

Regional Advisory Committee Meeting Update Fall Funding Intake

January 9, 2024 – At the Joint Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) meeting for ETSI-BC, held on December 8, 2023 by Zoom, the RACs recommended 27 projects, representing \$522,250 in grant funding. These projects had a total value of \$2.1 million in our region.

ETSI-BC Fall Funding Intake Approvals by Region

	\$ Approved	% of Total
Columbia-Kootenay	\$243,250	46%
Thompson-Okanagan	\$264,000	51%
Both Regions	\$15,000	3%
TOTAL	\$522,250	100%

These projects help build and diversify the region’s economy, as part of the ETSI-BC Fall Funding Intake, focused on two of its core Funding Streams: *Building Economic Development Capacity*, and *Innovating & Advancing Key Sectors*. Project partners include local governments, First Nations, industry groups, Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures, and non-profit organizations in BC’s Southern Interior.

Projects approved in this Funding Intake will be carried out by three First Nations and in communities in all nine Regional Districts in the ETSI-BC service area, including the Central Okanagan, Central Kootenay, Columbia Shuswap, East Kootenay, Fraser Valley, Kootenay Boundary, North Okanagan, Okanagan Similkameen, and Thompson-Nicola Regional Districts. More information about this funding can be found on our [News page](#).

In December 2023, an additional \$608K in funding was also announced by ETSI-BC as part of the *Regional Transportation Enhancement (RTE)* Funding Program. The total number of projects recommended by RACs in 2023 was 48, amounting \$954,100 in ETSI-BC funding, on projects worth over \$3.2 million. All projects recommended by the RACs in 2023 were approved by the ETSI-BC Board.

Overall in 2023, 104 projects worth over \$6 million have been approved by ETSI-BC including all its Funding Streams, and these initiatives are projected to help create or maintain over 7,000 jobs in the BC Southern Interior,” says CEO, Laurel Douglas. “We are so proud of the transformative value this funding has on our communities, and thank the RAC members for their important role in the approval process.”

Since re-launching as ETSI-BC in April 2021, the regional economic trust has approved \$7.7 million in grant funding in support of its Strategic Pillars. This funding has supported projects valued at over \$17 million that have helped create or maintain almost 18,000 jobs in the region.

“On behalf of the ETSI-BC Board, I am delighted to share this news,” said Sharon Shepherd, ETSI-BC Board Chair. “These initiatives will help enhance economic development capabilities within our communities, foster innovation, and facilitate progress in critical sectors of our regional economy.”

The following is a list of Core projects recommended for funding by the RACs in December 2023. A link to the list of successful [2023 RTE projects can be found here](#).

ETSI-BC APPROVED *Fall Funding Intake* PROJECTS as of December 12, 2023

PROJECT PARTNER	PROJECT NAME	ETSI-BC FUNDING
Big White Mountain Chamber of Commerce	Business Walk and Shop Local Program	\$5,750
Boundary Country Regional Chamber of Commerce	Grand Forks Ambassador Program	\$15,000
Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce	Downtown Street Closure Feasibility	\$3,000
Community Futures Central Kootenay	Climate Resilient Kootenay Businesses	\$30,000
Community Futures North Okanagan	North Okanagan Community Health Clinic	\$15,000
Creston Valley Tourism Society	Creston Valley Tourism Society 5-Year Plan & MRDT Consultation	\$15,000
Fields Forward Society	Business Development & Marketing Incubator	\$35,000
Foresight Cleantech Accelerator Centre	Feasibility of Small Diameter Logging & Slash Bundling Technology	\$29,500
Greater Trail Community Skills Centre	EcoRenovate: Building a Sustainable Future Awareness Campaign	\$15,000
Kamloops Food Policy Council	Strengthening the Kamloops Regional Food Supply Chain	\$28,000
Kelowna Chamber of Commerce	Southern Interior Regional Economic Summit II	\$50,000
Kimberley & District Chamber of Commerce	Kimberley BC Business Retention and Expansion Survey	\$15,000
Kootenay Rockies Tourism Association	Building Regional Cannabis Trails	\$15,000
Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation	Southern Interior Food Distribution Model Expansion and Implementation	\$35,000
Merritt & District Chamber of Commerce	Chamber of Commerce 3-year Strategic and Tactical Plan	\$10,000
North Bend Community Association	North Bend Hall -- Community Space Preservation	\$15,000
Okanagan Circular Society	OCS Community Solar Initiative	\$40,000
Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia	Outdoor Recreation Communities Toolkit	\$15,000
Regional District Okanagan Similkameen	Naramata Community Revitalization Plan	\$15,000
Rotary Club of Castlegar Sunrise	Ecolink Castlegar to Selkirk	\$11,000
Salmon Arm & District Chamber of Commerce	Strategic Vision for the Salmon Arm Chamber of Commerce	\$5,000
Salmon Arm Folk Music Society	Strategic Planning Roots and Blues	\$10,000
Shuswap Economic Development Society	Shuswap Economic Development Office and Workhub	\$25,000
Skwłāx te Secwepemcúłecw - Little Shuswap Lake Band	Skwłāx te Secwepemcúłecw Business Park Recovery & Expansion	\$15,000
Slocan Valley Chamber of Commerce	New Denver Visitor centre feasibility study	\$15,000
Trails to The Boundary Society	Social Enterprise Opportunities for Rural Economic Development	\$15,000
Westbank First Nation and Okanagan Indian Band	Connected Communities Campaign	\$25,000