



# Regional Board Report

**TO:** Regional Board

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

**DATE:** May 13, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) – Local Government Partnership Program Funding

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

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**Purpose:** To request Board support for a IAF – Local Government Partnership Program Fund application.

## Executive Summary:

The Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) has made funding available through the Local Government Partnership Program to help regional districts and municipalities develop, update and implement agricultural planning tools. Staff is preparing an application to request \$40,000 in funding to complete a Regional Agricultural Strategy.

A Board resolution supporting RDCO's funding application is recommended 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 funding application under the Investment Agriculture Foundation – Local Government Partnership Program to complete a Regional Agricultural Strategy.

Respectfully Submitted:

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

Todd Cashin, Director of Community Services

Approved for Board's Consideration

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

Brian Reardon, CAO

*Prepared by: Michael Czarny, Planner*

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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: Relationships, Collaboration, Regional Perspective, Transparency, Resiliency and Good Governance</li></ul>
Financial:	Request funding of \$40,000 for the Regional Agricultural Strategy
Policy:	Supporting the grant application complies with the Regional Growth Strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our Food</li><li>• Our Economy</li><li>• Our Health</li></ul>

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**Background:**Investment Agriculture Foundation

The British Columbia Investment Agricultural Foundation (IAF) is an industry led, not for profit society that creates funding opportunities to support the thriving BC Agricultural and Agri-food sector through the effective delivery of programs. Government programs are intended to improve innovation in, and competitiveness of the sector. IAF helps eligible members of industry access these opportunities

Local Government Partnership Program:

The purpose of the Local Government Partnership Program (LGPP) is to providing funding to help regional districts develop, update and implement agricultural planning tools. This program funds the development and implementation of agricultural area plans and is designed to support shared visions for agriculture and encourage the integration of agricultural priorities into local government planning and decision making. The desired outcome of the LGPP is for local governments to support the growth and economic viability of agriculture when making decisions about land-use planning, bylaws and regulations.

Regional Agricultural Strategy:

The Regional Agricultural Strategy was identified as priority project no. 8 under the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) Priority Projects Plan. The strategy's purpose is to support knowledge sharing, data collection, joint investments, and developing regionally consistent policies to help a number of aspects of the larger agricultural food system. It would support related regional initiatives and could coordinate implementation of actions embedded in local level agricultural plans including the District of Lake Country's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2020, City of Kelowna's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2017 and the City of West Kelowna's Agricultural Plan adopted in 2011 and 2016.

Should the funding application be approved, the Regional Agricultural Strategy may include the following components:

a) Phase 1: Research and data collection

- Analysing trends in the agricultural economy, including size, diversity and composition
- Compiling a regional inventory of agricultural land, including an identification of land actively farmed, or under pressure from development
- Identification of regionally common issues and challenges

b) Phase 2: Identify regional issues, goals and actions

- Establishing regional agricultural and food system goals
- An assessment of existing resources and supports
- Exploration and identification of regional level actions that support the established goals

c) Phase 3: Implementation and Communications Planning

- Collaboration and continuing to build partnerships with key agencies such as the Agricultural Land Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, and the BC Agriculture and Food Climate Action Initiative
- Developing a communications plan to work closely with farming communities to build resilience and increase the capacity of farmers to adapt to change
- Development of an implementation plan to carry out established recommendations by identifying areas of activity and roles of the stakeholders

## **Policy Considerations:**

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

The Regional Board has identified the values of Relationships, Collaboration, Regional Perspective, Transparency, Resiliency and Good Governance that shall be implemented through regional plans and strategies.

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

The proposal is supported by the RGS as it relates to future planning to ensure the viability and protection of agricultural land and agricultural uses. Further, Central Okanagan regional partners have agreed to:

- Policy 3.2.5.1 “Encourage cooperation with regional partners, provincial ministries and stakeholders that consider a regional agricultural strategy to identify issues and the present and future needs of the agricultural sector that will contribute to the well being of all residents to guide food security, economic opportunity and the protection of agricultural land”
- Policy 3.2.2.2 “Encourage and support related economic development initiatives that address the needs and challenges in the Region”
- Policy 3.2.2.9 “Support effectively managing and protecting the integrity of the Region’s critical assets such as the lakes, natural environment and agricultural lands that promote attraction of employment and investment”
- Policy 3.2.4.6 “Encourage cooperation with Interior Health to explore opportunities to develop healthy community strategies”

- Policy 3.2.4.8 “Incorporating health and principles of a Healthy Built Environment into the development of comprehensive plans”

### Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plan

The proposal is identified as project no. 8 in the RGS Priority Projects Plan.

#	Project	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
1	Regional Flood Management Plan: Phases 2 and 3					
2	Regional Planning Lab					
3	Regional Housing Needs Assessment					
4	Regional Growth Strategy Monitoring Program					
5	Regional Citizen Survey					
6	Regional Housing Strategy					
7	Regional Growth Strategy Five-year Review					
8	Regional Agricultural Strategy					
9	Regional Employment Lands Inventory					

### Financial Considerations:

The anticipated total budget for this project is \$95,000. The Local Government Partnership Program funding through Investment Agriculture Foundation can contribute a maximum of 50% of the cost eligible activities to a suggested maximum of \$40,000. The Healthy Public Policy grant through BC Healthy Communities can contribute a maximum of \$15,000 for the cost for eligible activities. Should both the funding applications be successful, the RDCO will be expected to contribute \$40,000 towards the Regional Agricultural Strategy. An amendment to the 2021 Budget may be required.

### Organizational Issues:

Should the funding request be approved, RDCO will be responsible for completion of the project by December 31, 2022 and for meeting reporting requirements.

### Alternative Recommendation:

**THAT** the Regional Board accepts the report regarding the IAF – Local Government Partnership Program Fund for information.

### Considerations not applicable to this report:

- Legal / Statutory Authority
- External Implications

Attachment(s):

- n/a