

To: Mayor and Council
From: Paul Gipps, CAO

Meeting Date: July 8, 2025
Meeting Type: Regular Council Meeting

Prepared by: Lauren Sanbrooks, Grant Funding Specialist
Department: Finance & Administration

Title: 2024 Grants Summary
Description: A summary of the 2024 Grants.

RECOMMENDATION

For Information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District of Lake Country actively pursues external grant funding to support capital and operational projects, reducing reliance on local taxation. In 2024, the District submitted 23 applications totaling \$12.58 million and secured 17 grants worth \$6.8 million, including \$5.55 million for the Beaver Lake Intake Tower Replacement. The grant process is a coordinated effort across multiple departments, requiring collaboration, expertise, and ongoing project alignment. Grants are cyclical and competitive, with results varying each year depending on factors such as elections, economic conditions, and policy changes. Successful applications may require adjustments to the Financial Plan, particularly when funding shifts the timing or scope of projects. In 2025, the District will continue to actively search for and apply to a wide range of grant opportunities, while building strong connections with funding agencies and learning from past applications. The Grant Funding Specialist, with support from staff across the District, will continue to work collaboratively to identify, secure, and manage grants that advance key projects and Strategic Priorities.

DISCUSSION

The District of Lake Country actively pursues external funding to support both capital and operating projects. This includes grants from federal and provincial governments, associations, foundations, and other funding bodies. These funds are vital for expanding the District's capacity beyond what can be achieved through local taxation alone. Grants contribute significantly to delivering key projects and reducing pressure on the municipal budget. Pursuing both large and small grants is essential. Large grants often support major infrastructure and long-term goals, while smaller grants can fund local initiatives that have a more immediate impact in the community.

The District operates in a continuous cycle of grant planning, application, and management. Once funding is approved, strong coordination is required to meet deadlines, track budgets, and complete mandatory reporting. A clear, cooperative approach across Departments ensures the District remains responsive and competitive in a limited and, often, time-sensitive funding environment.

2024 Grant Highlights

In 2024, the District actively pursued external funding opportunities across a range of government and non-government sources. A total of 23 grant applications were submitted, seeking approximately \$12.58 million in funding. 17 grants were awarded, totaling \$6,838,814.97. In addition, the District was directly allocated \$1.472 million in grant funding. This funding includes the Community Works Fund, Small Community Protection Grant, Okanagan Basin Water Board Sewage Facilities Assistance, Local Government Climate Action Program, and Capacity Funding for Local Government Housing Initiatives. A summary of all the successful applications is included in Attachment A. A few District projects that were awarded significant grants in 2024 are noted below:

Project: Beaver Lake Intake Tower Replacement

Two significant grants were secured for the Beaver Lake Intake Tower Replacement project. The project involves reconstruction of the Beaver Lake earth fill dam and water intake structure, which have reached the end of their life. Climate adaptation components will be incorporated, including automation of water releases to promote water conservation, advanced alerting to provide notice of dam breaches due to floods, accessing our full licensed storage. This project ensures a reliable water supply for residents, agriculture, and environmental conservation efforts.

- The District was successful in securing **\$4,550,000** through the UBCM *Community Emergency Preparedness Fund (CEPF) - Disaster Risk Reduction—Climate Adaptation (DRR-CA)* program for the reconstruction of the dam and intake structure at Beaver Lake. The CEPF Provincial funding stream is intended to support eligible applicants in reducing risks from future disasters.
- The District was successful in securing **\$1,000,000** through the *Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program (AWIP)* for the reconstruction of the dam and intake structure at Beaver Lake. The Agricultural Water Infrastructure Program is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture & Food and is delivered by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC. Through this program, the Government of BC seeks to see improvements to stream flows, fish populations, and an increased and more sustainable food production.

Project: Lodge Road Rail Trail

- The District was successful in securing **\$500,000** through the *B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program* for the active transportation improvements near and part of Lodge Road improvement project. The funding supports enhanced active transportation features including new curb and sidewalk, improved access to transit and transit stops, a reconfigured intersection at Sherman Drive to improve pedestrian safety and upgrades the Okanagan Rail Trail with a paved, all-season surface to provide a safe, accessible, and fully separated cycling and walking connection. The B.C. Active Transportation Infrastructure Grants Program, funded by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, provides cost-sharing opportunities for network planning grants and infrastructure grants. Funding from these grant programs supports the development and upgrading of active transportation infrastructure for all ages and abilities.

Project: FireSmart

- The District successfully secured **\$200,000** through the UBCM *Community Resiliency Investment Program - FireSmart Community Funding and Supports*. This program supported several FireSmart initiatives, including neighbourhood green recycling bins, home assessments, public education, critical infrastructure assessments, a structure protection unit, and the development of the Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan. The *FireSmart Community Funding and Supports program*, funded by Province, provides funding to local governments and First Nations in BC to increase community resiliency by undertaking community-based FireSmart planning and activities that reduce the community's risk from wildfire.

2025 Grants Management

In 2025, the District will continue to take a proactive and strategic approach to grant management. This includes building and maintaining strong relationships with funding agencies, seeking out unique or emerging grant opportunities, and subscribing to a wide range of funding resources and alerts. Staff will also follow up with grant providers to gain feedback on unsuccessful applications, helping to strengthen future submissions.

The Grant Funding Specialist plays a key role in identifying, overseeing, and applying for funding opportunities that align with District Strategic Priorities and project goals. However, the success of securing, managing, and delivering grants is made possible through the dedication and collaboration of numerous staff across the District. Collective expertise, coordination, and hard work are essential to the effective implementation of grant-funded projects.

The District has and will continue to actively pursue grant opportunities in 2025 that support its Strategic Priorities, align with master plans, and support both capital and operational projects.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION, BYLAWS AND POLICIES

District of Lake Country Strategic Priorities 2022

Support Opportunities to Diversify Lake Country's Tax Base.

2021-2038 Official Community Plan

23.1.6a. Pursue infrastructure grants from senior levels of government to lessen the impact on local property taxation and user fees.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

☐ None ☐ Budget Previously Approved ☒ Other (see below)

In 2024, the District secured 17 grants worth \$6,838,814.97 million. In addition, the District was directly allocated \$1.472 million in grant funding.

Grant funding is cyclical and competitive, and the amount awarded to the District can vary from year to year. Some years see increased funding success, while others result in fewer approvals. External factors—such as government changes (including the 2025 federal election), policy shifts, economic conditions, tariffs, and evolving program criteria—can all affect funding availability and program structures.

When grants are successful, changes to the District's Financial Plan may be required to reflect new funding streams or revised project timelines. In some cases, a successful grant application may accelerate the delivery of a project or shift its timing to meet the requirements of the funding program. Flexibility in financial and project planning is therefore essential to maximizing grant opportunities.

COMMUNICATION

This application was referred to internal departments.

Respectfully Submitted.

Lauren Sanbrooks, Grant Funding Specialist

Attachment A – Grant Management – 2024 Grant Summary