



## COUNCIL REPORT

To: Mayor and Council

Date: May 23, 2023

From: Paul Gipps, CAO

Subject: **Growing Communities Fund (GCF)**

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### **RECOMMENDATION** to Consider and Resolve:

**THAT** Council direct staff to establish a segregated reserve by bylaw under section 188 of the *Community Charter*; and

**THAT** the ten million two hundred and twelve thousand (\$10,212,000) grant funds received from the Province under the Growing Communities Funds be placed in that reserve; and

**THAT** staff be directed to develop a draft process for the use of those funds to be considered by Council and the next Strategic Priorities Workshop this fall.

### **STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS**

**Invest in Infrastructure** – We will invest in building, improving and maintaining infrastructure to meet the needs of, and to provide a high quality of life for, current and future generations.

### **BACKGROUND**

On March 31, 2023 the City of West Kelowna received an automatic deposit from the Province of BC for \$10.212 million dollars as part of the Provinces commitment to municipalities to support growth from their Growing Communities Fund (GCF). The funding purpose is intended to “one-off costs needed to build required infrastructure and amenities rather than funding ongoing or operational activities”.

As a condition of the grant the funding must be placed in a segregated reserve fund established by bylaw under Section 188 of the *Community Charter* for the Capital and Planning purposes of the GCF. The funding must be reported on annually as required under Section 167 of the *Community Charter* until the funds are fully utilized.

Tied to the financial reporting, an annual report on work related Housing Needs Reports and pre-zoning requirements, as applicable is required. In addition, the City should try to align with the Province’s priorities with Clean BC, Childcare as well with Environmental, Social and Governance Framework for capital projects.

Of course, any use of the funds is expected to meet the public recognition for funding related to projects for acknowledgement and advertising. It is also expected that the funds would be fully spent within 5-years of receipt.

Eligible costs are as follows:

- Public drinking water supply, treatment facilities and water distribution;
- Local portion of affordable/attainable housing developments;
- Childcare facilities;
- Municipal or regional capital projects that service, directly or indirectly, neighbouring First Nation communities;
- Wastewater conveyance and treatment facilities;
- Storm water management;
- Solid waste management infrastructure;
- Public safety/emergency management equipment and facilities not funded by senior level government;
- Local road improvements and upgrades;
- Sidewalks, curbing and lighting;
- Active transportation amenities not funded by senior level government;
- Improvements that facilitate transit service;
- Natural hazard mitigation;
- Park additions/maintenance/upgrades including washrooms/meeting space or other amenities; and
- Recreation-related amenities.

Further to the above-noted capital costs, one-off costs can include:

- Costs of feasibility studies (including infrastructure capacity assessment); other early-stage development work; costs of designing, tendering and acquiring land (where it is wholly required for eligible infrastructure projects); constructing eligible infrastructure projects; and, in limited situations, non-capital administrative costs where these are necessary, for example adding staff capacity related to development or to establish complementary financing for local government owned infrastructure or amenities.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Additional staff time and expenses for tracking and reporting are to be expected with the allocation of these funds. In the meantime, while projects are being considered various investments vehicles are being reviewed for the appropriate term and interest.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staff will prepare a suggested process to assist Council to rate and determine how they would like to see the funding used in anticipation of the next Strategic Priorities Workshop later this fall.

## **REVIEWED BY**

Warren Everton, CFO

Sandy Webster, Director of Corporate Initiatives

## **APPROVED FOR THE AGENDA BY**

Paul Gipps, CAO