

DISTRICT OF INVERMERE



**OPERATIONAL & CAPITAL FUNDING REQUEST
FOR THE COLUMBIA VALLEY CENTRE**

BUSINESS CASE

To: RDEK

January 16th, 2020

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Columbia Valley Centre (CVC) has been in operation since September 2017. Since that time, it has supported all of the pre-existing events that were in hosted in the old community hall, along with some newly formed events, a couple of examples being indoor walking opportunities for people in the winter months, popular wedding venue, large enough area for our local graduating class celebration and a sought after film festival location as well as hosting numerous craft fairs.

The goals and objectives:

- To receive operational funding from RDEK,
- To receive capital funding from RDEK,
- Continue to gather statistics of users of the facility,
- An equity of shared costs of the building to the tax payers of Invermere,
- To become a leading regional facility for performances and larger scale events.

Background

In the past year 2 years, the District has changed the user fee rates many times along with observing the types of users and what their needs have been. A welcome outcome has been the progression of a film festival “season” during the winter months and the amount of attendees have been incredible. We are still in the process of adding kitchen equipment, understanding the acoustics and improving on it, as well as understanding the need of the audio visual with our users and how we can create the best experience with any group.

The District has created a new position of “Manager of Leisure Services”, which was our events coordinator and now we have increased her responsibility of managing the CVC with having her office in the CVC and creating a presence at the centre. The past six months we have tasked her with bringing in acts and performances that will showcase what the centre is capable of as well as seeking ways to attract regional festivals and events to benefit everyone in the Columbia Valley and beyond.

The variety of use and where the users reside have expanded over the past couple of years. Half of the weddings have been from out of the valley but choose to come to Invermere because of some connection in the valley. We have started collecting stats to where each person attending an event lives and we will continue to look at these stats in the upcoming year. The two events we sampled so far were a film festival and a band. The first had 55% of residents from outside the District of Invermere and the second sample had 59% outside our boundaries. As stated, we will continue to gather information from events that the District hosts as well as polling attendees of other events. Thus far, it is not surprising that over half of the visitors are from outside the District of Invermere.

The operational costs for 2019 was approximately \$165,500 and the capital funding for the 2020 budget is approximately \$120,000, which includes improving the acoustics, a new LED sign, roof top patio furniture and more kitchen equipment.

Further to the use of the building, the regional library occupies the upstairs, as well as the mezzanine and a shared lobby and washrooms on the main floor. The District subsidizes the cost of the building for the library, such as heat, electricity, internet, phones and cleaning totaling \$17,000 in in-kind labour and services. The current agreement with the RDEK excluded any renovations, equipment or operating costs associated with the library or any of the library services.

The operational and capital costs should not rest fully on the District of Invermere taxpayers, particularly, when the sample events polled show the majority of the users residing outside of Invermere. We want to see the CVC being used as a regional facility for everything from walking and mom & tot groups to film festivals, concerts and weddings. Invermere has created a flagship facility that welcomes community participation in community events, activities and festivals.

The intent of the building was to consider it a regional facility and so far the numbers are proving that between 50-60% of the users are from outside our boundaries. The total cost of the building to the Invermere taxpayers was \$10,608,654 in which the RDEK contributed \$625,000 (\$125,000 over 5 years). A major purpose of a regional district is to facilitate cooperation among member municipalities to provide services for a sub-area of the regional district that includes more than a single municipality or an electoral area. Currently RDEK funds recreation in the Columbia Valley for the CVC (expiring in 2019), Eddie Mountain Memorial Arena and Canal Flats Arena

Recommendations

Below is a table of the approximate costs and the request from RDEK in relation to the DOI costs.

| | Approximate Total | Request to RDEK per year |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Operational Funding | \$165,500 | \$80,000 |
| 2020 Capital Funding ** | \$120,000 | \$30,000 |
| In-kind Library Services | \$17,000 | |
| Manager of Leisure Services Wages * | \$54,600 | \$10,000 |
| TOTAL | \$357,100 | \$120,000 |

* A portion of her wages is coded to the CVC.

** An approximate portion of the 2020 capital funding spread over 5 years.

B. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

If the full request is not considered by RDEK, then below are some alternative options:

- i. Continue to gather stats of the user groups and submit another request next year,
- ii. Research a two-tiered facility use structure, whereby by those users who do not contribute through taxation would pay a higher fee to use the facility.

C. CONCLUSIONS

WHAT

To secure a 5 year agreement with the RDEK for \$90,000 a year towards operational funding and \$30,000 a year for capital funding.

WHY

To ensure residents of the District of Invermere are paying a fair amount of the operating and capital funding for a regional building.