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REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREAS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, APRIL 09, 2025

SUBJECT 2024 Community Works Fund Annual Report

ISSUE SUMMARY

This report provides a summary of Community Works Fund (CWF) activity for the period of January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.

BACKGROUND

CWF is one of three program streams under the Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) Program. The CCBF transfer is from the federal government and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) administers the CCBF program on behalf of the province through a trilateral agreement. The agreement between the Government of Canada-Province of BC-UBCM provides a 10-year commitment (2024-2034) to deliver funding to local governments for infrastructure and capacity building projects. This agreement provides the administrative framework for the program. It sets out the funding allocation, program delivery and eligible categories.

To receive funding, local governments are required to enter into an agreement with UBCM as the program administrator. Funding is distributed to local governments through UBCM on a per capita basis. In alignment with Capital Regional District (CRD) Board Direction (September 2024), CWF funds received are distributed to the three Electoral Areas (EAs): Juan de Fuca (JdF), Salt Spring Island (SSI) and Southern Gulf Islands (SGI) on a per capita basis. Once funds are distributed, staff administer the program through a continuous application process.

The CRD has been a recipient of CWF under three agreements: 2005-2014, 2014-2024 and 2024-2034. Appendix A provides a summary of activity since 2006 and remaining balances at the end of 2024. The previous agreement (2014-2024) expired on March 31, 2024, and final payment was received in 2023 under the former agreement. In September 2024 the CRD entered into the next 10-year agreement (2024-2034) with UBCM, and the first-year payment was received in 2024.

IMPLICATIONS

Service Delivery Implications

CRD services in the EAs are eligible to access CWF funding. Under the new agreement, third party projects may be able to access funds in limited and restrictive circumstances. The funding is used to support the diverse needs and local priorities in each of the EAs.

In 2024, successful projects under CWF's eligible categories included recreational, drinking water, wastewater, fire halls, solid waste and community energy systems projects. Slight adjustments were made to eligible projects and expenditures under the new agreement. The new agreement also requires local governments to commit to asset management practices. Appendix B details a

list of projects that were awarded in 2024. Appendix C details projects by recipient type and project category.

Financial Implications

2024 Activity

Tables 1 and 2 provide an overview of CWF allocation and activity in the EAs for the past two years.

Table 1: Distribution of CWF Funds to EAs

	Population (2021 Census) ¹	%	2024 Allocation (\$)	Population (2021 Census) ¹	%	2023 Allocation (\$)
JdF	5,531	24	325,004	5,531	24	291,531
SSI	11,635	50	683,680	11,635	50	613,263
SGL	6,101	26	358,498	6,101	26	321,575
Total	23,267	100	1,367,182	23,267	100	1,226,369

¹These numbers are derived from the 2021 Statistics Canada census. In alignment with CRD Board direction (September 2024), these population numbers were used for CWF distribution to the EAs.

Table 2: CWF Funding Awarded to Projects

	2024		2023	
	# of Applications	Amount Awarded (\$)	# of Applications	Amount Awarded (\$)
JdF	10	820,000	1	30,000
SSI	11	446,400	20	1,197,330
SGL	4	940,000	4	189,000
Total	25	2,206,900	25	1,416,330

Remaining Funds

Since 2006, the CRD has awarded \$17.9 million to projects. The CRD has \$3 million in funding remaining uncommitted at the end of 2024. Some CRD services have identified CWF as a potential funding source in the 2025-2029 capital plans to utilize remaining funds.

The new 10-year agreement (2024-2034) with UBCM requires the CWF transfers to the CRD be expended within five years of receipt. Any unspent funds under the former agreement (2014-2024) are also required to be spent within five years of entering the new CWF agreement. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and identified through long-term capital and asset management plans. Unspent funds will be monitored on an ongoing basis to ensure all funding is utilized.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 CWF Annual Report provides a summary of funding activity in 2024. The program is administered through a continuous application process for services in the EAs. Applications must have EA Director support and are subject to availability of funds and program eligibility, which is coordinated through a rigorous pre-screening and application process. The previous agreement expired on March 31, 2024, and the CRD entered into a new 10-year agreement in September 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A: Community Works Fund Funding Summary
- Appendix B: 2024 Community Works Fund Grants Awarded
- Appendix C: 2024 Community Works Fund Detailed Breakdown by Electoral Area