

NEWS RELEASE

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NEW FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR THE COLUMBIA VALLEY & SURROUNDING AREAS TO FUND RECOVERY ADVISOR POSITIONS

COLUMBIA VALLEY, B.C.: Communities and businesses throughout the Southern Interior are receiving new support for much needed economic recovery. The Economic Trust of the Southern Interior (ETSI-BC) announced the successful funding recipients of the Rural Business and Community Recovery (RBCR) Program and the Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce received funding to lead a group of partner stakeholders covering a micro region of Columbia Valley, Cranbrook, Kimberley, and Golden.

“We were excited with the interest shown by communities and business support organizations throughout the Southern Interior to hire Recovery Advisors through this funding,” said Laurel Douglas, CEO of ETSI-BC. “We are delighted to provide this assistance in our region with support from the Province of British Columbia as it delivers on its StrongerBC Plan.”

After careful consideration, the ETSI-BC adjudication team selected 20 successful applicants whose projects will create a total of 30 part-time and full-time Recovery Advisor positions to assist businesses and rural communities in the Southern Interior with COVID-19 economic recovery.

The funding received will support the hiring of one full-time advisor in the Columbia Valley, one in Cranbrook/Kimberley, and agency/stakeholder supports in Golden & Kimberley. Starting as early as May 1, 2021 and lasting for at least one year, this program will provide businesses and organizations with customized service to connect owners and operators in this region to the supports they need now and into the future.

“We are thrilled to be working collaboratively with our community neighbors and partner organizations on this incredibly valuable program. We are beyond grateful for this support from ETSI-BC and the Province of British Columbia, which comes at such a critical time for the economic sustainability of our region,” said Pete Bourke, Executive Director of the Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce.

In total, 59 communities in all nine ETSI-BC regional districts are being served by these RBCR-funded projects, including 10 First Nations communities. ETSI-BC’s CEO Laurel Douglas and her team were inspired by the applications.

“In reviewing the applications, we saw innovation at the forefront as a key to economic recovery for communities,” said Douglas. “Our team is working closely with the recipients so their Recovery Advisors can engage and begin providing much-needed economic recovery support.”

ABOUT ETSI-BC

ETSI-BC is the Economic Trust of the Southern Interior, formerly known as the Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust (SIDIT). The organization was created by the Province of British Columbia on February 27, 2006. Through the SIDIT Act, the Trust was allocated \$50 million to assist in the growth and diversification of the economy in the Southern Interior of B.C. The Trust is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors which includes local elected officials and provincial government appointees. Two Regional Advisory Committees of elected officials from the Thompson-Okanagan and Columbia-Kootenay regions also provide input. ETSI-BC’s service area spans nine Regional Districts ranging from Hope in the west, Clearwater in the north, the Alberta border in the east, and the U.S. border in the south. For more information, visit www.etsi-bc.ca.

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