



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

**Area A Economic Development Commission
OPEN MEETING AGENDA**

2:00 p.m. PDT

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Location: Hybrid Model – In-person and Remote

To promote openness, transparency and provide accessibility to the public we provide the ability to attend all RDCK meetings in-person or remote.

Join by Video:

<https://rdck-bc-ca.zoom.us/j/93079902753?pwd=1DnbzulpvRtHNZyPqjp7NKtEtkguO3.1>

Join by Phone:

1-778-907-2071 Canada Toll-free

Meeting Number (access code): 930 7990 2753

Meeting Password: 881036

In-Person Location: Kokanee Springs Resort - lower level of the 1st Lodge building at the rear of the building, 16082 Woolgar Road, Crawford Bay, BC

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Director G. Jackman	Area A
Commissioner G. MacMahon	Kootenay Bay
Commissioner G. Medhurst	Crawford Bay – Chair
Commissioner P. Cullinane	Boswell
Commissioner F. Demman	Wynndel
Commissioner R. Bertram	Crawford Bay/Gray Creek

STAFF PRESENT

Robin Baril	Meeting Coordinator
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____ out of ____ voting Commission/Committee members were present – quorum was met.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Medhurst called the meeting to order at [Time] p.m.

2. TRADITIONAL LANDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

We acknowledge and respect the Indigenous peoples within whose traditional lands we are meeting today.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

RECOMMENDATION

The agenda for the March 17, 2026, Area A Economic Development Commission meeting, be adopted as circulated.

4. RECEIPT OF MINUTES

The February 9, 2026 Area A Economic Development Commission minutes, have been received.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce Grant Application

Request for grant funding to support the Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce.

5.2 Crawford Bay Sunday Market Grant Application

Request received for grant funding to support the weekly Sunday Market in Crawford Bay.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.1 Economic Action Plan

Director Jackman requested to include the Creston Valley Services Committee report for discussion. This report includes direction for an expression of interest for a new provider for the economic action partnership as well as other initiatives.

7. PUBLIC TIME

The Chair will call for questions from the public at [Time] p.m.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next Area A Economic Development Commission meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2026 at 2:00 PDT.

9. ADJOURNMENT

RECOMMENDATION

The Area A Economic Development Commission meeting be adjourned at [Time] p.m.



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY
AREA A ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OPEN MEETING MINUTES

2:00 p.m. PDT

Tuesday, February 9, 2026

Location: Hybrid Model – In-person and Remote

ZOOM REMOTE MEETING INFO

To promote openness, transparency and provide accessibility to the public we provide the ability to attend all RDCK meetings in-person or remote.

Join by Video:

<https://rdck-bc-ca.zoom.us/j/93079902753?pwd=1DnbzulpvRtHNZyPqip7NKEtfkguO3.1>

Join by Phone:

+1-778-907-2071 Canada

Meeting Number (access code): 930 7990 2753

Meeting Password: 881036

In-Person Location: Kokanee Springs Resort – lower level of the 1st Lodge building at the rear of the building, 16083 Woolgar Road, Crawford Bay, BC

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Director G. Jackman	Area A
Commissioner G. Medhurst	Crawford Bay – Chair
Commissioner G. MacMahon	Kootenay Bay
Commissioner R. Bertram	Crawford Bay/Gray Creek
Commissioner P. Cullinane	Boswell
Commissioner F. Demman	Wynndel

STAFF PRESENT

R. Baril	Meeting Coordinator
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GUESTS

M. Stenhouse	Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce Director
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6 out of 6 voting Commission/Committee members were present – quorum was met.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Medhurst called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. TRADITIONAL LANDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

We acknowledge and respect the Indigenous peoples within whose traditional lands we are meeting today.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved and seconded,
and resolved:

The agenda for the February 9, 2026 Area A Economic Development Commission meeting, be adopted with the addition of Item 5.2 Grant Approval Voting Procedure as circulated.

Carried

4. RECEIPT OF MINUTES

The January 13, 2026 Area A Economic Development Commission minutes, have been received.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1 Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce

Widely received attendance at the Christmas Banquet, Chamber of Commerce Director Mike Stenhouse reported that it seemed that the whole community came out.

With the sudden passing of Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce President, they have not been able to finalize the budget for the Christmas Banquet. The directors will work on this for a future meeting. The Chamber will be looking for a new President.

5.2 Grant Approval Voting Procedure

The Commission reviewed the Board procedures for grant approval voting procedures to ensure clarity among the Commissioners for future grant requests.

**ORDER OF AGENDA
CHANGED**

The Order of Business changed to consider Item 6.2 – Economic Action Plan (EAP) at this time.

6. OLD BUSINESS

6.2 Economic Action Plan (EAP)

Town of Creston, Electoral Area A, B and C met in early January to discuss equalizing the contributions to the EAP for the coming year. The EAP has lost some steam but is being revitalized this year. Area directors have discussed continuing to fund physician recruitment and Creston Tourist Information booth.

Grant money has been earmarked by the Commission for future planning opportunities.

**ORDER OF AGENDA
RESUMED**

Item 6.1 – Economic Development – Area A Service S107 Draft Budget Discussion at this time.

6.1 Economic Development – Area A Service S107 Draft Budget Discussion

Direction to Staff: Keep the funding for Service S107 at \$50,000.00 for 2026. Once the amounts have been allocated for administration, insurance, etc. The amount to contract services is to remain where previously projected (\$2,560) with the balance to be placed under grants. Requisition amount should be inflated in 2027 through 2030, according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

7. PUBLIC TIME

The Chair called for questions from the public at 3:10 p.m.

No members of the public were present.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next Area A Economic Development Commission meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. PDT.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved and seconded,
and resolved:

The Area A Economic Development Commission meeting be adjourned at 3:11 p.m.

Carried

Digitally approved by:

Chair Gina Medhurst



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY Area A – Economic Development Commission Grant Application

Contact Information:	
Organization Applying: (This is the name that will appear on the cheque issued from RDCK and is recognized on the organization's bank account.)	Date:
Mailing Address:	Amount of Financial Aid Requested: \$
City, Province:	Project Start Date:
Postal Code:	Project End Date:
Contact Person:	Contact Phone #:
Contact Email:	Contact Fax #:

About Your Proposal:
Brief Summary of Proposal:
Will this proposed activity/project be advertised and if so, how?
How will the support from Area A EDC be recognized?

Return completed application and supporting documents by email to info@rdck.bc.ca

Please see page 2 for instructions on how to complete this application.



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Area A – Economic Development Commission

Grant Application

Instructions for completing the Area A Economic Grant Application:

On a separate page, please outline your project plan in detail, including answers to the following:

1. What is the purpose and goal(s) of the project?
2. How does this support and help to develop the local economy or add value to the community?
3. Does this compete with already established groups or businesses?
4. How many people will be involved? Will there be a fee charged to those people?

Please list other organizations or businesses that support your idea, and attach any letters of support.

Please give brief bio/credentials of the main project leader(s).

Please attach a balanced budget for the project showing the following:

1. Show how the grant monies will be allocated
2. List other sources and amounts of funding – multiple sources are encouraged.
3. List all anticipated expenses associated with the project plan
4. If you are hiring a contractor, include one or more quotes for the project.
5. If this is not the first year for the project, please attach an Income-Expense Statement from last year.

The sponsoring society is required to provide a general statement of income and expenses for the past fiscal year. Any monies received from Area A EDC must be expended on the grant proposal within one year from the date of receipt of funds. RDCK may request copies of all receipts.

EDC will request a final report on the project within 6 months of completion, including a final Income-Expense statement showing how grant monies have been spent, and a statement about how the project did or did not complete the stated goals.

Questions?

Please call Garry Jackman, Electoral Area Director, at (250) 223-8463 or email to info@rdck.bc.ca

Kootenay Lake Chamber Community Engagement & Digital Development Initiative

1. Purpose and Goals of the Project

The purpose of this project is to strengthen the capacity of the Kootenay Lake Chamber to support businesses, tourism, and economic activity in the East Shore and Kootenay Lake region.

This initiative includes four key components:

1. **Community Event Infrastructure** – purchasing portable equipment (tent, table, chairs, banner and display materials) to allow the Chamber to host and participate in local events, markets, and outreach activities that promote regional businesses. Long term infrastructure investment.
2. **Digital Infrastructure** – development of a modern Chamber website that will serve as a business directory, community information hub, and promotional platform for local businesses and organizations. The website is for long term Chamber and community infrastructure investments. The website includes a calendar to be used by the community to promote events that draw tourism, enhance community livability, and reflect East Shore livability to potential future. Website requests for proposals have been sent out in February,
3. **Organizational Capacity Building** – engaging advisory support through the CBT Non-Profit Advisors program to strengthen governance, strategic planning, and long-term sustainability of the Chamber.
4. **Project Administration and Coordination** - Administration costs support the ongoing coordination required to deliver Chamber services and economic development activities for the Kootenay Lake region. These administrative functions ensure that the Chamber can effectively promote businesses, share information with visitors and residents, and support economic activity throughout the Kootenay Lake area.
These duties include:
 - **Membership coordination and communication** with local businesses and organizations
 - **Preparation and distribution of Chamber newsletters/social media** promoting local businesses, events, and economic initiatives
 - **Website administration and updates**, including maintaining business listings and community information
 - **General administrative support** for Chamber programs and initiatives
 - **Bookkeeping and financial administration** related to Chamber activities

- **Distribution of tourism and business promotional materials**, including stocking brochures on the Kootenay Lake ferry and other visitor locations
- **Coordination of community events and outreach initiatives** that support local business promotion

The project also includes hosting a **Father's Day community event** that will highlight local businesses and bring visitors to the area.

Overall goals include:

- Increasing visibility of local businesses
- Supporting tourism and visitor engagement
- Strengthening the Chamber's ability to serve businesses in the region
- Improving access to information about local businesses and services

2. How the Project Supports Local Economic Development

This project supports economic development by increasing promotion and visibility for local businesses and improving the Chamber's ability to connect businesses with residents and visitors.

Specific benefits include:

- **Business Promotion:** The new website will provide a centralized online business directory and information platform for businesses and organizations in the Kootenay Lake region.
- **Community Events:** Outreach equipment will allow the Chamber to participate in regional markets, festivals, and community events that highlight local products, services, and tourism opportunities.
- **Visitor Engagement:** The Father's Day event will attract residents and visitors, encouraging them to explore local businesses and services.
- **Business Support:** Governance and organizational advisory services will strengthen the Chamber's capacity to support business development and economic initiatives.

By improving outreach, visibility, and organizational capacity, the project will help foster a stronger and more connected local economy.

3. Does This Compete With Existing Businesses?

No. The Chamber does not compete with local businesses. Instead, it acts as a **support and promotional organization** that works to strengthen the business community and local economy.

The website and outreach initiatives will promote existing businesses and organizations and encourage residents and visitors to shop locally.

4. How Many People Will Be Involved? Will There Be Fees?

The project will involve:

- Kootenay Lake Chamber board members and volunteers
- Local businesses participating in Chamber initiatives
- Website development contractors
- Non-profit advisory consultants

Community events organized through this project may involve **100+ participants and visitors**, depending on the event.

Some Chamber events may include small participation fees or vendor fees to help cover event costs, though many outreach activities will remain free to the public.

Project Leadership

The project will be led by the **Kootenay Lake Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors**, a volunteer-led organization dedicated to supporting local businesses and economic development in the Kootenay Lake region.

Board members have experience in community development, business leadership, and event coordination.

Kootenay Lake Chamber Community Engagement & Digital Development Initiative Project Budget

Expenses	Amount
Expense	
Event outreach equipment (table, chairs, tent, canvas top, shipping, display rack)	\$1,300
Chamber promotional banner	\$500
CBT Non-Profit Advisory consultation	\$800
Website development	\$8,000*
Father's Day community event	\$2,500
KLCC administration	<u>\$7,500</u>

Total Expenses \$20,,600

Funding Sources

Funding Source	Amount
Columbia Basin Trust	\$1,500
Columbia Power	\$500
Nelson & District Credit Union	\$1,500
Kootenay Lake Chamber	\$1,000
RDCK Area A EDC	<u>\$16,100</u>
Total Funding	\$20,600

*quotes are coming for website



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Area A – Economic Development Commission

Grant Application

Contact Information:	
Organization Applying: (This is the name that will appear on the cheque issued from RDCK and is recognized on the organization's bank account.) Crawford Bay Sunday Market	Date: <p style="text-align: center;">February 14, 2026</p>
Mailing Address: Box 243	Amount of Financial Aid Requested: \$ <p style="text-align: center;">6,000.00</p>
City, Province: Crawford Bay, BC	Project Start Date: <p style="text-align: center;">May 3, 2026</p>
Postal Code: V0B 1E0	Project End Date: <p style="text-align: center;">October 25, 2026</p>
Contact Person: Kurtis Staven	Contact Phone #: (250) 584-9690
Contact Email: info@cbsundays.ca	Contact Fax #:

About Your Proposal:
Brief Summary of Proposal: This is an annual weekly Sunday Market in Crawford Bay. The Crawford Bay Sunday Market will bring together artisans, farmers, food vendors and musicians, and is designed as a welcoming gathering place that supports local vendors and gives visitors a reason to stop and stay. The Crawford Bay Sunday Market will run on Sundays beginning May 3, 2026, through the end of October except for Starbelly weekend July 12th . The Market will offer a curated mix of
Will this proposed activity/project be advertised and if so, how? This project will be advertised on regional Facebook Community pages, our own FB page and website, Mainstreet paper, Nelson Star and the Creston Advance. Also local radio will be utilized that announce community events in the region. We will also utilizing banners and roadside signage.
How will the support from Area A EDC be recognized? We will recognize all supporters and sponsors in Media Releases, on Facebook, our own Website, along with a banner on-site.

Return completed application and supporting documents by email to info@rdck.bc.ca

Please see page 2 for instructions on how to complete this application.



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY

Area A – Economic Development Commission

Grant Application

Instructions for completing the Area A Economic Grant Application:

On a separate page, please outline your project plan in detail, including answers to the following:

1. What is the purpose and goal(s) of the project?
2. How does this support and help to develop the local economy or add value to the community?
3. Does this compete with already established groups or businesses?
4. How many people will be involved? Will there be a fee charged to those people?

Please list other organizations or businesses that support your idea, and attach any letters of support.

Please give brief bio/credentials of the main project leader(s).

Please attach a balanced budget for the project showing the following:

1. Show how the grant monies will be allocated
2. List other sources and amounts of funding – multiple sources are encouraged.
3. List all anticipated expenses associated with the project plan
4. If you are hiring a contractor, include one or more quotes for the project.
5. If this is not the first year for the project, please attach an Income-Expense Statement from last year.

The sponsoring society is required to provide a general statement of income and expenses for the past fiscal year. Any monies received from Area A EDC must be expended on the grant proposal within one year from the date of receipt of funds. RDCK may request copies of all receipts.

EDC will request a final report on the project within 6 months of completion, including a final Income-Expense statement showing how grant monies have been spent, and a statement about how the project did or did not complete the stated goals.

Questions?

Please call Garry Jackman, Electoral Area Director, at (250) 223-8463 or email to info@rdck.bc.ca

The Crawford Bay Sunday Market will bring together artisans, farmers, food vendors and musicians, and is designed as a welcoming gathering place that supports local vendors, provides a community gathering venue and gives visitors a reason to stop and stay.

The **Crawford Bay Sunday Market** will run on Sundays (10-4) beginning **May 3, 2026**, through the end of October, except for Starbelly weekend, July 12th. The Market will offer a curated mix of handmade goods, services, farm goods, prepared food, and live music in a relaxed, welcoming setting. The market is intended to serve both residents and visitors, while strengthening connections within the community and encouraging visitors to explore the East Shore.

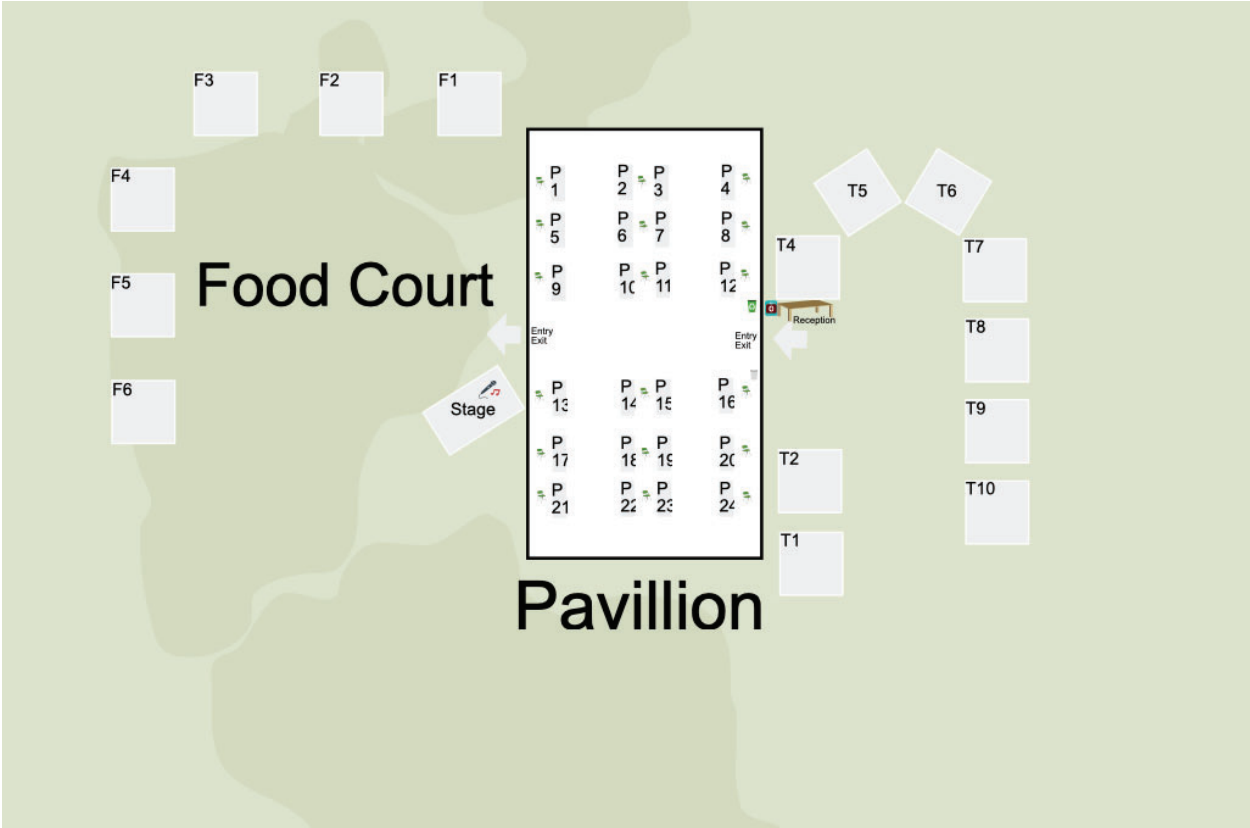
The market is being organized by **Paula Snow** and **Kurtis Staven**, who bring a combined background in business, arts, and community-based projects. Paula is a local author, who has organized other local vendor markets in partnership with the Ladybug Cafe in Kootenay Bay. Kurtis is a local business owner (StavenCraft Leather) and has been an organizer/director with Pet Expo (Calgary, Edmonton, Regina). He has also been a director for Numerous community projects and organizations in Christina Lake, Grand Forks, and currently serves with Circle of Friends in Riondel, and with The Hall and Parks Board in Crawford Bay.

Our goal is to use this experience to establish a market that is sustainable, well-organized, and rooted in the character of the East Shore. This is about creating something that lasts and building a market that supports local vendors, adds energy to the community, and gives people a reason to stop, linger, and come back.

In addition to vendor booths, the market will feature local musicians and performers, helping create a lively atmosphere while providing paid performance opportunities. We are also working with the chamber of

commerce and nearby businesses to strengthen visibility and encourage visitors to explore the area.

We will have a capacity for 24-6 foot vendor tables in the Pavillion, 10-10 x 10 vendor tents outside the pavilion, and up to 6 food vendors in the performance area. Site map below.



Vendor fees and revenues are as follows:

Outdoor Tents-10' x 10' MAX (\$30) Pavillion Tables- 6 foot max (tables not supplied-bring your own) (\$25) Prepared Food Vendors-trailers (\$40) We currently have local sponsorship from Crawford Bay RV,

Green Bubble, Newkeys Pub, The Landing (Balfour), and 5 local area private individuals. This totals \$1300.00. Sponsorship form is located on our website. www.cbsundays.ca

Estimated Expenses and Revenues (2026 Season) 30 Market Days

Total

Expenses:

Rent	\$2,250.00
Insurance	\$883.00
Marketing and Social Media	\$2,650.00
Day Staff (Students)	\$8,400.00
Entertainer booking Agent	\$3,000.00
Signage	\$2,500.00
Incidentals and Supplies	\$1,000.00
P.A System	\$899.00
Canopy for stage area	\$529.00
Musician Honorariums	\$9,000.00

 Total: \$31,111.00

Revenues:

Vendor fees	75%? capacity	Full Capacity
24 tables (25)	\$13,500.00	\$18,000.00
10 tents (30)	\$6,750.00	\$9,000.00
6 food vendors (40)	\$5,400.00	\$7,200.00
current sponsors	\$1,300.00	\$1,300.00

 Total: \$26,950.00 \$35,500.00

Honorariums are a maximized figure and expected to be reduced as booking arrangements are completed. We are currently negotiating 7 of the 30 slots with groups who will perform for free or based on on-site donations.

Grant monies will be allocated to marketing, signage, p.a. equipment, site rent, insurance and a much needed canopy.



Committee Report

Creston Valley Services Committee

March 5, 2026

Economic Development Services in the Creston Valley

Author:	Stuart Horn, Chief Administrative Officer Mike Moore, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Creston
File Reference:	01-0515-20
Electoral Area/Municipality:	AREAS A, B, C AND TOWN OF CRESTON
Services Impacted	S107 Economic Development-Area A; S108 Economic Development – Creston and Areas B and C

1.0 STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT staff be directed to issue an Expression of Interest to identify an external service provider for economic development activities in the Creston Valley based upon the proposed level of service for economic development outlined in the committee report dated March 5, 2026, AND FURTHER, that after the evaluation of the submissions, staff return to the Creston Valley Services Committee for consideration.

2.0 BACKGROUND/HISTORY

With the expiry of the contract with Kootenay Employment Services at the end of 2024, staff provided the Creston Valley Services Committee (CVSC) with a report that outlined the history and background of Economic Development in the Creston Valley. The CVSC recommended to the RDCK Board that the KES contract be extended to September 2025 to complete the remaining work.

The report identified several structural and governance challenges in the current approach to economic development. The Creston Valley's economic development is fragmented across multiple services and organizations, resulting in a "silo" effect. Key entities—including Kootenay Employment Services (KES), the RDCK, the Town of Creston, Creston Valley Tourism Society, Nelson Kootenay Lake Tourism, and the Chamber of Commerce—operate with overlapping mandates and funding streams, which can lead to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for collaboration. The advisory committee for the Creston Valley – Economic Action Partnership (CV-EAP) has experienced inconsistent participation, limiting diverse perspectives and inclusive decision-making. Additionally, there is uncertainty about the continued relevance and value of the Stronger Together strategy, and whether the current contract model best serves the region's needs.

Financial and operational concerns also emerged. The KES contract, which expires December 31, 2024, is valued at approximately \$120,000 per year and split between services S107 and S108. Other significant expenditures include annual support for tourism initiatives, the subsidized visitors centre, and physician recruitment programs. Staff highlighted the need for a thorough discussion on contract performance, governance, and potential efficiencies before recommending a path forward.

While options included the renewing or extending of the current contract, updating the strategy, or conducting a comprehensive analysis for future decision-making, it was determined by Staff that reviewing governance structures would be beneficial prior to consideration of the other options.

A two-day workshop on January 6 & 7, 2026 was hosted by the Town of Creston with facilitator Christina Benty to explore governance options to improve service delivery.

The participants of the workshop agreed upon a contracted delivery model whereas the level of service, strategic focus and funding (the “What” & “Why”) is determined by the CVSC (the “political body”) and the contractor develops and implements a plan with coordination of local stakeholders (the “Who” and “How”).

3.0 PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Governance Model

Focused delivery. Political direction. Professional execution.

Economic Development delivered through a contracted service

Economic development is delivered through a time-limited, outcome-focused contract, rather than as an internal Regional District function. This model is appropriate where the desired scope of work is targeted, time-bound, and focused on specific economic priorities.

The emphasis is on delivery of defined outcomes, not ongoing organizational capacity.

Roles and accountabilities

Creston Valley Services Committee (Political Body)

- Defines why economic development work is being undertaken
- Sets specific deliverables, timelines, and priorities through an Economic Development Action Plan
- Confirms funding level and contract term
- Receives outcome-based reporting, not operational detail

RDCK CAO

- Manages the economic development contract on behalf of the Regional District
- Acts as the primary point of accountability and political buffer
- Oversees performance against the approved Action Plan
- Ensures alignment with internal services and regional partners where economic outcomes depend on collaboration

Economic Development Contractor

- Retained to deliver a clearly defined scope of work
- Operates with professional independence
- Authorized to:
 - Build sector partnerships within the aligned with approved priorities
 - Pursue investment and business attraction within scope

- Support business retention and expansion tied to deliverables
- Coordinate funding only where it advances the approved Action Plan
- Reports to the CAO, not directly to elected officials
- Accountable for delivery against defined milestones and outcomes
- **The core accountability tool**

A narrow, time-bound Economic Development Action Plan serves as both:

- The governance direction set by the Services Committee, and
- The performance framework for the contract.

The Action Plan:

- Identifies a small number of priority outcomes
- Specifies deliverables, timelines, and success measures
- Clarifies what is in scope and out of scope
- Is used to evaluate contract performance

This approach replaces:

- Broad, unfocused economic development strategies
- Grant chasing without clear focus
- Open-ended partnership mandates
- Informal direction through committees
- **Advisory input (used intentionally)**
Advisory structures are not required by default.

If used, they are:

- Non-political
- Skills-based
- Time-limited or task-specific
- Advisory only (no decision authority)

Advisory bodies exist solely to inform delivery—not to govern or direct the contractor.

- **Conditions for Success**
Political direction is provided only through approved plans, budgets, and reporting—not through informal direction.

Why this model works

- Maintains political control over priorities and scope
- Preserves professional independence in delivery
- Reduces governance complexity
- Provides clarity for staff, contractors, and elected officials

- Allows the Regional District to “test and learn” before committing to an in-house service
- Review and Transition
This model is reviewed at the end of the contract term to determine whether:
 - The service should be extended,
 - The scope should be adjusted, or
 - Economic development should transition to an in-house service.

This model provides:

- Use a clear Action Plan
- Rely on CAO oversight
- Minimize political interference
- Focus on outcomes, not activity

3.1 Alignment to Board Strategic Plan

- Organizational excellence;
- Manage our assets and service delivery in a fiscally responsible manner;
- Develop relationships and partnerships;
- Regional approach to growth; and
- Advocacy.

3.2 Legislative Considerations

For S107 Economic Development-Area A, Electoral Area A Economic Development Commission Bylaw No. 2677, 2019 to establish an Economic Development Commission for Electoral Area A of the Regional District of Central Kootenay.

For S108 Economic Development – Creston and Areas B and C, Creston Valley Services Commission Bylaw No. 2328, 2013 to establish a Creston Valley Services Committee for Electoral Areas A, B, C and the Town of Creston of the Regional District of Central Kootenay.

3.3 What Are the Risks

The risks associated with the problem are primarily related to a lack of support for business, industry

4.0 PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposed solution is one where a contractor would be engaged to deliver economic development services in the Creston Valley, including working with the organizations currently delivering specific services.

Staff recommends preparing an Expression of Interest document (A Draft prepared by Town CAO is at Appendix A) to look for submissions for this work.

4.1 Financial Considerations of the Proposed Solution

Costs will be determined based on the submissions received from the EOI process, subject to CVSC and RDCK Board approval. Costs will be paid from S107 Area A Economic Development and S108 Economic Development Town of Creston Areas B, C.

The split between S107 and S108 is a weighted calculation based on population and assessment values (50% each). Staff will look at updating this calculation in 2026.

4.2 Risks with the Proposed Solution

Economic Development is one of the more difficult services to clearly measure success, particularly on a micro level. Large wins (drawing in a new industry) can be measured easily. Smaller wins can fly under the radar or worse yet, not be achieved. The risk is a contract award that does not yield the results the committee wishes to see.

4.3 Resource Allocation and Workplan Impact

The Regional District does not have economic development staff, and based on the capacity of other departments, it has fallen to the CAO of the RD to manage. The desire for concrete results and value for money will mean the CAO will be spending time on this file, from the evaluation of the submissions through to the management of the contract. This will not be insignificant.

4.4 Public Benefit and Stakeholder Engagement of Proposed Solution

The delivery of economic development is not a mandated service for the Regional District. That being said, there are significant benefits of appropriately scaled and delivered economic development programs. This ranges from support for business, increasing the availability of services, keeping and attracting larger industry, and improving tourism.

4.5 Leveraging Technology

At this time this is unknown. The EOI submissions may include ways that the proponents would use technology to support delivery.

4.6 Measuring Success

1. Strategic Plan Implementation

Actions:

- Develop annual work plans aligned with the Stronger Together – Creston Valley Economic Action Strategy's five pillars.
- Coordinate and integrate activities across tourism, business retention, agriculture, resident attraction, and new initiatives.
- Ensure alignment of all partner organizations' efforts to avoid duplication and maximize impact.

Outputs:

- Annual and quarterly work plans.
- Documentation of coordinated initiatives and cross-partner projects.

2. Governance & Advisory Support

Actions:

- Organize and facilitate regular advisory committee meetings with representatives from RDCK, Town of Creston, sector groups, and other stakeholders.
- Prepare agendas, minutes, and follow-up actions for each meeting.
- Advise elected officials and staff on strategic decisions, governance improvements, and inclusivity.

Outputs:

- Meeting schedules, agendas, and minutes.
- Governance review reports and recommendations.

3. Program Delivery

Actions:

- Implement business retention and expansion programs, tourism development, grant administration, and special projects (e.g., physician recruitment, community events).
- Collaborate with local organizations to deliver shared initiatives and leverage resources.
- Monitor progress and adjust programs as needed.

Outputs:

- Program activity reports.
- Documentation of delivered services and outcomes.

4. Performance Measurement & Reporting

Actions:

- Establish and track KPIs and metrics that reflect EAP goals (e.g., business engagement, investment, jobs created, stakeholder satisfaction).
- Prepare quarterly and annual progress reports for the Creston Valley Services Committee (CVSC).
- Present findings and recommendations to elected officials and stakeholders.

Outputs:

- KPI dashboards and data summaries.
- Quarterly and annual performance reports.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

Actions:

- Conduct outreach to local governments, sector representatives, and community partners.
- Facilitate public engagement sessions to gather input and feedback.

- Incorporate stakeholder perspectives into strategy and program adjustments.

Outputs:

- Records of engagement activities.
- Summary reports of stakeholder feedback and resulting actions.

6. Contract & Financial Management

Actions:

- Administer contract deliverables within approved budgets and timelines.
- Track expenditures, prepare financial reports, and ensure transparency in resource allocation.
- Respond to financial audits and requests for information.

Outputs:

- Financial statements and budget reports.
- Documentation of contract compliance.

7. Continuous Improvement

Actions:

- Analyze performance data and stakeholder feedback to identify areas for improvement.
- Recommend updates to service delivery, governance, and strategy.
- Support periodic reviews and revisions of the EAP strategy and governance structure.

Outputs:

- Improvement plans and recommendations.
- Updated strategy and governance documents.

5.0 ALTERNATIVE SOLUTION(S)

As economic development is not a mandated service for the Regional District, the alternative solution is to keep the status quo and where possible, support the Creston Valley Tourism Society, Physician Recruitment Program, Chamber of Commerce, and Tourism Information Centre.

6.0 OPTIONS CONSIDERED BUT NOT PRESENTED

1. Review Physician Recruitment program to determine alignment with economic development activities.
2. Review Tourism Information Centres across the province to determine opportunities for improved area promotion through increased collaboration between the different destination marketing areas.
3. Review funding models for the Town of Creston and RDCK Electoral Areas A, B and C to align with level of service expectations.
4. Update the Economic Action Partnership Plan.

It should be noted that as part of the contractor's work, the items above may be come to be in scope.

7.0 OPTIONS SUMMARY

Option 1:

Recommendation:

THAT staff be directed to issue an Expression of Interest to identify an external service provider for economic development activities in the Creston Valley based upon the proposed level of service for economic development outlined in the committee report dated March 5, 2026, AND FURTHER, that after the evaluation of the submissions, staff return to the Creston Valley Services Committee for consideration.

Option 2: That staff be directed to continue the current economic development model, where the individual organizations approach the CVSC for funding.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

THAT staff be directed to issue an Expression of Interest to identify an external service provider for economic development activities in the Creston Valley based upon the proposed level of service for economic development outlined in the committee report dated March 5, 2026, AND FURTHER, that after the evaluation of the submissions, staff return to the Creston Valley Services Committee for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Stuart Horn, Chief Administrative Officer

CONCURRENCE

Chief Administrative Officer – Stuart Horn

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Expression of Interest (EOI): Economic Action Partnership (EAP) Contractor

Appendix B: Expression of Interest

Expression of Interest (EOI): Economic Action Partnership (EAP) Contractor

Purpose:

The Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is seeking Expressions of Interest from qualified organizations or individuals to deliver economic development services under the Economic Action Partnership (EAP) framework for the Creston Valley. The successful contractor will implement the Stronger Together – Creston Valley Economic Action Strategy, coordinate regional initiatives, and drive measurable outcomes for the community.

Scope of Work

- Implement the EAP strategic plan, focusing on tourism, business retention, agriculture, resident attraction, and new directions.
- Facilitate collaboration among local governments, sector organizations, and community partners.
- Deliver and/or maintain existing economic development programs, including business outreach, grant administration, tourism initiatives, and special projects (e.g., Physician Recruitment, Community Event Coordination)
- Track and report on key performance indicators (KPIs) aligned with EAP goals.
- Engage stakeholders through advisory committee meetings and public outreach.
- Provide regular updates and annual reports to the RDCK through the Creston Valley Services Committee.
- Administer contract deliverables within approved budgets and timelines.

Submission Requirements

Interested parties should submit:

- A cover letter outlining relevant experience and approach to EAP implementation.
- A summary of qualifications, including experience in economic development, stakeholder engagement, and program delivery.
- Description of existing or proposed organizational capacity to provide service.
- Examples of previous work in similar settings.
- Proposed methodology for tracking and reporting KPIs.
- References from recent clients or partners.

Furthermore, in addition to the previously stated submission requirements, the submission must also provide evidence of local relationships.

- Please describe your existing relationships and engagement with key economic development stakeholders in the Creston Valley, including local governments, business organizations, tourism bodies, agricultural groups, Indigenous partners, and community organizations.
- Provide examples of past collaboration, joint initiatives, or partnership projects with these stakeholders.
- Outline your approach to building and maintaining effective local partnerships, including strategies for inclusive engagement and communication.
- Preference will be given to proponents who can demonstrate a deep understanding of the local context and a proven ability to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to achieve shared economic development goals.

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated based on:

- Demonstrated experience and expertise in economic development.
- Demonstrated local relationships with economic development stakeholders
- Understanding of regional collaboration and governance.
- Capacity to deliver measurable results and transparent reporting.
- Quality of stakeholder engagement approach.
- Value for money.

Submission Deadline

EOIs must be submitted by **[insert date]** to **[insert contact information]**.