



Date: 06/08/2025

To: Chair and Directors, Cariboo Regional District Board

And To: Murray Daly, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Darron Campbell, Manager of Community Services

Date of Meeting: Cariboo Regional District Board_Aug15_2025

File: 8030-02

Short Summary:

Esler Sports Complex Access Road – UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund Grant Application

Voting:

Various Votes – Please see recommendations below

Memorandum:

In May, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) announced an intake for the Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) grant program. Applications from local governments can be for a broad range of projects and may receive 100% funding up to \$7 million with a total of \$125 million available across the province. Regional Districts are eligible to submit up to four projects, three for capital infrastructure and one for capacity building. The deadline for submissions is September 12, 2025.

An application to the SPF program was made for the Esler Sports Complex Access Road project during the last intake in 2022; however, that application for up to \$5 million was not approved by UBCM.

The construction of a new access road into the Esler Sports Complex has been a business plan goal in the Central Cariboo Recreation and Leisure Services function for many years.

Recent progress has been made on the project with detailed design drawings and a Class A construction cost estimate planned for completion in October. The development review drawings were submitted to the Ministry of Transportation by Celtic Engineering on August 1 to initiate the highway connection permit process.

The project has three distinct construction phases: i) the Highway 20 connection scope with deceleration/acceleration lanes and utility relocations ii) development of the access road across Crown land to the Esler Sports Complex property and iii) improvement of traffic flow and parking areas on the sports complex property for safe and efficient entry to each user group area including slo-pitch, minor fastball, and soccer.

The focus for a proposed SPF grant application is phase three of the project, which would allow phases one and two to proceed as planned, subject to necessary funding approval through the Central Cariboo Recreation financial plan.

An expected grant funding approval date is not provided in the SPF program guidelines and based on previous staff experience, adjudication of applications can often take 12-18 months. If the phase three SPF application is approved, the scope can be added to the first two phases of the project which may already be in progress.

At its May 2, 2025 meeting, the Regional District Board committed \$1 million of Community Works Funds to the project to support allocations required from the Central Cariboo Recreation capital budget.

Attachments:

1. Proposed concept designs and cost estimate for the Esler Sports Complex parking and traffic flow improvements.

Financial Implications:

The proposed SPF grant application is for \$1.35 million based on the concept cost estimate provided by Celtic Engineering for updated parking areas and improved traffic flow. This amount is expected to cover 100% of the cost for the phase three scope.

The cost for phases one and two of the project will be confirmed by the Class A estimate in progress and subsequently considered as part of the annual business goal and financial planning process for the Central Cariboo Recreation and Leisure Services function in October 2025. Previous concept-level estimates had the total project cost at approximately \$4 million.

The Board has committed \$1 million in Community works Funding to facilitate the overall project.

Policy Implications:

None. The Esler Sports Complex Access Road project is identified and prioritized in the Central Cariboo Recreation business and financial plans.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☒ **Infrastructure and Asset Management:** To establish a systematic, predictable approach to managing the regional district's assets and infrastructure that builds on current asset management data and condition assessments.
- ☐ **Enhanced Communications and Engagement:** To build trust and credibility of the regional district by enhancing our communications and engagement with citizens, stakeholders, and volunteers.
- ☐ **Effective and Responsive Land Use Planning and Development:** To ensure our land use planning and development is responsive to future growth and housing needs, anticipates risks and hazards

associated with climate change and provides efficient and consistent processes for landowners and developers.

- ☐ **Relationships with First Nations:** To foster a healthy and inclusive region by building and strengthening our relationships with First Nations and embracing the principles of reconciliation.

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Options:

1. Endorse the recommendation;
2. Other action;
3. Defer.

Recommendation:

Corporate Vote – Unweighted

#1: That an application be made by the Cariboo Regional District to the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund grant program for phase three of the Esler Sports Complex Access Road project in the amount of \$1.35 million.

Corporate Vote - Weighted

#2: That the appropriate signatories be authorized to execute the required contribution agreement should the UBCM Strategic Priorities Fund grant application for phase three of the Esler Sports Complex Access Road project grant application be successful.