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**REPORT TO ELECTORAL AREA SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 2013**

**SUBJECT COMMUNITY WORKS FUND ALLOCATION - SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS
(SGI) QUALITY OF LIFE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT INVENTORY**

ISSUE

The requirement for a Southern Gulf Islands (SGI) quality of life and needs assessment inventory as a foundation for integrated community sustainability planning

BACKGROUND

The SGI Community Economic Development Commission (SGI-CEDC) was established in early 2012 to facilitate community development that fosters the SGI's economic, environmental and social sustainability. It initially identified six strategic priorities: (1) Social Finance; (2) Transportation Planning; (3) Experience the Gulf Islands (ETGI); (4) Broadband Infrastructure Improvements; (5) Education; and (6) Resource Inventory. In addition, the Commission's preliminary discussions with various stakeholders have raised a seventh priority - local sustainable food systems and agriculture – as well as issues and questions about the role, governance and focus of SGI-CEDC. Consequently, and under the advice of CRD staff, the Commission has recognized the need to engage all community sectors and First Nations in an SGI-wide economic development planning process.

Over the immediate term, the SGI-CEDC has identified two projects to undertake that align with its priorities as follows: a. Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory (aligns with Priority 6) and b. Agriculture Plan (aligns with Priority 7).

The purpose of this report is to request funding for the Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory. The aim of the survey is to provide a comprehensive and objective analysis of the community's needs relating to economic stability, sustainability and environmental issues.

Funding for this initiative is estimated at \$15,000, which can be sourced from the SGI's allotment of Gas Tax Community Works Funds (GT-CWF). The SGI Electoral Area Director supports this request.

ALTERNATIVES

1. That the Board authorize a contribution of \$15,000 from the Southern Gulf Islands' (SGI) portion of the Gas Tax Community Works Fund to undertake a Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory.
2. That CRD staff determine an alternative source of funds for this planning initiative.

IMPLICATIONS

Administrative

The proposed project fits within the CRD's mandate and the SGI-CEDC mandate. The SGI Electoral Area Director, with assistance from the SGI-CEDC, will provide administrative oversight of the project.

Economic

The proposed project fits within the Capacity Building category of the Gas Tax funding program. It will provide data to support integrated community sustainability planning. The required funding is available in the SGI's allotment of GT-CWF.

CONCLUSION

The newly formed SGI-CEDC has identified two projects to undertake over the immediate term. Both align with the Commission's community development strategic priorities as follows:

- a. Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory (aligns with Priority 6)
- b. Agriculture Plan (aligns with Priority 7)

The purpose of this report is to request funding for the Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory. Funding for this initiative is estimated at \$15,000, which can be sourced from the SGI's allotment of Gas Tax Community Works Funds (GT-CWF).

This project aligns with CRD's mandate and the Gas Tax grant program criteria. The SGI Electoral Area Director supports this grant request.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Electoral Area Services Committee recommend:

That the Board authorize a contribution of \$15,000 from the Southern Gulf Islands' (SGI) portion of the Gas Tax Community Works Fund to undertake a Community Quality of Life and Needs Assessment Inventory.

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