



COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT

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March 18, 2025

Sent by email: tmandewo@coquitlam.ca

Trish Mandewo, President
Union of British Columbia Municipalities
10551 Shellbridge Way
Richmond, BC V6X 2W8

Dear Ms. Mandewo:

Re: Changes to the Community Works Fund Eligibility

On behalf of the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) Electoral Area Directors, I am writing to express our concerns about the recent changes to the Community Works Fund (CWF) eligibility and the impact these changes may have on rural communities. We recognize the vital role that third party organizations play in providing services and infrastructure in these areas.

At the Regular Board Meeting on February 20, 2025, the Board moved that:

THAT: the Board write a letter to UBCM expressing the concerns of Electoral Area Directors regarding the changes to the Community Works Fund eligibility and acknowledging the important role of third parties in services and much needed infrastructure in rural communities;

AND THAT: this topic be included as an agenda item at the EA Forum;

AND FURTHER THAT: the letter be copied to regional districts.

It is recognized that the CWF is an important funding stream of the Canada Community-Building Fund. The CSRD relies greatly on this allocated funding toward the eligible costs of eligible regional district projects as set out in the agreement.

The role of third party organizations has been significant in rural areas where capacity and resources are limited. Rural communities have relied on the support of the Community Works Fund to address gaps, meet unique needs, and enhance services for their residents. The CSRD has always worked closely with third party organizations and supported them with funding for projects.

The recent changes to the eligibility criteria for the CWF have raised significant concerns regarding the future of our partnerships with third party organizations. These organizations are integral to the delivery of services, which directly impact residents in rural areas. The funds have provided an invaluable resource for projects that are often overlooked or underfunded. The Board is concerned that the changes to eligibility may limit the ability of these third parties to access CWF funding, thereby affecting their ability to continue providing much-needed services.

ELECTORAL AREAS

A GOLDEN-COLUMBIA
B REVELSTOKE-COLUMBIA

C EAGLE BAY-WHITE LAKE-TAPPEN
D FALKLAND-SALMON VALLEY

E SICAMOUS-MALAKWA
F NORTH SHUSWAP-SEYMOUR ARM
G BLIND BAY-SORRENTO-NOTCH HILL

MUNICIPALITIES

GOLDEN
REVELSTOKE

SALMON ARM
SICAMOUS

With limited resources at the local government level, third party organizations have played a crucial role in filling gaps where the CSRD lacks the capacity to fund or prioritize certain needs. This concerns us as it could impact the overall quality of life for residents.

In addition to the impact on third party assets, the new eligibility requirements state that assets must be identified in CSRD public-facing documents, such as an electoral area parks master plan, to qualify for funding. This creates challenges in working with third party organizations, as we must ensure they understand the CSRD is not assuming control of their services, programs, or facilities. Rather, this is a necessary step so they can be eligible for CWF funding requests through the CSRD.

The Board of Directors also faces a political challenge in determining how to allocate funding fairly and equitably through Board resolution. CSRD projects and infrastructure needs must be prioritized, while balancing the requests and needs of third party organizations that struggle to fund projects and services on their own.

We strongly urge UBCM to consider our concerns surrounding eligibility criteria. Specifically, we ask that third party organizations to be fully recognized for the vital role they play in supporting the continued growth, sustainability, and resilience of rural communities.

The Board appreciates UBCM's ongoing efforts to support regional districts throughout the province and trust that our feedback will be considered in discussions about CWF eligibility requirements. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to work together for a solution that meets the needs of rural communities in British Columbia.

Yours truly,

COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT

Per:



Natalya Melnychuk
Board Chair

cc: Regional Districts