



BOARD REPORT

TO:

Chair and Directors

File No: 0580 01

SUBJECT:

Work BC – Emerging Priorities Grant Application

DESCRIPTION:

Report from Robyn Cyr, EDO, dated October 15, 2018. Authorization is required from the Board to submit a grant application to Work BC – Employment Services – Community Workforce Response Grant – Emerging Priorities.

RECOMMENDATION #1:

THAT: the CSRD Board provide authorization to the CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department for the submission of a grant application of up to \$300,000.00 to Work BC – Employment Services – Community Workforce Response Grant – Emerging Priorities program.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Funding has become available through Work BC that supports communities undergoing a significant shift in the local labour market. Reasons for that shift may be an industry closure or expansion, a natural disaster such as a forest fire or a flood, or other conditions that have impacted employment in the community.

The Elite Sawmill in Malakwa closed indefinitely in 2017, due to a fire which directly displaced approximately 35 full time workers and indirectly displaced several others in the small rural communities of Malakwa and Sicamous. While historically founded on the lumber industry these local economies have suffered ongoing reductions in natural resource development employment for several years prior to this last closure. Louisiana Pacific was a major employer in the region and the permanent closure of the sawmill in the late-2000s saw many residents unable to find jobs in the area. Area residents have sought to re-invent and re-invigorate their skills sets as the local economy has become more reliant on service and tourism jobs and less reliant on higher paying natural resource jobs.

Many of the impacted sawmill workers have had difficulty adapting to the changing skill requirements of the changing local economy. This program will aim to help these impacted workers adapt to the local changing job market. It is important to note that according to census data, the population of this region has both aged and declined over the last 10 years.

Funding has become available through the Work BC – Emerging Priorities funding grant that will provide up to \$300,000.00 for employment assistance services, skills training, and financial support for participants if they are required to live away from home to attend courses that will ultimately allow them to find full time employment or be self-employed.

VOTING:	Unweighted Corporate	<input type="checkbox"/>	LGA Part 14 (Unweighted)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Weighted Corporate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stakeholder (Weighted)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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BACKGROUND:

This program will be a partnership between Okanagan College and the CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department.

Okanagan College delivered a similar program in Revelstoke in 2014 which was called “Experience Works” and was specifically targeted to prepare workers for new and immediate employment or self-employment.

Based on five years of successful experience delivering the Experience Works program in Revelstoke, Okanagan College can state with confidence that the program increases the employability of workers and ensures they remain active and productive in the labour market. Okanagan College continually consults with community partners to ensure that the program is current and meets the local labour market needs.

Experience Works combined relevant, hands on and practical skill training for workers with community outreach activities. These activities promote and inform various employment sectors about the benefits associated with a slightly older demographic of workers enhancing their opportunity to find employment. The program will be marketed to the eligible older worker and promoted via their community partnerships.

The new program that is being proposed would have similar goals for the eligible applicants. Work BC will fund up to \$15,000.00 per individual to attend this course.

The Shuswap Economic Development Strategy also supports the development of programs that can provide support for older workers to be able to become self-employed.

POLICY:

This request is under the authority of Bylaw No. 5582, Section 11 (b) for the delegation of authority in relation to grant applications.

FINANCIAL:

There are no financial implications to the CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department to submit this grant application other than wages for the Economic Development Officer to submit the application and ensure that reports are prepared and submitted as required.

KEY ISSUES/CONCEPTS:

The key concept to the submission of this grant application is to support Okanagan College in the development of a skills training program to the unemployed, underemployed, or precariously employed participants in Malakwa and Sicamous to enable these participants to obtain fulltime employment or become self-employed.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The grant application will be prepared in partnership with the CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department and Okanagan College. The CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department will be the eligible applicant and Okanagan College will deliver the program as identified. I would also recommend that a memorandum of agreement is developed between the CSRD Shuswap Economic Development department and Okanagan College for the delivery of this program.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Regular communication and updates will be provided to R. Cyr, EDO, and reports will be prepared to be presented at the regular Shuswap Economic Development Advisory Committee meetings. The minutes of these meetings are then presented to the CSRD Board at regular board meetings.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

The desired outcomes of this report would be that the funding for the Work BC – Employment Services – Community Workforce Response Grant – Emerging Priorities program application is approved and up to 15 residents of Malakwa and Sicamous gain the skills to obtain employment or become self-employed.

BOARD'S OPTIONS:

1. *Endorse the Recommendation.*
2. *Deny the Recommendation.*
3. *Defer.*
4. *Any other action deemed appropriate by the Board.*

LIST NAME OF REPORT(S) / DOCUMENT(S) AVAILABLE FROM STAFF:

1. Overview of the “Experience Works” targeted initiative for older workers program deliver in Revelstoke in 2014.