

## F1.12 Community Works Fund Prioritization Policy



## Regional Board Policy

### Community Works Fund Prioritization Policy

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#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the Cariboo Regional District derives the maximum possible benefit from Community Works Funds (CWF) through an optimal and equitable allocation and disbursement policy.

#### **POLICY:**

##### **Background**

Community Works Funds (CWF) are provided by way of a transfer of Federal Gas Tax Funds to Local Governments to provide them with a source of stable, predictable, and long-term funding towards environmentally sustainable infrastructure. The Cariboo Regional District receives an allocation of funds based on the total population residing in the Region's Electoral Areas, while each of the member municipalities receive Community Works Funds directly based on their respective populations.

Initial agreements required that CWF funds be directed towards projects aligned with three key environmental outcomes:

- Reduced Greenhouse Gas emissions,
- Cleaner Water, and
- Cleaner Air.

The New Administrative Agreement on the Federal Gas Tax Fund in British Columbia, effective April 1, 2014, expanded the eligible project categories to which CWF funds could be applied in order to help Local Governments build and revitalize public infrastructure,

support regional productivity and economic growth, and promote and maintain a clean environment. Eligible categories under the new agreement include:

- Local roads and bridges,
- Highways,
- Short-sea shipping,
- Short-line rail,
- Regional and local airports,
- Broadband connectivity,
- Public transit
- Drinking water
- Wastewater
- Solid waste
- Community energy systems,
- Brownfield redevelopment,
- Sport infrastructure,
- Recreational infrastructure,
- Cultural infrastructure,
- Tourism infrastructure,
- Disaster mitigation, and
- Capacity building.

Over the remaining life of the current 10-year agreement, the Cariboo Regional District will receive Community Works Funds in the amount of \$1.7 million for 2020/2021, \$1.78 million in years 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, and \$1.85 million in year 2023/2024. The Regional District will continue to maximize the benefits received by residents through an optimal and equitable distribution of available Community Works Funds based on the following principles:

### **Principles**

- Community Works Funds should not replace or displace regular annual taxation.
- Community Works Fund allocations and disbursements should result in incremental value added capital spending.
- Community Works Funds should support the achievement of local rural priorities, while recognizing the associated benefits of supporting sub-regional and regional initiatives and ensuring that benefits accrue equitably across the Regional District.
- Community Works Fund allocations and disbursements should be transparent, and include public reporting of CWF allocations and actual expenditures.
- Community Works Funds should continue to emphasize projects aligned with key environmental outcomes, while recognizing newly eligible project opportunities associated with revitalizing public infrastructure and promoting economic growth.
- Community Works Fund projects, for which the leveraging of funds available from additional alternative sources is possible, should be identified and pursued to maximize the benefits associated with the allocation and disbursement of CWF funds.

- Community Works Fund projects should, where applicable and possible, support the Regional District's Long-Term Asset Management and Financial Planning programs.

**Prioritization**

In order to ensure that funds are distributed as equitably as possible, the following priorities are established in order of importance:

- 1) Projects that benefit rural taxpayers will be prioritized over regional or sub-regional initiatives;
- 2) Projects that support the following key environmental outcomes will be prioritized over projects in other eligible categories:
  - a. Reduced greenhouse gas emissions;
  - b. Cleaner water;
  - c. Cleaner air; and
  - d. Solid Waste.
- 3) Projects that provide incremental value that would not otherwise be obtained or maximized through regular taxation.
- 4) Sub-regional or regional projects.
- 5) Projects that promote regional economic growth.

**Procedure**

- Preparation of Annual Budgets AND Five-Year Financial Plans will include as detailed an allocation of Community Works Funds as is possible given currently approved and proposed projects.
- Previously approved Community Works Fund projects, which have not commenced or are incomplete at year-end must be reviewed, reappraised, and reapproved as part of the Annual Budget and Five-Year Financial Plan process.

**\*\*\* END OF POLICY \*\*\***

<u>Amended (Y/N)</u>	<u>Date Reissued</u>	<u>Authority (Resolution #)</u>
Yes Adopted – New Policy	January 17, 2020 June 2016	2020-1B-29 2016-06B-18