July 31. This shift reduced the previous quarterly system to three annual intakes, with intake one and two capped to ensure funding is available for all three cycles.

There has been strong demand for funding, with grant requests consistently exceeding available resources, making the process competitive. Most infrastructure project applications were submitted in the first two intakes, likely influenced by construction season timelines. Overall, the new structure has been positively received, although adjustments will be monitored over the next three years.

2025 will see minor changes to NDIT grant intakes including an online portal for Community Development Grants and a slight change to intake dates for Capacity Building Grants.

Volunteer burnout continues as organizations are seeing a lack of participation and an aging population. Non-profit organizations are rethinking their structure.

A high number of resorts throughout the South Cariboo are up for sale. Some have been purchased as private residences while others have new ownership. The South Cariboo

Tourism Forum was a great opportunity for new owners to network and learn about regional resources.

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

### **Measuring Previous Years Performance**

**Goal:** Investigate the development of a circular economy in the Cariboo.

- Ongoing. Research into circular economies, business clusters, and decreasing environmental footprint has started. More in-depth work needs to follow in 2025.

**Goal:** Investigate the idea of a pilot project heritage tour.

- Not completed. Included in 2025 business plan goals.

**Goal:** Support improvements to Lone Butte Heritage Sites to build tourism assets along Highway 24.

- Completed. Project is scheduled to be completed Fall 2024.

**Goal:** Support the Fishing Highway 24 Tourism Association to encourage tourism along the Highway 24 tourism corridor.

- Completed. Contributed to the Fishing Highway 24 cooperative marketing campaign.

**Goal:** Monitor and support agritourism.

- Completed. Continued to distribute the Agritourism in the Cariboo-Chilcotin 2023 document with agriculture groups and individuals.

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

- Completed. One of the two Regional Economic Development Roundtables was hosted in the South Cariboo.

**Goal:** Sponsor conferences and events in the South Cariboo.

- Completed. Worked with the District of 100 Mile House and the South Cariboo Visitor Centre to organize and host a South Cariboo Tourism Forum.

**Goal:** Market the economic development landing pages 'Make the Move' to attract new residents in key labour sectors.

- Completed. Executed a marketing campaign with NG Media and distributed 'Make the Move' bookmarks with QR codes through regional library loans.

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

- Completed. Supported the 2024 Explore Cariboo marketing tactics. Suggested and shared a multi-year agreement but no traction.

**Goal:** Review the contribution agreement in place with the Development Corporation for the South Cariboo Tourism Marketing Strategy.

- Completed. The agreement was renewed with no material changes to the terms and conditions.

**Goal:** Review the agreement in place with the 100 Mile Sani Dump.

- Completed. The agreement was renewed with no material changes to the terms and conditions.

### **Other Accomplishments**

In 2023, due to oversubscription of the NDIT Cariboo-Chilcotin/Lillooet Regional Development account, the Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) temporarily suspended their Business Façade Improvement Program. They reinstated the program in 2024. Our region received and distributed \$14,810.50 of the available \$20,000 funds to support projects at two businesses, two are located in the South Cariboo.

The District of 100 Mile House recently published the South Cariboo Tourism Strategy. Following a recommendation from this strategy, the District of 100 Mile House, the South Cariboo Visitors Centre, and the Cariboo Regional District collaborated to organize a South Cariboo Tourism Forum. This event fostered connections and bolstered the tourism sector by encouraging businesses and organizations to work together to improve partnerships and opportunities.