

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee
From: Kate Fenton, Planner I, Indigenous Relations

Date: 2025-02-13

Subject: Boston Bar First Nation's Grant Application Request for Support

Reviewed by: Melissa Geddert, Acting Manager of Integrated Planning & Engagement
David Urban, Deputy Director of Regional Services
Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services/Deputy CAO
Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board acknowledges and supports **Boston Bar First Nation's** application for a funding opportunity from the Federation of Canadian **Municipalities'** Green Municipal Fund Feasibility Study Grant for the Boston Bar Geothermal and Green Hydrogen Project, in partnership with the Fraser Valley Regional District.

AND THAT Boston Bar First Nation is the lead applicant on this project, and the Fraser Valley Regional District supports the application as the eligible local government with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

AND THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District as a partner is absolved from any financial or administrative obligations to this project.

BACKGROUND

The Boston Bar First Nation (BBFN) is a member of the Nlaka'pamux Nation. Their territory spans south-central British Columbia, and they have 12 reserves located within the Fraser Canyon and Electoral Area A. BBFN has requested support from the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) for a resolution to endorse the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Green Municipal Fund (GMF) Feasibility Study Grant application, see attached request. This grant would allow investigation into the feasibility of a geothermal power plant on Kopchitchin 2 (adjacent to North Bend), to provide backup power to Tuckkwiowhum 1 (south of Boston Bar).

DISCUSSION

Power outages are a frequent occurrence in the **Fraser Canyon, with BC Hydro's power lines being** damaged by rockslides, snowslides, and accidents. Sometimes power outages can last for an entire day. For backup power, BBFN previously relied on a small-scale run-of-river hydroelectric facility on

Scuzzy Creek, but it was destroyed by flooding in 2023. This has forced reliance on diesel generators and wood-burning stoves for backup power. Both of these alternatives have significant environmental impacts and create fuel dependence.

To address these challenges and improve energy security, BBFN is exploring a seven mega watt (MW) geothermal plant (scalable to 100 MW) with an integrated green hydrogen production facility. This would provide a reliable, locally controlled, renewable energy source.

FCM GMF provides funding to support feasibility studies that outline the design of a proposed community energy system. For Indigenous communities to qualify for this funding application, they must secure support from a Canadian municipal government in an official capacity, such as a Board resolution. BBFN will apply for the funding as the lead applicant, with the FVRD as their local government partner. The FVRD will provide representation on the project team solely as an observer, and is not be required to provide logistical, administrative or financial support.

Participating on the project team will also help to advance the FVRD's Indigenous Relations goals as outlined in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, such as exploring opportunities with Indigenous governing bodies on the provision of local services, nurturing strong relationships based on reconciliation and shared goals, and the development and implementation of joint advocacy efforts and projects. With the Board's support, BBFN can successfully apply to the FCM GMF and take significant steps toward a more secure and sustainable energy future.

COST

There are no financial implications with providing this resolution. The funding will be awarded to BBFN who have assumed responsibility for executing this project.

CONCLUSION

BBFN, located in the Fraser Canyon, experiences frequent and extended power outages due to damage to BC Hydro lines. The destruction of their backup hydroelectric facility in 2023 has left the community dependent on diesel generators and wood stoves. To enhance energy security and sustainability, BBFN is proposing a geothermal plant with integrated hydrogen production. Securing funding for a feasibility study requires the support of a Canadian municipal government. Therefore, BBFN is seeking **the Board's support through a resolution**, a requirement for their GMF application.