



## CORPORATE REPORT

To: Fraser Valley Regional District Board

Date: 2018-03-27

From: David Urban, Manager of Outdoor Recreation Planning

and Alison Stewart, Manager of Strategic Planning

File No: 6900-20-2017

**Subject: Successful 2017 Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund Application – FVRD Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Infrastructure Management Plan**

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### INTENT

This report is intended to advise the Fraser Valley Regional District Board of information regarding the successful application to the 2017 Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund Capacity Building Stream for an FVRD Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Infrastructure Management Plan. Staff is not looking for a recommendation and has forwarded this information should members want more clarification or to discuss the item further.

### STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Support Environmental Stewardship

Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy

Support Healthy & Sustainable Community

### PRIORITIES

Priority #4 Tourism

Priority #5 Outdoor Recreation

### BACKGROUND

In alignment with the priorities outlined by the Fraser Valley Regional District's (FVRD) Strategic Plan 2014-2018, and with the support of the Board, the FVRD submitted a grant application to the Gas Tax Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF) program last May for an FVRD Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Infrastructure Management Plan. Last month, the FVRD received notification that our application was approved for \$282,000, the full amount requested. The project was announced on March 9, 2018.

## DISCUSSION

Last year, the FVRD hosted a facilitated multi-stakeholder visioning workshop to discuss the future potential of outdoor recreation and tourism in the region. This workshop also supported a more focused SPF application relating to outdoor recreation and tourism within the FVRD. Last May, the FVRD submitted an application and last month found out our application was successful.

With respect to the outcomes of the workshop and FVRD strategic priorities, the application consisted of two projects, when combined, will comprise the FVRD Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Infrastructure Management Plan. The first component of this plan, which will be undertaken this year, will be a 'region-wide economic impact analysis' to explore various outdoor recreation activities currently occurring within the region. The intent of this research will be on outdoor recreation tourism sectors, such as fishing, mountain biking, and First Nation's cultural tourism, as well as some traditional measures such as overnight stays, visitor centre engagement

With no tourism data specific to the Fraser Valley currently available, this analysis will address a critical information gap in the region. As it stands, it's unclear who's coming to the region, how frequently they visit, what they do when they're here, or how much they spend – information which is key to the development of a robust and sustainable tourism economy. The information collected from the project will help guide FVRD strategic planning, and support both regional Destination Marketing Organization's (DMOs) and Destination BC's planning process for the Fraser Valley.

As there is currently no guiding outdoor recreation strategy for the FVRD as a whole, the second component of this plan will be a region-wide outdoor recreation asset management strategy which will begin in 2019. This strategy will be highly collaborative, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, including federal and provincial agencies, local government, First Nations, and user groups from throughout the region. This strategy will focus on the impacts of increased visitation, policies and procedures necessary for long-term sustainability, establishing roles and responsibilities, issues that cross jurisdictional boundaries and establishing an operational framework for the ongoing management of the region's recreational assets.

On March 9, 2018 the official announcement was made regarding the project. The same day, the FVRD issued a media release for distribution to the local media providing details of the successful grant and also shared this information through social media, please see attached media release. Shortly after, the region's DMOs and Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia were also notified of the successful application after it was made public; they will continue to play a key role in the success of this plan.

The FVRD is awaiting the funding agreement. In the meantime, staff are working on the finalizing the project goals and objectives and have begun to work on the project scope for the first component of this plan.

**COST**

The SPF funds up to 100% of eligible costs. The FVRD received the full amount requested of \$282,000 for the FVRD Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Infrastructure Management Plan.

**COMMENT BY:**

**Barclay Pitkethly, Director of Regional Programs**

Reviewed and supported.

**Mike Veenbaas, Director of Financial Services**

Reviewed and supported.

**Paul Gipps, Chief Administrative Officer**

Reviewed and supported