



Towns for Tomorrow

PROGRAM GUIDE



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

December 2006

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1 Program Overview

1.1. Purpose

The Town's for Tomorrow Program (the program) was developed to address the unique challenges faced by smaller communities in British Columbia with respect to meeting their infrastructure needs. As the title resonates, the program will look at how small communities envision themselves in the future, back casting to today in order to implement the infrastructure that will allow communities to fulfill that vision.

The program is based on principles of innovation and sustainability, and is integrated with social, cultural, economic, and environmental viability. From this foundation, the program will aim to invest in those capital projects that will help achieve the province's vision of vibrant, integrated, creative and prosperous communities. It will be equally important to acknowledge the diversity amongst small communities across British Columbia and ensure that projects support the unique vision and needs of each community.

Recognizing that resources are often limited in smaller communities, the program will be designed to meet these challenges, from ease and simplification of applications to efficient and effective administration processes. Small towns are often overwhelmed by major capital infrastructure programs, not having the resources that are afforded larger municipalities. The desired outcome will be a program that is robust but not onerous to the applicant, maintaining its integrity through delivery on defined goals, objectives and outcomes. Local Governments will identify the capital infrastructure project that is most important to the community, looking towards the future, and the program will maintain a flexibility that will effectively address the community's needs.

While the program will be focused on capital investment, capacity building investment, or 'soft' infrastructure, will be also incorporated into the program in order to enhance a community's ability to implement planning, management and governance structures, often over looked, but considered integral to the ongoing sustainability of capital infrastructure and viable communities.

Towns for Tomorrow will ensure that eligible applicants can benefit from potential synergies and integration with other existing programs such as;

- Small Community Grants Program
- Canada/BC Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF)
- Gas Tax Agreement (GTA)
 - Community Works Fund
 - General Strategic Priorities Fund
 - Innovation Fund

By providing small communities with funding assistance for the construction of new infrastructure, Towns for Tomorrow supports the Province's Great Goals of:

- Healthy living
- Sustainable environmental management
- Job creation

Towns for Tomorrow supports the goals and objectives of many provincial plans including: Clean Air Plan; Energy Plan; Drinking Water Action Plan; Water Conservation Strategy; and Climate Change Plan.

1.2. Amount of Grant

The Program is a \$21 million capital grant program that will commit \$7 million a year over the next 3 years. The cost sharing formula will be 80/20 – 80% provincial contribution, 20% local government contribution – with a maximum provincial contribution of \$400,000 for each approved project. For example, on a \$100,000 project, the province will contribute up to \$80,000 while on a \$1,000,000 project, the province will contribute up to \$400,000.

Under the Towns for Tomorrow Program, Applicants will be required to utilize internal funding sources to meet their 20% contribution. This may include monies from the GTA Community Works Fund, local sources (e.g. borrowing, reserve funds), Small Community and Regional District Unconditional Grant Programs and other 3rd party sources.

Towns for Tomorrow funding can be used to enhance the scope of a project under other programs such as the BC Community Water Improvement Program, CBCMRIF, or the LocalMotion and B.C. Spirit Squares programs. It can also be used to fund a component of a larger project that would otherwise go unfunded. For example, while projects that are associated with community growth may not be a priority under CBCMRIF, they are recognized as important to smaller communities and may be funded under Towns for Tomorrow if done in a manner which demonstrates innovation and sustainability. Towns for Tomorrow funds cannot be utilized to fund the applicants share under these programs (e.g. 1/3rd under CBCMRIF).

When utilizing more than one program, applicants will still be required to adhere to all requirements of other funding programs. This includes provincial contribution limits of other programs such that the combined total of all funds from the Province cannot exceed a certain percentage of the total project eligible costs (e.g. 50% for CBCMRIF). For more information see specific program guides or contact the Ministry of Community Services.

2 Eligibility

2.1. Eligible Applicants

An eligible Applicant must be;

- An incorporated municipality that has a population¹ of 5000 persons or less, or
- The Central Coast Regional District.

¹Population will be based on 2006 BC Stats Population estimates (3 year average). This is consistent with other Ministry of Community Services' funding programs such as Small Community and Regional District Unconditional Grant Programs. If a municipality's population is shown as over 5000 by BC Stats and the municipality believes that it will have a population of 5000 persons or less reflected in Statistics Canada's 2006 Census, they may submit an application. When the 2006 Census is released (spring 2007), Ministry staff will confirm the population and advise the applicant of their eligibility status.

2.2. Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects must:

- be for construction, renewal, expansion or material enhancement of community public infrastructure;
- not be started (construction) prior to application;
- be submitted by an Eligible Applicant who demonstrates that it will be able to operate and maintain the resulting infrastructure over the long term;
- stipulate a construction completion date of no later than March 31, 2011;
- be duly authorized by a resolution of the Applicant's Municipal Council or Regional District Board;
- be consistent with the planning practices and guidelines of British Columbia; and
- meet the requirements of all applicable federal and provincial legislation.

Project Categories

Eligible projects are, but not limited to, the following categories;

- **Water Projects** including drinking water source supply, drinking water treatment systems, and drinking water distribution systems;
- **Wastewater Projects** including wastewater systems, separate storm water systems, and management of on-site sewage treatment systems;

- **Public Transit Projects** including transit buses; and
- **Environmental Energy Improvement Projects** including local government-owned buildings and/or infrastructure and energy systems such as renewable energy, combined heat and power (CHP), cogeneration and district energy.
- **Local Road Projects** including arterial roads, bridges and tunnels within local boundaries and capital investments to improve public transportation on the local road network such as queue-jumpers and Intelligent Transport System (ITS) technologies to improve priority signalling, passenger and traffic information, incident management and rescue systems;
- **Cultural Projects** including museums and public art galleries, designated local heritage sites, facilities for performing arts, cultural or community centres, municipal and community libraries, and other cultural infrastructure;
- **Recreation Projects** including sports facilities (excludes facilities used primarily by professional athletes), community recreation spaces, fields and parks, fitness trails, bike paths and lanes, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities;
- **Tourism Projects** including basic local government infrastructure to support or provide access to tourist facilities, community public attractions, convention or trade centres, and exhibition buildings; and
- **Other Projects** including protective and emergency services infrastructure and community development.

2.3. Ineligible Projects

Projects must meet the criteria of the program as outlined in this Program Guide. Projects will be deemed ineligible if:

- construction has already begun prior to the submission of the application;
- the project is considered routine maintenance or repair; or
- the project will be completed after March 31, 2011.

2.4. Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are defined as all direct costs properly and reasonably incurred and paid solely and specifically in relation to the project. Such costs would normally be capitalized in the records of the local government. Included are:

- engineering;
- design;
- capacity building²;
- interim borrowing costs (where applicable); and
- the use of a local government's own work force if used for project construction;

Committed engineering or design costs are eligible for reimbursement provided construction has not commenced.

Only those projects and itemized estimated project costs approved by the Province will be funded. Any grants that may be approved will be based on the net cost to the applicant, that is, net of contributions from other governments, other Provincial programs and/or private contributions.

² **Capacity Building** – up to 10% of eligible costs can be attributed to capacity building provided the capacity building component is directly linked to the physical infrastructure component of the project. Capacity Building includes;

- implementation of sustainable approaches to infrastructure planning and management;
- development of asset management to support financial planning and decision making;
- integration of demand management in infrastructure planning and management such as water conservation strategies, energy efficiency plans and alternative transportation strategies;
- advanced training that supports operation and management of infrastructure such as Water/Wastewater Operator Training; and
- education and transference of information from one local government to another.

2.5. Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs include:

- administration or administrative overhead charges
- GST (as of February 2004, municipalities receive a 100% federal government rebate on GST paid)

3 Application Process

3.1. Application Limit

Each applicant is allowed to submit **1 application per application deadline** (refer to Section 3.5).

3.2. How to Apply

Step 1: Download both the Application Form and the Certification Form from the web at:

www.townsfortomorrow.gov.bc.ca.

Step 2: The Application Form is a protected Word® Document which should be completed electronically using word processing software. Please note that the area below each question will expand as necessary to provide additional space to answer a question. Each question must be answered in less than 200 words.

Step 3: Save the completed Application Form with the following filename format using the applicant's name, then TFT (acronym of the program) and date completed (yyymmdd). For example:
Tahsis_TFT_070120.doc

Step 4: If applicable, prepare and copy any supporting documentation that will be submitted with the Application Form (e.g. work plan, consultant's proposal, site plan, council resolution). Supporting documentation can be submitted in portable document format (PDF).

Step 5: Email the completed Application Form and any supporting documentation to the Ministry of Community Services at: infra@gov.bc.ca (mailed/faxed hardcopies will also be accepted). Make sure that everything identified on the "Applicant Checklist" (available on the program's website) has been satisfied.

Step 6: Complete the Certification Form, then print, sign and mail it to the Ministry of Community Services. By signing this form, the applicant is certifying that the information contained in the application is correct and complete.

Once all required materials have been received by the Ministry, a letter will be sent notifying applicants that their application package is complete and eligible for assessment.

3.3. Application Guidelines

Each project requires a completed application form, signed certification form and supporting documentation (refer to Section 3.6 Application Review and Selection Criteria for examples of supporting documentation).

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that full and accurate information is submitted to the Ministry. Applications with incomplete information will not be considered until all necessary information has been submitted. Please ensure that all necessary information is attached and all the appropriate boxes have been completed. If there is no supporting documentation, or the question is not applicable to the project, provide a brief explanation.

Applicants should be aware that information collected is subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. The information being collected is for the purpose of administering the Towns for Tomorrow Program and will be used for the purpose of evaluating eligibility under the program. Any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of this information should be directed to the contacts at the end of this guide.

If you have already sent information to the Ministry, such as a detailed work plan or consultant's proposal, it is not necessary to re-submit it. You should make reference to the date when this material was sent.

If it is not possible to complete the Application Form using a computer, please contact the Ministry and an application designed to be filled in by hand will be mailed to you.

3.4. Where to Apply

All completed application forms should be emailed to the Ministry of Community Services at: infra@gov.bc.ca

Please mail the signed Certification Form to:

Ministry of Community Services
Infrastructure and Finance Division
PO Box 9838 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9T1

If you are unable to submit application forms by email, then hardcopy applications forms can be mailed to the above address.

3.5. Application Deadline

All Application Forms and supporting documentation must be received at the Ministry by **February 16, 2007** in order to be considered for the first round of approvals in **Spring 2007**.

The program will be accepting applications on an ongoing basis, with subsequent application deadlines in Winter 2008 and Winter 2009. A second round of approvals is scheduled for Spring 2008 with a third and final round of approvals in Spring 2009.

3.6. Application Review and Selection Criteria

Project selection criteria will be focused on the principles of sustainability and the integration of innovation to any given project. Selection criteria include;

- Sustainable Planning, Design, Construction and Management
- Encouraging Innovative Approaches
- Environmental Benefit and Contribution
- Health and Social Benefits
- Economic Growth/Financial Planning & Capacity

Projects will be assessed on how they meet these criteria. Those applications that are able to effectively demonstrate how they are able to meet the selection criteria will have the greatest opportunity in being considered for approval. Please provide sufficient information so as to enable a proper assessment of your project and community.

It is highly recommended that applications are submitted with supporting documentation in order to fully assess the selection criteria. Some examples of supporting documentation include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Engineering feasibility study of options along with detailed cost estimates and design criteria including a map with sufficient details to fully describe the project;
- Letters of support and/or documentation demonstrating support from relevant regulatory agencies such as local Health Authorities, local Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Environment, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Ministry of Transportation etc.;
- Demonstration of how this project incorporates the four pillars of sustainability: society, culture, economy, environment, including the following considerations:
 - societal/community well being;
 - economic resiliency and prosperity;
 - ecological considerations;
 - reduced resource consumption; and
 - demand management
- Demonstration of how this project is supported by a long term plan (e.g. Official Community Plans, Watershed Management Plan, Community Energy Plan, Master Water Plan, Liquid Waste Management Plan, Transportation Plan) and innovative by-laws (e.g. Low Flow Fixture By-laws, Well Protection By-laws, Engine Idling By-laws etc.);
- For new building projects, demonstration that the project will be designed and constructed to meet standards for energy efficiency (e.g. 25% better than the Model National Energy Code for Buildings);
- A plan or report summarizing the community's demand management strategies (e.g. water conservation plan, transportation demand management strategy);
- Demonstration that the project will comply with construction standards and best practices such as the:
 - The Design Guidelines for Rural Residential Community Water Systems (available at www.env.gov.bc.ca/wsd/water_rights/water_utilities/)
 - Stormwater Planning: A Guidebook for British Columbia (available at www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/epdpa/mpp/stormwater/stormwater.html)
 - Infraguide, the National Guide to Sustainable Municipal Infrastructure (available at www.infraguide.ca)

4 Approval and Payment of Grants

4.1. Announcements

Successful applicants will receive written notification of approved funding. The first round of announcements will occur in Spring 2007.

4.2. Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants will receive a contract that sets out the terms and conditions of the funding. This will confirm all parties' understanding of the project, its cost and the maximum grant amount to which the applicant is entitled. The schedule will also include a payment timetable and an expiry date. Certain conditions may be attached to successful contracts in order to ensure that sustainability goals and Towns for Tomorrow program objectives are met.

4.3. Transfers Between Projects

Grants are project specific and may not be transferred from an approved application to a new proposal. Any diversion from the project description, as provided by either the initial terms of reference, a consultant's proposal or a detailed work program, may be considered only with the prior agreement of the Ministry of Community Services. Any substitute project must produce similar results to that for which the grant was approved.

4.4. Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will be required to make regular quarterly progress reports to the Ministry of Community Services providing details of the progress of approved projects, with photos to illustrate construction progress (if feasible). Completion of these reports on a timely basis will be a condition of the grant.

4.5. Payment of Grant

To request payment of the grant, applicants must complete, sign and submit the Claim Form. The Claim Form will be available for download from www.townsfortomorrow.gov.bc.ca. An invoice for all work undertaken to complete the project must be submitted with the claim form. Should the invoice show unreasonable or ineligible costs, grant claims may be denied or reduced.

The total amount of the grant payable will not exceed either the amount noted in the contract or the approved percentage of the actual cost, whichever is less.

4.6. Claim Period and Expiry of Grant

The claim period for the project, the payment schedule and the expiry date for the grant will be set out in the contract between the Province and the recipient. Requests for an extension of this claim period will only be considered where there are unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Such requests will not be considered if received after the end of the claim period. In any event, no claims for payment received after March 31, 2012 will be approved for payment.

5 Contact Information

Mailing Address

Ministry of Community Services
Infrastructure and Finance Division
PO Box 9838 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9T1

Location Address

4th Floor - 800 Johnson Street, Victoria, BC

Phone: (250) 387-4060

FAX: (250) 356-1873

Email: infra@gov.bc.ca

Website: www.townsfortomorrow.gov.bc.ca