



REPORT

To: Rural Budgets Administration Committee

Report Number: FN-RBAC-112

From: Teri Vetter, Chief Financial Officer

Date: November 25, 2021

Subject: Community Works Gas Tax Grant Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee recommend that the Regional Board adopt the Community Works Gas Tax Grant Policy, which sets out the principles and guidelines governing the issuance of grant funding for eligible capital and capacity building infrastructure projects for public use or benefit, in compliance with the terms set out in the Administrative Agreement on Federal Gas Tax Fund in BC, and administered by the Rural Budgets Administration Committee.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

In alignment with the PRRD Strategic Plan, a comprehensive review of the Rural Budgets Administration Committee (RBAC) Funding Policies booklet, comprised of some formal policies and other additional guidelines the Committee routinely follows and were included in the booklet for convenience, was launched. The RBAC Funding Policies booklet was approved by RBAC in 2014, to assist staff and Directors with funding decisions, as a 'one stop shop' for information regarding grant policies and guidelines.

The various RBAC Funding Policies were written to assist RBAC in their decision making process for the award of grants to support improvements and increase programs and services for those communities located in the rural areas of the PRRD. The RBAC Funding Policies booklet, in its current form, functions as a large multiple page manual that contains various guidelines for a number of different grant funding options that is not user friendly, easy to follow, or interpret. In an effort to streamline this document, enhance and clarify for staff and RBAC consistency around grant administration, and to make it easier for potential grant applicants to understand the eligibility, application, and reporting requirements, four new policies have been created based on the information contained in the existing RBAC Funding Policies booklet. These new policies are consistent with and reflective of local government legislative requirements and best practices. This report provides information on the new Community Works Gas Tax Grant policy.

This new Community Works Gas Tax Grant policy establishes guidelines to assist RBAC in providing grants to eligible organizations to support capital or capacity building infrastructure projects that primarily support public use or benefit. The policy contains clear and concise information for all readers and is written in the appropriate formatting style that is consistent with other grant policies. In addition to providing a purpose, scope and definitions, the policy section of the document outlines the principles, applicant criteria, how to apply and payment of funds.

The policy is written to ensure it supports compliance with the specific eligibility criteria for recipients and projects guided by the eligibility framework developed for the Community Works Fund to deliver

the Canada Community - Building Fund (formerly Gas Tax Fund). The Community Works Gas Tax Grant policy is unique as it outlines specific examples of the type of projects (see Appendix A) and related costs that can be supported. In the building of the policy, staff collaborated with a Union of BC Municipalities representative, who reviewed the policy for compliance, provided information for inclusion and concurred that the policy correctly reflects the intention of the Canada Community – Building Fund.

If new types of projects are deemed eligible for Community Works Funding grants, as administered by UBCM to local governments, the new eligibility rules will need to be added to the policy, to ensure that the framework imposed on local governments as a condition of the funding being shared with them, is consistent with the policy framework adopted by the Regional Board. The agreement would override the policy in any event; however, the policy is the public facing document and should therefore also be kept current.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Rural Budgets Administration Committee provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- Organizational Effectiveness
- Comprehensive Policy Review

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

Community Works Gas Tax grant contributions will be provided from the Community Works Gas Tax Reserve Fund per each Electoral Area B, C D, and E.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

Once the Community Works Gas Tax Grant policy is adopted by Regional Board, it will be posted on the PRRD website.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

Upon the approval of the Community Works Gas Tax grant policy, the existing rural grant application will be updated by staff to ensure it aligns with the information that is reflected in the new adopted policy.

In the RBAC Funding Policies booklet, the existing “Gas Tax Grant Funding” page does not indicate an “adopted” date, and it is unknown if it was a guideline adopted by RBAC to self-govern their determinations, or if it was Board approved as a policy that RBAC must adhere to as part of the delegation of the authority to administer Fair Share and other funds, such as Gas Tax, to the Committee (via Bylaw 1166). In any event, the existing “Gas Tax Grant Funding” information, and in fact the entire RBAC Funding Policies booklet will be considered repealed and obsolete.

Attachments:

1. Final Draft Community Works Gas Tax Grant Policy

External Links:

1. [Rural Budgets Administration Committee Funding Policies](#)