



Making a difference...together

**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2026**

SUBJECT **Electoral Areas Grants-In-Aid Guidelines Update**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To update the Capital Regional District's (CRD) Electoral Areas (EA) Grants-In-Aid (GIA) program guidelines to current administrative standards and best practices.

BACKGROUND

In 1977, the CRD was originally granted authority through Supplementary Letters Patent (SLP) to provide GIA to organizations deemed by the Board to contribute to the general interest and benefit of the EAs. The service authority granted from SLP was converted to service establishment bylaws for each EA in 2025.

The EA GIA guidelines and application form were last updated in 2012 (Appendix A). Since 2015, staff have periodically reviewed the program and identified updates to improve administrative efficiency and the applicant experience. Proposed changes included revisions to the approval process, eligibility criteria, a community needs assessment, application form updates, setting funding maximums, improved reporting, and other administrative needs.

Consultations with EA staff and directors from 2018 to 2020 did not identify these broader updates as an implementation priority, apart from changes to the approval process. As a result, the delegation bylaw was amended in 2019 to authorize EA Directors to approve EA GIAs. Previously, the Board approved GIA awards in batches, which caused additional delays for recipients. In 2025, the bylaw was further amended to delegate SSI GIA approval to the SSI Local Community Commission (LCC), consistent with its service authority.

Staff continually make efforts to identify opportunities to update the program guidelines and administrative processes to reflect current standards and best practices. Discussion with EA department staff and the SSI LCC in recent years have indicated a desire and opportunity to improve the program's reporting framework and simplify the application form. Engagement was conducted internally with EA staff to better understand the needs of local societies and community groups, as well as administrative considerations. Feedback from EA staff has been incorporated into the revised guidelines and supporting documentation included in this report.

In fall 2025, through a motion with notice, the SSI LCC has directed staff to consider implementing outcome reporting within one year of approval as a requirement for SSI GIA recipients.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the revised Electoral Areas Grants-In-Aid Program Guidelines be approved;
2. That staff be directed to implement the revised guidelines; and
3. That this report be referred to the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission for information.

Alternative 2

That this report be referred back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Each EA would continue to have separate GIA budgets and the proposed program updates would not affect the decision-making process for establishing annual GIA funding.

Service Delivery Implications

The main changes of the revised guidelines (Appendix B) include the introduction of standardized reporting and a requirement that approved projects be completed within one year of approval.

A standardized report will simplify the reporting process for recipients while improving the CRD's ability to identify program benefits, evaluate project outcomes and inform future funding decisions. Recipients will benefit from a centralized and straightforward reporting process that supports consistent financial reporting practices and helps communicate project successes and community impacts. The CRD will gain valuable information on project outcomes to support program analysis, reporting and community engagement.

The second proposed revision would require approved projects to be completed within one year of approval. Establishing a maximum project duration is expected to help ensure projects are completed within a reasonable timeframe and improve the CRD's ability to recover funds in the event of stalled or cancelled projects. As GIA funded projects are typically small-scale and completed within short timelines, this requirement is not expected to create a barrier for applicants.

Numerous administrative updates are also implemented for the program documentation, including the program guidelines (Appendix B), application form (Appendix C) and final reporting template (Appendix D) to reflect current best practices and improve the applicant's experience. Language has been simplified where possible to improve clarity and reduce ambiguity. The application has also been revised to better collect information. These changes are intended to make it easier for applicants to provide complete and accurate information while improving the quality and consistency of submissions received. More concise and complete applications will also support the adjudication process. Staff will periodically review program documentation and implement administrative updates as needed to maintain the GIA program and respond to emergent needs.

CONCLUSION

Staff have identified opportunities to revise the GIA program documentation to current best practices and administrative standards. The proposed revisions were completed with the input of EA department staff and seek to improve the program by increasing fiscal transparency and accountability while also simplifying the application process for applicants.

RECOMMENDATION

The Electoral Areas Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That the revised Electoral Areas Grants-In-Aid Program Guidelines be approved;
2. That staff be directed to implement the revised guidelines; and
3. That this report be referred to the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission for information.

Submitted by:	Lia Xu, MSc., CPA, CGA, Manager, Local Services and Corporate Grants
Concurrence:	Nelson Chan, MBA, FCPA, FCMA, Chief Financial Officer & General Manager, Finance & Technology
Concurrence:	Stephen Henderson, MBA, P.G.Dip.Eng, BSc, General Manager, Electoral Area Services
Concurrence:	Ted Robbins, B. Sc., C. Tech., Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Capital Regional District Grants-In-Aid Application Guide – for Electoral Areas Only
- Appendix B: Electoral Areas Grants-In-Aid Program Guidelines - 2026
- Appendix C: Grants-In-Aid Application Form (Draft)
- Appendix D: CRD – Electoral Areas Grants-In-Aid – Final Report (Draft)