



REQUEST FOR DECISION

To: Courtney Kirk, CAO

CC: Board of Directors, CCRD

From: Ken McIlwain, Operations Manager

Meeting Date: April 15, 2021

Subject: Application to the Regional Air Transportation Initiative for grant funding to assist with operating costs at the Bella Coola Airport and repairs/upgrades to the terminal building

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors of the Central Coast Regional District approves staff to submit a grant application to the Regional Air Transportation Initiative for up to \$300,000 to assist with operating and maintenance costs, as well as terminal facility repairs and upgrades.

Issue/Background Summary:

Program overview

The Regional Air Transportation Initiative (RATI) aims to help regional air transportation ecosystems affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19. This support will enable the air transportation system in Western Canada to remain operational through these difficult times and continue to support the economic growth of our regions.

This national initiative has a total budget of \$206 million over two years. It is being delivered by Canada's six regional development agencies (RDAs). The RATI is in addition to the measures in Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan and complements measures implemented by Transport Canada to support the air transportation sector.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) has \$54.6 million to support the air transportation ecosystem in the West. The objective of this initiative is to contribute to the economic development of communities through the restoration or addition of regional air service, and the increase in air passenger volumes.

Project description

This funding program is new and staff are still working with the grant manager from Western Diversification Canada to zero in on what projects/purchases etc. will be eligible expenditures under this new program.

The Airport Master Plan identifies upgrades to the terminal building and parking areas to meet expected increases in passenger loads into the future. There are also repairs and upgrades required to meet building code and accessibility standards.

Policy, Bylaw or Legislation:

CCRD Policy A-18 – Funding Proposals:

***“Policy:** That all funding proposals be carried out with and through Board direction and authorization, and that once in place, the proposal shall be executed on behalf of the Board by the Chief Administrative Officer or designate.*

***Exception:** In the event that a funding proposal falls within the current strategic priorities of the board of directors, board authorization by resolution is not required.”*

As noted in the previous section, the project falls within current strategic priorities of the CCRD Board of Directors.

Financial/Budgetary Implications:

The grant program provides 100% funding.

Uncertainty remains around the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on air travel. The Bella Coola Airport has seen drastic drops in revenue due to reduced travel and flight movements. While some relief has been provided to assist with some short-term revenue loss, it is likely that more assistance will be required going forward.

Time Requirements – Staff and Elected Officials:

The application will be prepared by the CCRD Operations Manager. Approximately 2 days of time will be required for the Operations Manager to prepare project details and budgeting/financial information to support the application.

Submitted by: _____
Ken McIlwain, Operations Manager

Reviewed by: _____
Courtney Kirk, Chief Administrative Officer