

Complete Communities

2023/24 Program and Application Guide

Updated October 2023

Application Deadline: January 12, 2024

1. Introduction

The Complete Communities program supports local governments and modern Treaty First Nations in advancing identified community goals through the creation of more complete communities. The program supports communities in undertaking assessments to inform land use decision-making, considering housing need, supply, and location; providing transportation options including increased walkability; and making connections to infrastructure investment and servicing decisions.

The Complete Communities program aligns with commitments in the [CleanBC Roadmap to 2030](#), the Province's plan to achieve its emissions reduction targets while building a cleaner economy that benefits everyone. All local governments in BC are signatories to the Climate Action Charter and the program supports signatories in fulfilling their commitment to create more complete, compact, and energy efficient communities.

What is a 'complete community'?

Complete communities is a broad concept and can be defined in several different ways. For the purposes of the program, complete communities are communities – or areas within a community – which 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.

All communities have the potential to be more complete, regardless of their existing context and physical characteristics. In larger urban areas, creating more complete communities might focus on neighbourhoods within a municipality. In a small town, a town centre might form the main hub of daily needs, with most housing nearby. And in a regional district, complete communities could be the hubs that are part of a connected regional network.

Complete Communities Program

The intent of the Complete Communities program is to support local governments and modern Treaty First Nations to enhance their ability to make evidence-based land use planning decisions through assessments of their current community completeness; analysis and identification of strengths, opportunities, challenges, and potential actions that align with identified community goals and support creating more complete communities; and an implementation plan.

These actions will provide local governments and modern Treaty First Nations with information and processes to support local planning activities (such as the development or update of OCPs, RGSs, Land Use Plans, local area plans, master plans, development plans, zoning bylaws, etc.); however, costs directly related to such planning activities are not eligible under the Complete Communities program.

To support alignment with the intent of the funding program, the [Ministry of Housing Complete Communities Guide](#) is available.

The Ministry of Housing has provided \$10 million in funding and UBCM is administering the program.

2. Eligible Applicants

All local governments (municipalities, regional districts, and the Islands Trust) and modern Treaty First Nations (as defined by the *Interpretation Act*) in BC are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants can submit one application per intake, including regional applications or participation as a partnering applicant in a regional application.

3. Grant Maximum

The Complete Communities program can contribute a maximum of 100% of the cost of eligible activities to a maximum of \$150,000.00.

In order to ensure transparency and accountability in the expenditure of public funds, all other financial contributions for eligible portions of the project must be declared and, depending on the total value, may decrease the value of the grant. This includes any other grant funding and any revenue that is generated from activities that are funded by the Complete Communities program.

4. Eligible Projects

To be eligible for funding, applicants must select a minimum of three of the four lenses identified in the Ministry of Housing's *Complete Communities Guide* to assess their community completeness:

- Housing
- Daily Needs
- Transportation
- Infrastructure

In addition, to qualify for funding, projects must:

- Produce 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.
- Include new activities or represent a new phase of an existing project (retroactive funding is not available).
- Be capable of completion by the applicant within one year of the date of grant approval.

Applicants must choose to apply as a single applicant (e.g., an individual local government as identified in Section 2) or as part of a regional project.

Regional Projects

Funding requests from two or more eligible applicants for regional projects may be submitted as a single application for eligible collaborative projects. In this case, the maximum funding available would be up to \$150,000 in base funding plus up to an additional \$50,000 for additional eligible applicants. It is expected that regional projects will demonstrate cost-efficiencies in the total grant request.

The total funding request for regional projects cannot exceed \$500,000.

The primary applicant submitting the application for a regional project is required to submit a resolution as outlined in Section 7 of this guide. Each partnering applicant is required to submit a resolution that clearly states their approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

5. Requirements for Funding

As part of both the development of the application package and the delivery of the approved project, local governments are encouraged to proactively engage with local First Nations and Indigenous organizations. Engagement by local governments both locally and regionally can help build relationships with First Nations, benefit both communities and enhance reconciliation. More information on engagement best practices is available [here](#).

As part of the Approval Agreement, approved projects must meet the following requirements for funding:

- Any in-person activities, meetings, or events must meet public health orders or guidance.
- Activities must comply with all applicable privacy legislation under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in relation to the collection, use, or disclosure of personal information while conducting funded activities. Personal information is any recorded information about an identifiable individual other than their business contact information. This includes information that can be used to identify an individual through association or inference.

6. Eligible and Ineligible Costs and Activities

Eligible costs are direct costs that are approved for funding, properly and reasonably incurred, and paid by the applicant to carry out eligible activities. Eligible costs can only be incurred from the date of application submission until the final report is submitted.

Table 1 identifies examples of activities that are eligible for funding. Other activities that support the intent of the program may be considered for funding. Eligible activities must be cost-effective.

Table 1: Activities Eligible for Funding
1. Prepare (Ministry of Housing <i>Complete Communities Guide</i> – Phase 1)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of community context and identified community goals that support complete communities.• Prepare scope of work (identification of team, resources, project goals, and engagement strategy, if applicable).• Data collection, compilation, and updates (e.g., spatial data/mapping/digitalization). Data may include, but is not limited to, that which supports measurement of the suggested indicators outlined in the Ministry of Housing <i>Complete Communities Guide</i>.
2. Assess (Ministry of Housing <i>Complete Communities Guide</i> – Phase 2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spatial analysis of selected lenses (Housing, Transportation, Daily Needs, and Infrastructure) individually and in relation to each other.• Assessment of strengths, opportunities, and challenges to becoming more complete.• <u>Updated October 2023</u>: Determine potential actions (e.g., extending cycling infrastructure, changes to zoning bylaw to support creating complete communities, complete street development).• Creation of scenarios to test potential actions.• Analysis of potential trade-offs for different potential actions and of how these actions may help achieve community goals.
3. Act (Ministry of Housing <i>Complete Communities Guide</i> – Phase 3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of implementation plan, based on identified actions.

Additional Eligible Costs and Activities

In addition to the activities identified in Table 1, the following expenditures are also eligible provided they relate directly to eligible activities:

- Incremental applicant staff and administration costs (e.g., creating a new position or adding new responsibilities to an existing position).
- Consultant/contractor costs. Please note: if you intend to hire a qualified professional to support proposed activities, professional consultant rates will only be considered for activities that represent respective professions. For other activities (e.g., planning events), consultant rates are expected to be commensurate with the type of activity being undertaken.
- Engagement with experts (e.g., knowledge keepers, health authorities), the community (e.g., equity-denied populations), Indigenous Nations, other local governments, or modern Treaty First Nations, etc.
- Honoraria for cultural leaders, Elders, Indigenous knowledge keepers, and/or cultural keepers when they are scheduled to speak, present, or teach. Note: these honoraria should reflect the role of Indigenous Peoples as subject matter experts and be equitable to consultant rates.
- Honoraria for equity-denied populations or service organizations that support equity-denied populations.
- Spatial/visual outputs to support decision-making (i.e., comparative growth and infrastructure costing over different time horizons).
- Translation costs and the development of culturally appropriate materials.
- Public engagement or workshops including preparation and events.

Ineligible Costs and Activities

The following expenditures are not eligible for funding:

- Updated October 2023: Development or update of OCPs, RGSs, Land Use Plans, local area plans, master plans, development plans, zoning bylaws, etc.
- Data that is already available at no cost, including open source data, data provided by the Province ([Spatial Access Measures for BC](#), [Housing Needs Report demographic data](#), etc.), and Canada (Census, [Linkable Open Data Environment](#), etc.)
- Duplication of recently developed information, maps, or imagery provided the information remains reasonably current.
- Implementation of recommended actions.
- Monitoring and associated reporting on implemented actions.
- Development or update of feasibility studies.
- Routine or ongoing operating costs or activities (e.g., heating, cooling, and lighting costs; security; software or service subscriptions; or membership fees).
- Routine or ongoing planning costs or planning activities (e.g., costs related to bylaw adoption).
- Legal, audit, or interest fees, or fees to incorporate a society.
- Fundraising, lobbying, or sponsorship campaigns.
- Purchase of promotional items, door/raffle prizes, give-away items, and/or gifts for community members.

7. Application Requirements and Process

UBCM is in the process of implementing an online application tool.
Information on this tool will be available later in 2023.

Application Deadline

Funding permitting, two application deadlines are scheduled: June 16, 2023 and January 12, 2024. Applicants will be advised of the status of their applications within 90 days of the application deadline.

Required Application Contents

All applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete application, including:

- Completed Application Form with all required attachments.
- Detailed budget that indicates the proposed expenditures from the Complete Communities program and other sources (if applicable) and that aligns with the proposed activities outlined in the application form. Although additional funding or support is not required, any other grant funding or in-kind contributions must be identified.
- Council, Board, Local Trust Committee, or modern Treaty First Nation resolution, indicating support for the current proposed activities and willingness to provide overall grant management.
- For regional projects: Council, Board, Local Trust Committee, modern Treaty First Nation resolution from each partnering applicant that clearly states approval for the primary applicant to apply for, receive, and manage the grant funding on their behalf.

Resolutions from partnering applicants must include the language above.

Submission of Applications

Applications should be submitted as Word, Excel or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20 MB.

All applications should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Review of Applications

UBCM will perform a preliminary review of all applications to ensure the required application contents have been submitted and to ensure that eligibility criteria have been met.

Following this, the Evaluation Committee will assess and score all eligible applications. Higher scores will be given to applications that:

- Demonstrate alignment with the intent of the Complete Communities program;
- Demonstrate evidence of engagement with First Nations and/or Indigenous organizations in advance of submitting the application and as part of the proposed project (e.g., collaborative planning tables; incorporating First Nation values and perspectives in proposed activities; existing outreach, plans, engagement reports or processes; including First Nation engagement costs in the budget; completion of Indigenous Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility Training);
- Effectively engage with neighbouring jurisdictions, and other impacted or affected parties as appropriate to the project;
- Demonstrate how the Complete Communities program supports or will be used to inform community goals (specifically, but not exclusively, related to housing, climate action,

transportation, and fiscal sustainability), corporate plans (e.g., OCP updates, zoning bylaw updates, housing plans, climate action plans, or transportation plans); and

- Demonstrate cost-effectiveness.

Point values and weighting will be established within each of these scoring criteria. Only those applications that meet a minimum threshold point value will be considered for funding. The Evaluation Committee will consider the population and provincial, regional, and urban/rural distribution of proposed projects. Recommendations will be made on a provincial priority basis. All funding decisions will be made by UBCM.

All application materials will be shared with the Province of BC.

8. Grant Management and Applicant Responsibilities

Grants are awarded to eligible applicants only and, as such, the applicant is responsible for completion of the project as approved and for meeting reporting requirements.

Applicants are also responsible for proper fiscal management, including maintaining acceptable accounting records for the project. UBCM reserves the right to audit these records.

Notice of Funding Decision and Payments

All applicants will receive written notice of funding decisions. Approved applicants will receive an Approval Agreement, which will include the terms and conditions of any grant that is awarded, and that is required to be signed and returned to UBCM.

Grants are awarded in two payments: 50% at the approval of the project and when the signed Approval Agreement has been returned to UBCM and 50% when the project is complete and UBCM has received and approved the required final report and a financial summary.

Please note that in cases where revisions are required to an application, or an application has been approved in principle only, the applicant has 30 days from the date of the written notice of the status of the application to complete the application requirements. Applications that are not completed within 30 days may be closed.

Progress Payments

To request a progress payment, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Description of activities completed to date;
- Description of funds expended to date; and
- Written rationale for receiving a progress payment.

Changes to Approved Projects (Amendment Requests)

Approved grants are specific to the project as identified in the approved application, and grant funds are not transferable to other projects. Generally speaking, this means funds cannot be transferred to an activity that was not included in the approved application or to a new or expanded location.

Approval from UBCM and/or the Evaluation Committee will be required for any variation from the approved project. Depending on the complexity of the proposed amendment, requests may take up to 90 days to review. To propose changes to an approved project, approved applicants are required to submit:

- Amended application package, including updated, signed application form, required attachments, and an updated resolution or motion.
- For regional projects only, evidence of support from partnering applicants for proposed amendments will be required.

- Written rationale for proposed changes to activities and/or expenditures.

Applicants are responsible for any costs above the approved grant unless a revised application is submitted and approved prior to work being undertaken.

Extensions to Project End Date

All approved activities are required to be completed within the time frame identified in the Approval Agreement and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by UBCM.

The Interim Report Form will be required to be submitted for all extension requests over six months. Extensions will not exceed one year from the date of the original final report deadline.

9. Interim and Final Report Requirements and Process

All funded activities must be completed within one year of notification of funding approval and the final report is due within 30 days of project completion.

Interim Reports

The Interim Report Form will be required to be submitted in support of any extension requests over six months (see above).

Final Reports

Applicants are required to submit an electronic copy of the complete final report, including the following:

- Completed Final Report Form with all required attachments.
- Copy of the completed Complete Communities report that includes key assessment findings; identified strengths, opportunities, and challenges to increase community completeness; and an implementation plan that includes potential future actions.
- Detailed financial summary that indicates the actual expenditures from the Complete Communities Program funding and other sources (if applicable) and that aligns with the actual activities outlined in the final report form.
- Copies, excerpts, and/or links to all materials produced with grant funding.
- Photos or media related to the funded project.

Submission of Final Reports

Final reports should be submitted as Word, Excel or PDF files. Total file size for email attachments cannot exceed 20 MB.

All final reports should be submitted to:

Local Government Program Services, Union of BC Municipalities

E-mail: lgps@ubcm.ca

Review of Final Reports

UBCM will perform a preliminary review of all final reports to ensure the required report elements have been submitted.

All final report materials will be shared with the Province of BC.
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10. Additional Information

For enquiries about the application process or general questions regarding the program, please contact UBCM at lgps@ubcm.ca or 604-270-8226, extension 220.