



STAFF REPORT

To: Council
From: Director of Development Services
Subject: Complete Communities Grant UBCM

File No.:
Date: June 28, 2023

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council support for an application for funding from the Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) Complete Communities Program. For the City of Courtenay to be eligible for UBCM grant funding, a Council resolution indicating support for the grant application, and direction to provide overall grant management, must be submitted with the application. The Complete Communities Program aligns with several of Council's strategic priorities and contributes to the City's commitment to creating a more complete, compact, and energy efficient community. The funding will assist with implementing many of the OCP policies and the program aligns with our four cardinal directions.

BACKGROUND:

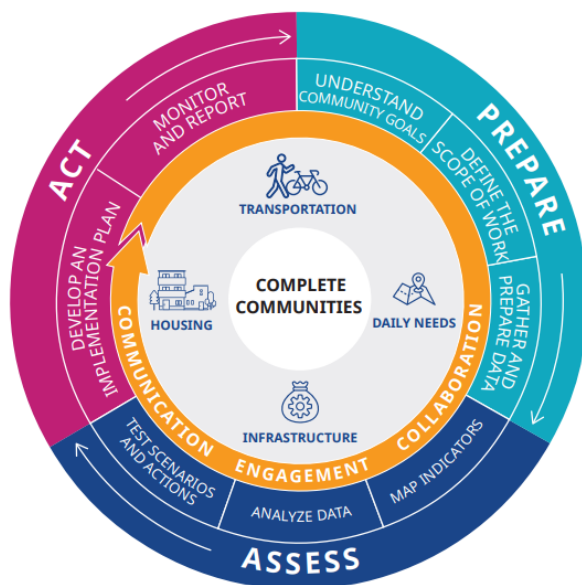
Complete Communities Fund and Program

Complete communities provide a diversity of housing to meet identified community needs and accommodate people at all stages of life, and provide a wider range of employment opportunities, amenities, and services within a 15-20 minute walk. The Complete Communities Program, administered by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) on behalf of the Province, supports local governments and modern Treaty Nations in undertaking assessments of their community completeness to identify current strengths, opportunities, and challenges and determine potential actions to increase their completeness.



A minimum of three of the four lenses identified in the Ministry of Housing's *Complete Communities Guide* should be used to assess community completeness: housing, transportation, daily needs, and infrastructure. It is recommended that the City use all four lenses to complete the assessment.

The grant deliverable includes a report that sets out: key assessment findings; identified strengths, opportunities, and challenges to increase community completeness; and an implementation plan that includes potential future actions. The Complete Communities assessment process includes eight steps over three phases: prepare, assess, and act.



- Phase 1: Prepare, involves identifying the community goals that may be supported by creating more complete communities which will inform the scope and scale of the assessment and the data required to complete the project.
- Phase 2: Assess, involves using data to map and measure each of the indicators nested under each lens (housing, daily needs, transportation, and infrastructure).
- Phase 3: Act, includes developing an implementation plan which outlines the necessary steps resulting from the assessment to help meet the identified community goals. The grant program does not include funding for the implementation of the actions developed in this phase.

Geospatial land use assessment is an important component of the Complete Communities program. Completion of the Complete Communities assessment will involve compiling and analyzing geographic data (data that is associated with geographic locations) as it provides context for the analysis and identification of potential actions.

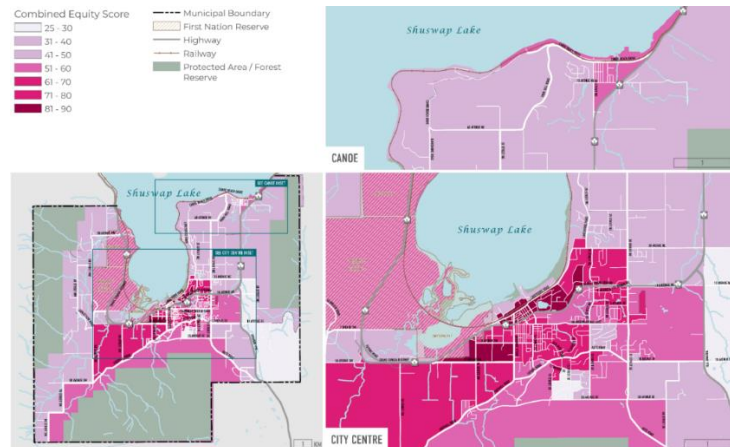
Publicly available data, assembled by the Integrated Cadastral Information (ICI) Society, will be available to the City to access to support the assessment. The grant funding can also be utilized to digitize relevant data such as pedestrian networks, infrastructure, housing types, community parks, facilities, etc. required to complete the assessment. The completion of this mapping would be an asset to the planned OCP review.

Example Projects

The [Complete Communities Guide](#) highlights several examples of geospatial data compilation and analysis for identifying spatial trends and community needs. The examples offered in the Guide and those mentioned below can be woven into organizational or community discussions about the City's planning processes and opportunities to become more complete to support the City's identified goals. The following geospatial maps are examples of mapping that could be developed for the City of Courtenay as part of the Complete Communities assessment:

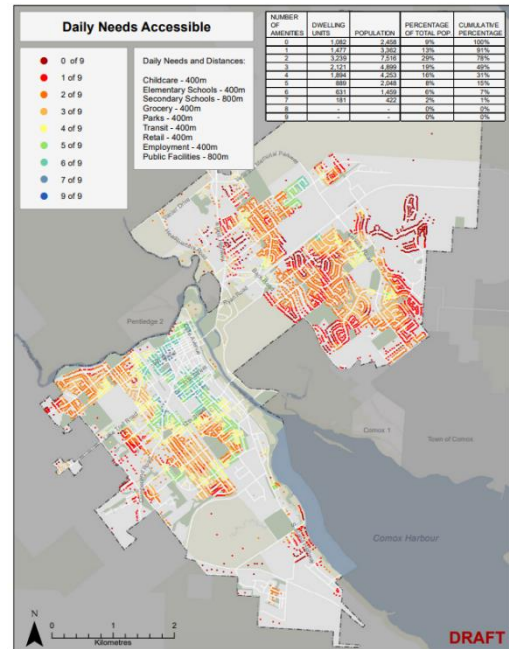
Salmon Arm Active Transportation Network Plan – Equity Analysis

City of Salmon Arm conducted a geospatial equity analysis to develop a transportation network that serves all areas of the city and provides equitable access for all residents. The geospatial map below identifies neighbourhoods where there were higher concentrations of equity-priority groups. The analysis identified underserved areas where there were opportunities to make strategic investments to improve transportation equity.



Courtenay OCP Review

In the City’s recent Official Community Plan review, residents were engaged about the future of Courtenay, including about many elements that make up complete communities. The City also conducted a spatial analysis of several indicators of the built environment, demographics, and travel behaviour to inform conversations for its OCP review process as illustrated in the map to the right. The analysis provided the City with a broader understanding of the community’s strengths, opportunities, and challenges. The Complete Communities program would support the City in building on this geospatial analysis work in the “act” phase of the assessment process to develop an implementation plan. The implementation plan would outline the necessary steps needed to help meet the identified community goals including details around the type of action, implementation tools, resource requirements, responsibilities, and timelines.



DISCUSSION:

The Complete Communities program grant can be used to enhance the City of Courtenay’s ability to make evidence-based land use planning decisions through assessments to inform land use decision-making, considering housing need, supply, and location; providing transportation options including increased walkability; and making efficient use of infrastructure.

Two application deadlines are scheduled for 2023/2024: June 16, 2023, and January 12, 2024. UBCM is currently accepting grant applications to the 2023 intake of the Complete Communities Program. Staff recommend submitting the application in the first intake as application success is likely higher than in the second intake.

Local municipalities will be advised of the status of their application within 90 days of the application deadline. The Complete Communities Program must be completed within one year of the date of grant approval.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

Official Community Plan

The City of Courtenay Official Community Plan (OCP) accounts for the diverse and complex ways in which the urban environment impacts well-being. Community well-being is identified as one of four vital navigational tools to guide decision-making as Courtenay moves toward its community vision. The City has committed to taking a systems-based approach to well-being, considering the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals and communities, and the natural ecosystem.

The OCP recognizes the role of housing in meeting the City’s vision and goals. The OCP supports the development and integration of a variety of housing options in all neighbourhoods in the City. Infrastructure and corresponding levels of service will affect Courtenay’s future fiscal performance, public health, safety, and

environment. The OCP supports the need to embrace a holistic approach to land use management and associated infrastructure planning, accounting for long-term lifecycle costs associated with development.

The Complete Communities Program and the four lenses (housing, daily needs, transportation, and infrastructure) greatly align with the above identified policies and would support Courtenay in achieving its community objectives.

Clean BC Roadmap to 2030

The Complete Communities program aligns with commitments in the Clean BC *Roadmap to 2030*, the Province's plan to achieve its emissions reduction targets while building a cleaner economy. The Complete Communities program would support the City in aligning land use and transportation planning to build connected, mixed-use communities where more people can live closer to jobs, services and transportation choices, and helping to reduce commute times and GHG emissions.

The City of Courtenay is a signatory to the B.C. Climate Action Charter. The Complete Communities program supports the City in fulfilling its commitment to create more complete, compact, and energy efficient communities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The Complete Communities program can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$150,000. In addition to the grant application, the City must provide a budget that indicates the proposed expenditures from the Complete Communities program and other sources (if applicable) that aligns with the proposed activities of the program. If successful, the funding program will provide the City with financial resources to conduct the required geospatial analysis to support several of the implementation actions identified in the recently completed OCP, including completing additional engagement, geospatial analysis, policy review and implementation planning that will directly benefit the completion of the planned OCP implementation including the comprehensive zoning bylaw review.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

To assist with staff capacity, the grant application is being prepared by a consultant. City staff will be required to support with the coordination and preparation of application materials required for submission. If successful, the grant will fund consulting services to complete all phases of the project including public engagement, mapping, and final reporting.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

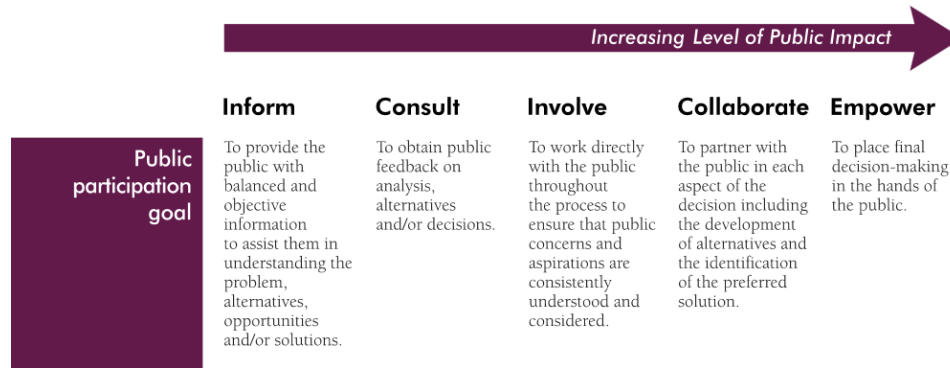
This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Buildings and Landscape - Review and update land use regulations and bylaws for consistency with OCP
- Buildings and Landscape - Update Zoning Bylaw - review maximum building heights
- Buildings and Landscape - Support investment and redevelopment in downtown core: Review and evaluate Downtown development incentives e.g. fast tracking/density bonuses/DCC
- Buildings and Landscape - Update Subdivision Bylaw, including offsite frontage improvements

- Social Infrastructure - Develop measures and criteria to track progress for the OCP's four cardinal directions: reconciliation, community well-being, equity, and climate action
- Streets and Transportation - Update cycling network plan and implementation strategy

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation if the grant is received:



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OPTIONS:

1. THAT Council support the submission of a grant application to UBCM for the Complete Communities Fund.
2. THAT Council provide alternative direction to staff.

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