



# Regional Board Report

**TO:** Regional Board

**FROM:** Todd Cashin  
Director of Community Services

**DATE:** April 26, 2021

**SUBJECT:** UBCM – Local Government Development Approvals Program (1855-20)

**Voting Entitlement:** *All Directors – Unweighted Corporate Vote – Simple Majority- LGA 208.1*

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**Purpose:** To request Board support for a UBCM – Development Approvals Program Fund application.

## Executive Summary:

The Province of British Columbia has made funding available through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) intended to support the implementation of established best practices and to test innovative approaches to improve development approvals processes while meeting local government planning and policy objectives. Staff is preparing an application to request funding to complete a Development Approvals Process Improvement Strategy.

A Board resolution supporting RDCO's grant application is required as part of the application package. Accordingly, this matter is now before the Board for its consideration and approval.

## RECOMMENDATION:

**THAT** the Regional Board approves submitting a grant application under the Union of BC Municipalities – Local Government Development Approvals Program to complete a Development Approvals Process Improvement Strategy.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Cashin".

Todd Cashin, Director of Community Services

*Prepared by: Brittany Lange, Environmental Planner*

Approved for Board's Consideration

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

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**Implications of Recommendation:**

Strategic Plan:	Supporting the grant application achieves the Regional Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Values: Collaboration, Regional Perspective, Transparency, and Good Governance</li><li>• Priorities: Sustainable Communities</li></ul>
Policy:	Supporting the grant application complies with the Regional Growth Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Governance</li></ul>

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**Background:**

In 2019, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs initiated the Development Approvals Process Review (DAPR). The Ministry engaged local governments and a broad range of stakeholders to discuss the challenges of current development approvals processes in B.C., to identify opportunities for addressing those challenges, and to develop an informed list of ideas about how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes.

A summary report of engagement findings identified several key themes. The Ministry intends to move forward on initiatives that draw upon these, which may include work on development finance tools, public input processes, and provincial referrals in collaboration with local governments, the development sector, and other stakeholders.

The Local Government Development Approvals Program, a component of the Canada-BC Safe Restart Agreement, is one element in addressing the DAPR Report findings. All local governments (municipalities, regional districts, and the Islands Trust) in BC are eligible to apply.

**Local Government Development Approvals Program:**

The development approvals process refers to all operational steps and decision making in relation to a local government's consideration of approving development, from the pre-application phase to the issuance of the building permit. The local government's review process ensures that development applications conform to policies, plans, and regulations for building and development.

The intent of the Local Government Development Approvals Program is to support the implementation of established best practices and to test innovative approaches to improve development approvals processes while meeting local government planning and policy objectives.

**Development Approvals Process Improvement Strategy:**

Should the grant application be approved, the following activities are proposed to be completed under the RDCO Development Approvals Process Improvement Strategy:

- a) Conducting internal reviews of current development approvals processes to identify opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness. Examples include:
  - Conduct cross-jurisdictional research to ensure consistency in development approvals processes.

- Conduct a citizen survey for those who are using the development process for feedback on the existing system.
  - Develop list of recommendations for development process improvement.
- b) Updating or creating specific internal approvals procedures that will result in more effective and efficient development approvals processes. Examples include but are not limited to:
- Creating or updating a development approvals process guide for use by staff.
  - Updating the Development Applications Procedures Bylaw to clarify or improve the process for applicants to apply for amendments to a bylaw or request the issuance of a permit (for consideration by the Regional Board).
  - Amendments to the Zoning Bylaw or Rural Land Use Bylaw to reduce the need for commonly requested variances and streamlining processes.
  - Update Terms of Reference for Professional Reports.
  - Training Manual for Advisory Committees.
- c) Facilitating collaboration or coordination with external partners (e.g. development community, provincial Ministry, other local governments). Examples include but are not limited to:
- Developing guidelines that clarify to applicants the requirements that an application must meet to be accepted by staff and expectations of local government-applicant interaction throughout the application process.
- d) Improving information technology to facilitate development application processing. Examples include but are not limited to:
- Undertaking assessments to support future implementation of digital application platform or digital permitting software.
    - i. Digital Development Application Submission and Tracking Portal.
    - ii. Service Request System – Functional Area Point of Contact.
  - Purchasing and implementing new or upgraded digital platforms or software
  - Training staff on software or platform, or on process changes required to adopt software or platform.
- e) Training and capacity building for staff, elected officials (e.g. change management training), or external partners (e.g. application processes) in order to support the project.

## **Policy Considerations:**

### **Regional Board Strategic Priorities 2019-2022**

The Regional Board has identified and prioritized sustainable communities through various regional plans and actions, including:

- Outline innovative housing solutions and create best practices to inform local development policies and building standards.

### **Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Bylaw No. 1336**

The proposal is supported by the RGS as it relates to the need to respond to the needs of the region with an effective and efficient governance service model. Further, Central Okanagan regional partners have agreed to:

- Policy 3.2.10.2 “Encourage effective governance and service delivery by being transparent, accountable and accessible”.

- Policy 3.2.10.6 “Ensure the Region maintains effective services, which meets the present and future user demands”.

**Financial Considerations:**

The Program can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a suggested maximum of \$500,000.

**Organizational Issues:**

Should the funding request be approved, RDCO will be responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

**Alternative Recommendation:**

**THAT** the Regional Board accepts the report regarding the UBCM – Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for information.

***Considerations not applicable to this report:***

- *Legal / Statutory Authority*
- *External Implications*

## Attachment(s):

- n/a