



Review request

Please review your application below. To make changes, use the tabs at the top of the page to navigate back to the corresponding page.

Overview

Think about the direct activities related to your proposed project.

Select the [BC Economic Development Region](#) and Regional District where the majority of the direct activities will take place:

Direct activities are:

- Actions, steps or events that must be undertaken to complete the proposed project.

Examples of direct activities (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Providing training workshops for community members;
- Implementing recommendations from a completed business case for a tourism initiative;
- Building or upgrading destination trails.

Thompson/Okanagan

Thompson-Nicola

Provide the name(s) of the municipality(ies), reserves and/or electoral area(s) where the majority of the direct activities will take place:

City of Merritt

Think about the direct benefits of your proposed project.

Describe the geographic area that will directly benefit from your proposed project:

Direct benefits are:

- Positive change(s) that a specific community (or group of communities) experience as a direct result of actions or events undertaken in the implementation of the proposed project.

Examples of direct benefits (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Estimated number of training workshops provided and number of community members who receive training;
- Additional recreation tourism opportunities due to the planning and construction of destination trails in the community;
- Increased supports for local businesses through the implementation of a business attraction and retention project.

As of the 2016 census, the City of Merritt had a population of 7,139 with the total population in the Nicola Valley at approximately 12,139. Through these 6 projects residents in the Nicola Valley area will benefit from seminars, workshops and training opportunities.

Which project funding stream are you applying for? [Learn more about BC Rural Dividend's project funding stream.](#)

Single Applicant Project (up to \$100,000)

Eligible Applicant Organization Type: [Learn more about the BC Rural Dividend's Eligible Organization types.](#)

Local Government

Select the project category that best reflects the focus of your proposed project:

[Click here*](#) to learn more about the categories and see examples.

Community Capacity Building

Is your application for a Destination Trails project?

No

Organization profile

What is the legal name of the Applicant?

City of Merritt

What is the mailing address of the applicant organization?

Address 1

2185 Voght Street

Address line 2 (optional)

PO Box 189

City

Merritt

Province

British Columbia

Postal code

V1K 1B8

Contact information

Who is the primary contact for the project?

First name

Will

Last name

George

Title

Manager of Economic Development and Tourism

Telephone number

250-378-8619

Extension (if available)

Mobile phone (if available)

Email address (required)

wgeorge@merritt.ca

Please re-enter the email address

wgeorge@merritt.ca

Who is the signatory for the organization?

First name

Scott

Last name

Hildebrand

Title

Chief Administrative Officer

Telephone number

250-378-8613

Extension (if available)

Mobile phone (if available)

Email address (required)

shildebrand@merritt.ca

Please re-enter the email address

shildebrand@merritt.ca

Do you have any project partners working with you on your proposed project?

Please note that a minimum of one partner is required for the Partnership Grant

**Please refer to the Program Guide- Section 6, Eligible Partners for additional information on partner eligibility.*

No

Details

Project Title

Economic Development Community Development Projects

In 2-3 sentences please summarize your proposed project.

This grant application consists of six projects under the theme of community capacity building. The initiatives are part of the City of Merritt's Economic Development Action Plan and related City of Merritt strategies. This grant request is to address the December 2016 closure of Tolko Industries and the June 2019 shift reduction at Aspen Planers.

Describe your proposed project:

Your description should include:

- What direct actions you are taking;
- Why (the rationale for the proposed project); and
- What you hope to accomplish (the anticipated outcomes).

• Community Grant Writer

Actions: A community grant writer has been hired for a 1-year pilot program.

Rational: The community grant writer will build the grant writing capacity of the City of Merritt's Economic Development Department.

Outcomes: A grant writer hired by the City of Merritt for the Nicola Valley for the term of 2020 - 2021.

• Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program

Actions: The Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program has operated in 2018 - 2019. The City of Merritt would like to expand into 2020 to provide start-up funding, workshops and business support to youth in the Nicola Valley.

Rational: Youth in the Nicola Valley have expressed an interest in learning about entrepreneurship.

Outcomes: To continue the program in 2020 and assist 50 youth to start their own small businesses.

• Tourism Coordinator Position

Actions: City of Merritt will hire a tourism coordinator to assist the Economic Development Department with the Tourism Strategic Plan.

Rational: Projects in the City of Merritt's Economic Development Action Plan, Nicola Valley Tourism Plan and other related plans which have tourism initiatives identified.

Outcomes: Hiring a tourism coordinator position for a 1-year term.

• Tourism Attraction Videos

Actions: Hiring a video production company to complete 6 promotional videos for the Nicola Valley.

Rational: Tourism promotional videos play a large role within the Nicola Valley marketing plan.

Outcomes: Completing 6 tourism attraction videos for the Nicola Valley.

• Community Information Signage

Actions: These funds would be used to create and implement additional signage in the City of Merritt.

Rational: During the 2015- 2018 Merritt Business Walks, business owners identified additional signage in the community as one of the top three areas to improve.

Outcomes: To complete the information signage in Merritt, trail head markers and directional signage.

• Merritt and Nicola Valley Trail Coordinator Position (\$20,000)

Actions: The City of Merritt will hire a Trail Coordinator to assist with trail development initiatives, maintenance and promotional content.

Rational: A trails analysis has been identified in the 2019-2021 Council strategic planning.

Outcomes: Hiring a Trail Coordinator position for Merritt and the Nicola Valley for a 1-year term.

Applications for Destinations Trails projects need to provide information as to how your proposed project relates to the [Trails Strategy for British Columbia](#).

If this is a Destination Trails project, please provide a description of how the proposed project supports and is linked to the Trails Strategy for British Columbia.

N/A

The following four questions relate to the objectives of the Rural Dividend Program.

If a stated objective is not relevant to your proposed project, please type "N/A" in the response box. Your application will not be penalized if your proposed project is not linked to every objective.

Where applicable, include any details related to the [innovative](#) aspects of your proposed project.

Objective 1): Increase community resilience and support economic development and diversification through enabling rural communities to implement their vision for long-term vibrancy, as well as prepare and respond to economic disruptions.

Describe how your proposed project will support economic diversification resulting in a more resilient community:

This proposed project will support economic diversification resulting in a more resilient community through the variety of sub-projects focused on different sectors of the community. The Community Grant Writer will be able to assist as an additional resource to access more funding for the Nicola Valley. By having a resource in place with a Community Grant Writer, the City of Merritt will be able to complete more projects identified in the Economic Development Action Plan. The Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program will help to diversify the local economy by supporting youth in the Nicola Valley establish their own small businesses and learn more about entrepreneurship.

Part of the role of the new Tourism Coordinator Position and promotional videos will be to attract tourism related businesses into the community. This diversification will help to transition the City of Merritt from a largely forestry-based economy to a more diverse economy. The Trail Coordinator Position will assist with economic diversification and lead to long term economic vibrancy through the development of new trails and a new maintenance plan.

This funding request comes in part to the June 2019 shift reduction at the Aspen Planers mill in Merritt. The reduced included business operations transitioning from two shifts per day to one. This has resulted in 50 employees being laid off and it is estimated that another 100 – 150 indirect jobs will be negatively affected. Following the closure of Tolko Industries on December 16th, 2016, Aspen Planers is the last remaining mill in Merritt.

Objective 2): Support Indigenous communities and organizations to develop and lead traditional and/or emerging economic opportunities, including in the natural resource sector.

Describe how your proposed project will support Indigenous communities to develop and lead both traditional and emerging economic opportunities:

This project will support neighbouring Indigenous communities to develop economic opportunities by working within the Nicola Valley to provide resources and workshops on a valley level instead of just within City limits. There are five Indigenous bands in the Nicola Valley along with the City of Merritt. In order to grow the economy of the whole Nicola Valley, a regional approach is required.

The Community Grant Writer project is available for all non-profits in the Nicola Valley. The City of Merritt is seeking to reach out to those non-profits from the surrounding Indigenous communities to be included in collaboration projects and workshop resources on accessing more funding opportunities.

The Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program is open as well to youth in the Nicola Valley. Building off the success of the past two years, the City of Merritt is aiming to increase the number of youth participants from the local Indigenous bands participating in the program.

Both the Trails and Tourism Coordinator positions are to support growth within the whole Nicola Valley including all of the Indigenous communities. There are many opportunities in trail tourism development which can be beneficial to the economic growth of the Nicola Valley region. The City of Merritt has identified trails and guided tours as niche areas for growth which the City of Merritt and Indigenous communities to partner on for future development.

Objective 3): Strengthen the capacity of small and remote communities to address unique challenges in realizing their economic potential.

Describe how your proposed project will 1) strengthen the capacity of the communities involved and 2) use the additional capacity to benefit the local economy:

As mentioned above, this grant application is to financially address the shift reduction at the Aspen Planers mill. The funding for these projects will dramatically increase the capacity to complete community economic development projects and address prioritized items in the Economic Development and Tourism Strategic Plans. By having the funding for additional positions within the Economic Development Department, the department will be able to complete key projects identified through the Merritt City Council's strategic priorities.

Objective 4): Assist rural communities to pursue innovative economic opportunities that support climate mitigation and/or adaptation for a cleaner future for BC.

Describe how your proposed project will investigate and pursue economic opportunities that support a cleaner future.

Through the Community Grant Writer program, the City of Merritt and non-profits in the Nicola Valley will be able to apply for additional climate conscious and green initiatives. Both the Trails and Tourism Coordinator positions will be working to develop tourism and visitation in an environmentally-friendly manner. Following protocols from the City of Merritt's regional tourism partner, the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, the overall regional goal is "building a responsible and sustainable tourism industry". A large step to achieve this is through the regional award of the Biosphere Certified Destination. On April 19, 2018, the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association was named the winner of the Tourism for Tomorrow Destination Award during the World Travel and Tourism Council Summit in Argentina. The awards recognizes and celebrates world-changing initiatives in tourism taking place all over the globe.

Will the project directly create any additional jobs?

Yes

Provide anticipated employment numbers created by the project. (Note that indirect employment is covered in a subsequent question.)

Direct full time jobs?

0

Direct part time jobs?

6

Direct temporary/seasonal jobs?

58

Describe in detail the above positions and how the project helps create employment:

The projects listed in this grant application will assist to create employment opportunities through a variety of part time, seasonal and indirect opportunities.

• Community Grant Writer

Direct Part Time: 1

This position would be to hire a community grant writer on a 1-year contract.

Temporary/Seasonal: 1

An additional temporary position would be created to assist with organizing the non-profit meetings and workshops.

- **Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program**

Temporary/Seasonal: 50

These 50 seasonal positions would be created through the Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program. Start up funding is allocated for youth in the Nicola Valley to establish their own businesses to provide products and services to experience entrepreneurship.

- **Tourism Coordinator Position**

Direct Part Time: 1

One direct part time position would be created to develop a tourism coordinator role under the City of Merritt Economic Development Department.

- **Tourism Attraction Video**

Direct Part Time: 3

A video production company consisting of two staff members would be hired to complete these filming projects.

Temporary/Seasonal: 2

A minimum of two seasonal employment positions would be created to fill the role of actors in the tourism videos.

- **Community Information Signage**

Temporary/Seasonal: 5

Five temporary employment positions will be created to install the new community information signage.

- **Merritt and Nicola Valley Trail Coordinator Position (\$20,000)**

Direct Part Time: 1

One direct part time position would be created to develop a Trail Coordinator role under the City of Merritt Economic Development Department.

Describe potential indirect employment (not in the project itself) created as a result of the project.

Potential indirect employment created as part of this project would include:

- Additional employment could result from the projects from successful grants written by the Community Grant Writer.
- Additional employment has the potential to expand from the businesses the Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program
- Additional new businesses and residents relocating to Merritt due to the increased tourism experience and warm welcome completed by the Tourism Coordinator Position and tourism attraction videos
- Additional new businesses and residents relocating to Merritt due to the increased quality of life through active living and trail development projects completed by the Trail Coordinator position

Please indicate the components (key steps or elements) of your proposed project as well as the associated deliverables (to enter more than one component, use the "Add another component" link).

[Click here*](#) to see examples of project components and deliverables.

Please describe the component of your proposed project:

Community Grant Writer Program

Please describe the associated deliverables for this component:

- A Community Grant Writer hired for a 1-year contract
- A minimum of 2 grant writing workshops hosted with approximately 20 community members attending each workshop
- A minimum of \$200,000 worth of grants applied for

Please describe the component of your proposed project:

Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program 2020

Please describe the associated deliverables for this component:

- A Merritt Youth Entrepreneurship Program Coordinator hired for a 1-year contract
- A minimum of 2 weeks worth of youth business support workshops hosted with approximately 50 youth total attending

Please describe the component of your proposed project:

Tourism Coordinator Position and complete 6 tourism attraction videos

Please describe the associated deliverables for this component:

- A Tourism Coordinator hired for a 1-year contract
- Six new tourism attraction videos created during 2020
- The Tourism Coordinator will assist with the implementation of the Nicola Valley Tourism Strategic Business Plan. This includes coordinating and tracking Tourism marketing campaigns and programs (including website and social media channels), coordinating media relations and tours, coordinating and attending trade shows, liaising with Tourism stakeholders, performing market research and other duties as assigned.

Please describe the component of your proposed project:

Completion of Community Information Signage

Please describe the associated deliverables for this component:

- Completion of Community Information Signage as identified in the 2015-2018 Merritt Business Walks and the City of Merritt Wayfinding Strategic Plan

Please describe the component of your proposed project:

Merritt and Nicola Valley Trail Coordinator

Please describe the associated deliverables for this component:

- A Trails Coordinator hired for a 1-year contract
- A new trails plan brought forward to City of Merritt Council
- Trail development projects reviewed for implementation

Does the community/communities in which the project will be implemented have a current community and/or economic development plan?

Yes

Please note the section(s) in the plan which relate directly to the project and describe how the project supports the plan(s).

In the City of Merritt Economic Development Action plan the below pages relate to the projects in this grant application:

- Economic Development Capacity is identified on pages 24-27
- Merritt Youth Leap on pages 32-33
- Tourism on pages 43-44

Please attach your document using the Browse button below.

File: city_of_merritt.pdf

Size: 3 Megabytes

Describe the existing support for your proposed project. Indicate how support has been demonstrated within the community/communities and where applicable, outcomes from formal or informal discussions with indigenous communities:

[Click here*](#) to see examples of support.

The projects listed in this grant application are gathered from City of Merritt approved strategic plans, including: the Economic Development Action Plan, Tourism Plan for Merritt and the Nicola Valley, and the Tourism Asset Mapping Inventory Report. In the creation of these plans, public consultation was undertaken, gaining valuable information from residents across the Nicola Valley.

Budget

Important

Please fill out the separate Rural Dividend Budget Form, available on the [Rural Dividend website](#), to complete the following section.

Please note that if the amounts listed in the application differ from the completed Budget Form, the Program will assess the project utilizing the information in the Budget Form.

Funding Request:

\$ 100,000

What is the total project cost:

\$ 125,000

Indicate the estimated start and end dates of the project (maximum project duration is two years)

Estimated start date

2020-01-06

Estimated end date

2021-12-31

Full project duration (months)

23

Is the project ready to commence immediately upon receipt of funding?

Yes

Think about your project components and deliverables. Detail the project timeline from start to completion using each component and deliverable as a milestone.

As this is a bundle project the key milestones will be the start and finish of each project. Each of these deliverable identified will be started once funding is approved and completed prior to Dec. 31, 2021.

Will your proposed project establish any on-going activities or staff positions that will continue or be completed after the estimated project end date?

Yes

Describe how these on-going activities or staff positions will be sustained, either in the long term or until their completion:

These activities will be determined through the grants the City of Merritt Community Grant Writer applies for.

Describe the resources and skills of the applicant to manage and complete the project, including project management experience and/or implementing similar projects: [Learn more about examples of skills and experience.](#)

The City of Merritt Economic Development Department has previously received and managed two separate Rural Dividend grants and has the capacity/expertise to implement these projects.

Outline the role(s) of any project partners identified (Required for Partnership Projects):

N/A

Outline project risks to completion and describe risk mitigation measures to ensure project success:

The project is set to be completed according to plan, though there is always a risk that the City will be unsuccessful in hiring qualified applicants for the positions listed. To mitigate this risk, the City has reached out to the Thompson Rivers University Co-op program to determine whether co-op students from their various programs would be capable of filling these positions. Preliminary review indicates that there will be ample interest in the positions. Existing relationships with contractors can be leveraged to complete the other projects listed.

Will the project include physical infrastructure?

Yes

Please explain how the infrastructure will support economic development and diversification

initiatives, in alignment with other community plans and priorities. If the program contribution is required to leverage other funding for infrastructure, please outline here. **The only physical infrastructure for this project will be the creation and implementation of the Community Information Signage project. This project will increase the overall directional signage in the community and assist visitors discover new features of the community. This fits with the Merritt Wayfinding Strategic Plan to be completed and maintained by the City of Merritt.**

Who will own the infrastructure?

The City of Merritt

Who will be responsible for any ongoing associated costs (maintenance/operational) after project completion?

The City of Merritt

For Destination Trails projects, please describe the status of any required permits and identify all relevant jurisdiction/ownership of the land on which the trail project will take place (ex. provincial crown land, BC Parks, Municipal Parks, Regional District land, Reserve, other, etc.).

(If the project is not a Destination Trails project, please enter "N/A.")

N/A

Documents

Please attach the following REQUIRED documents below:

Most recent financial statements (required). [Click here*](#) to learn more about what financial statements are required based on your funding request.

File: City of Merritt.pdf

Size: 3 Megabytes

Please attach your completed Rural Dividend Budget Form (required).

File: ruraldividend_b.xlsx

Size: 82 Kilobytes

Board or Band Council Resolution [See a sample resolution](#)

Resolution:

THAT Council provide a resolution in support of the City of Merritt's 2019 BC Rural Dividend Fund Grant Program Application, to advance the Economic Development Community Development Projects.

Moved by:

Councillor Christopherson

Seconded by:

Councillor Luck

Date of Resolution:

2019-08-13

Do you have any other documents that should be attached to support your application? [Learn more about optional supporting documents.](#)

Yes

Please attach your document(s) using the Browse button below

Attach file

File: Aug. 13_ 2019 R.pdf

Size: 443 Kilobytes

File: Merritt.July SP.docx

Size: 20 Kilobytes

File: 2010-05_merritt.pdf

Size: 7 Megabytes

File: age_friendly_ac.pdf
Size: 5 Megabytes
File: Merritt Nicola .pdf
Size: 2 Megabytes
File: merritt_area_-__.pdf
Size: 2 Megabytes
File: Official Commun.pdf
Size: 3 Megabytes
File: 1-City of Merritt.pdf
Size: 30 Megabytes

Agreement:

By submitting this application I confirm that I have the authority to submit this request and agree to the conditions described below.

- (a) All information contained herein is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge;
- (b) Awarding of funding to successful applicants will be conditional upon finalization of a grant agreement that sets out the terms and conditions of the funding;
- (c) I consent to receiving email notifications regarding this application and any subsequent emails from the BC Rural Dividend Program or those working on behalf of the BC Rural Dividend Program that relate to this application.

NOTE: Applications submitted under the program are subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. The information being collected is for the purpose of administering the program and will be used for the purpose of evaluating eligibility under the program.

- ☒ I have read the Agreement above and agree to all the terms therein.
- ☒ I would like to receive email notifications about the BC Rural Dividend Program including upcoming intake periods.
- ☒ I consent to the BC Rural Dividend Program sharing this application with other funding programs in an effort to secure other or additional funding for my project.

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