

**ELECTORAL AREA GRANT-IN-AID**

Department	Finance	Policy No.	
Section	Grants	Date Approved by Board	
Repeals	RBAC Funding Policies	Board Resolution #	

Amended		Board Resolution #	
Amended		Board Resolution #	
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**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The Electoral Area Grant-in-Aid Policy establishes clear guidelines for the Rural Budgets Administration Committee (RBAC) for the award of rural grant contributions to assist eligible organizations requesting financial assistance to support community led projects or initiatives that fall outside the regular service functions, and serve or benefit the rural communities of the Peace River Regional District.
- 1.2 The Electoral Area Grant-in-Aid policy is intended to be flexible to provide RBAC the ability to be responsive to emerging needs or unique opportunities in rural communities.

**2. Scope**

- 2.1 This Policy applies to the RBAC, PRRD and all external organizations that apply for grant-in-aid funds from the Rural Budgets Administration Committee.
- 2.2 This Policy applies to all rural funded grant-in-aid, excluding those grants with stand-alone policies, which are:
  - a) Cemetery Grants
  - b) COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant-in-Aid
  - c) Community Works Gas Tax Grants
  - d) Rural Loan Fund Grants
  - e) Rural Recreational and Cultural Grants-in-Aid
  - f) Utility Extension Grants

**3. Definitions**

- 3.1 *Capital Costs*: refers to expenses incurred to purchase or improve physical assets such as buildings, vehicles, or equipment.
- 3.2 *Event*: refers to an event that is either social, economic or recreational in nature that may occur on a one-time or annual basis with a defined start and finish date.

- 3.3 *Feasibility Study*: refers to an assessment of the practicality of a proposed project or initiative that includes the analysis of the economic factors, viability, risks and the likelihood of its success.
- 3.4 *Grant Contribution*: refers to non-repayable funds disbursed or given by one party, often a government or other organization, to a recipient for a particular purpose.
- 3.5 *Infrastructure*: refers to a tangible capital asset, owned publicly by a municipal or regional government, or owned privately, that is primarily for public use or benefit.
- 3.6 *Initiative*: refers to an activity that tries out a specific idea or purpose which is intended to provide a benefit or result in a service to rural areas or the community at large.
- 3.7 *Not-for-Profit Society*: refers to a community organization which is not driven by profit, who is registered and in good standing with the Societies Act of BC.
- 3.8 *Operational Costs*: refers to expenses incurred that relate directly to the routine functions and activities of an organization.
- 3.9 *Project*: refers to an undertaking that is planned to achieve a particular outcome or result with a specific set of goals, objectives, start and finish date.
- 3.10 *Program*: refers to an activity designed for specific purpose which is led by a community organization and leads to the improvement to the quality of life for rural residents.
- 3.11 *Rural Budgets Administration Committee (RBAC)*: refers to a Standing Committee of the Regional Board comprised of the Electoral Director from each Electoral Area in the Peace River Regional District who has the authority, delegated to them by the Regional Board as per 'Rural Budgets Administration Bylaw No. 1166, 1998', to administer the rural budgets identified in Bylaw 1166 and approved in the current PRRD Five Year Financial Plan Bylaw.
- 3.12 *Service*: refers to a function led by a community organization which provides the public with an opportunity to benefit, or improves the rural areas or community at large.

#### 4. Policy

- 4.1 RBAC is responsible for the review and approval of all grant contributions provided through Electoral Area Grants-in-Aid.
- 4.2 RBAC has the sole discretion to respectfully deny any grant application.
- 4.3 Grants contributions must support projects or initiatives that are rural in scope and that encourage innovation in the delivery of services in rural communities and benefit the community at large.
- 4.4 RBAC must ensure the approval of grant contributions is equitable and transparent to make sure the grant application process is consistent with all organizations regardless of the type of grant being applied for.
- 4.5 RBAC must ensure the approval of grant contributions is information based, using adequate, un-biased research and analysis that includes recommended options.
- 4.6 Requests for financial assistance to support new services must have been the subject of a feasibility study that clearly identifies the service, and analyzes the need and financial viability of the service and its integration into other services.



- 4.7 Projects that involve construction or renovations that are supported with grant funds are required to adhere to building, plumbing, electrical, health, fire, zoning, gas and other codes and regulations, prior to the start of the project.
- 4.8 At the discretion of each Electoral Area Director, grant contributions may be provided from more than one Electoral Area for the same project, initiative, service, event, program or feasibility study intended to support the same purpose.
- 4.9 Grants provided to an organization for the purpose of capital projects, not owned by the PRRD, may require a Service Partnership agreement between the recipient organization and the PRRD contingent on the grant amount.
- 4.10 Grant funding may be authorized to support multi-year contributions up to a maximum of three consecutive years.
- 4.11 Grant contributions to support operational funding for more than three consecutive years and in excess of \$75,000 per year, will be evaluated by RBAC to determine whether or not a recommendation to the Regional Board to establish a service function should be made.
- 4.12 Organizations approved for multi-year grants must provide an annual report that includes the following:
  - a) Progress of the project (completed/ongoing)
  - b) Summary of the funding spent to date
  - c) Number of participants (where applicable)
  - d) Photographs (when available).
- 4.13 Organizations failing to abide by the conditions of the grant and/or reporting requirements may be subject to:
  - a) Cancellation of future grant payments for multi-year contributions
  - b) Repayment of grant funds
  - c) Being deemed ineligible for future grant consideration.
- 4.14 Grant recipients must be accountable for the use of funds in accordance with their grant application and conditions of the grant approval.
- 4.15 Grant contributions may not be used to support individuals, families or businesses.
- 4.16 Eligibility Criteria for Applicants:  
Applicants must be:
  - a) Not-for-profit organizations who are registered and in good standing with the Societies Act of BC who operate in one or more of the Electoral Areas; or operate in a Municipality but provide benefit to one of more of the Electoral Areas;
  - b) Local Government, First Nations Government, Band or Council; or
  - c) School District or a rural school parent advisory council (PAC) that is legitimized by the *School Act*.
- 4.17 Application Criteria:
  - a) Applications will be accepted on a continuous intake from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.



- b) Applications must include a relevant project budget, quotes (where applicable) and a copy of the applicant's most recent financial statements.
- c) Grants applications specific to Rural Fire Services must comply with and provide reference to the guidelines set in conjunction with the National Fire Protection Act (NFPA), Fire Underwriters Survey and WorkSafeBC prior to approval.
- d) Grant applications for capital projects must include a comprehensive Capital Project budget indicating all sources of income and expenditures; and information on how it will be paid for and maintained in the future.

**4.18 Eligible Costs:**

- a) Applicants may request grant funds to support projects, events (one time or recurring), capital investment, operational investment, programs, initiatives and feasibility studies.
- b) Funding assistance issued to support any of the categories listed below must meet the following specific criteria outlined in the chart below:

Feasibility Studies	
Funding support to assist with the assessment of a proposed project or initiative that results in an analysis of the economic factors, viability, risks and the likelihood of its success. Examples included Community halls, recreations facilities, fire departments, or other projects or initiatives deemed appropriate by RBAC.	
1.	Maximum grant contribution of \$50,000
2.	The study must not have begun prior to the request for financial assistance.
3.	Each Electoral Area may contribute the maximum grant amount for the same feasibility study.
4.	Grant funds provided for a feasibility study that results in the completion of a project and the establishment of a service function, will be recovered through that established function.

**Fire Services**

Grant contributions intended to support rural fire protection/services in the Electoral Areas of the PRRD may be authorized to support the purchase of fire equipment, new construction or renovation of an existing fire hall, and purchase of fire trucks.

1. **Fire Equipment** – maximum grant of \$50,000 for new or replacement equipment on vehicles, in fire hall or used by firefighters; request must be made by Fire Department's Society Board or Council
2. **Fire Halls** – New Construction or Renovations; limited to no more than one fire hall construction or renovation grant for a fire department during the life of the grant program; maximum grant of 50% of the cost estimate provide by an engineer or quantity surveyor; must be supported by a report from the fire underwriters survey, fire department master plan, fire department review or audit prepared by an independent consultant or authority.
3. **Fire Trucks** - maximum grant of up to 100% of the purchase price of the truck limited to one grant every 5 years to any one Fire Department; truck must be new to the fire department and supported by a Fire Underwriters Survey, part or a fired department master plan, or fire department review or audit prepared by an independent consultant or authority; this grant does not apply to a Fire Department within an established specified area shared with a municipality.

**Rural Capital Grants**

Grant funding may be used to support eligible organizations requesting financial assistance to purchase capital items for use by the organization that result in an overall benefit to the rural community at large.

1. Maximum grant \$50,000 is available.
2. The applicants must be able to support all ongoing maintenance and future costs.
3. Each Electoral Area may provide a grant for the same specific project.

**Parent Advisory Councils**

Grant funds may be used to support Parent Advisory Councils (PAC) seeking assistance to purchase playground equipment, or improvements to community recreation facilities located on school property provided:

1. The PAC is legitimized by the *School Act*; and
2. Supports a rural community school where no hall exists and the school is used as the community meeting place.
3. Grant contribution would provide 75% of the total project cost, to a maximum grant of \$25,000.
4. Contribution from the community (in-kind, labour or materials) must cover a minimum of 25% of the total cost of the project.
5. Upgrades to facilities inside a school, such as a gymnasium, the School District must be in agreement that the facility can be used as a community centre and must be willing to maintain it.



4.19 Disbursement of Funds:

Approved Grant funds will be payable to the recipients upon ratification by the Rural Budgets Administration Committee.

4.20 Grant recipients will be required to recognize the Regional District for their grant contribution.

Affiliated Procedure	
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