Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title	Project Lead
Core Events and Event Applications	COF/TF

RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Programs, Services, or Events	New	2025-06-02	2027-04-01

Project Description & Rationale Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

The CORE Events List will identify and support key tourism events that are vital to the Elk Valley's identity, economy, and visitor appeal. CORE Events are free, non-profit-led, non-fundraising events that attract visitors from outside the region and contribute to cultural pride, economic impact, and memorable visitor experiences.

Designated CORE Events will receive automatic, multi-year funding through the Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI), ensuring stability for event growth and enhancing the destination's year-round tourism strategy. In addition to the multi-year funding, the city will assist these events with in-kind support. This project involves setting clear event criteria, reporting requirements, and establishing an annual review process to inform the subsequent RDS development.

A portion of the funds will be set aside for two intakes of event applications per year, allowing seed money and support for new or growing events that attract seasonal visitors outside peak tourist times. These noncore events will be evaluated against the goals of the tourism strategy, RDS objectives, and its goals.

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

Griz Days ($40,000 per year): Celebrated annually, Griz Days is Fernie's premier winter festival. It honors the local legend of "The Griz," a mythical figure believed to bring abundant snowfall. The festival features a parade, live entertainment, fireworks, the Extreme Griz Competition, and more.

Wednesday Socials ($15,000 per year): A series of free outdoor concerts held every Wednesday evening during July and August at Station Square in downtown Fernie. These family-friendly Events include opening acts, food trucks, and craft activities for children. Headlining performances showcase diverse musical genres from unique Canadian musicians and bands. Attendees can also enjoy a beverage garden featuring local brews and wines. The Wednesday Socials have become a summer staple for locals and visitors, fostering community engagement and support for local businesses.

Wam Bam ($6,000): An annual Freeride Mountain Bike competition held at the Fernie Dirt Jump Park. Recognized as a Bronze-level event on the FMB (Freeride Mountain Bike) World Tour, it attracts riders of all skill levels, from beginners to professionals. Highlights include a Best Trick competition under the lights, DJ music, food vendors, and a vibrant atmosphere for participants and spectators. Proceeds from the event typically support local athletes' development and dirt park improvements.

Holiday Kickoff ($6,000): The Holiday Kickoff marks the beginning of the festive season in Fernie, typically held in late November. The event includes local shopping promotions, festive music, crafts, Santa and Mrs. Claus visits, and a fireworks display. The 2024 Holiday Kickoff took place on November 29, encouraging residents and visitors to support local businesses

Elk Valley Pride Festival ($6,000): An annual five-day celebration held each September in Fernie, British Columbia. Organized by the Fernie Pride Society, this inclusive event welcomes 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, allies, and visitors from across the region to participate in diverse activities that honor diversity, inclusion, and community spirit.

Festival highlights include a vibrant bike parade, flag-raising ceremony, Spectrum Queer Arts Day, drag story time, workshops, live music, and drag performances. Events are hosted at various locations throughout Fernie, with many centered around City Hall and the historic downtown area. Most activities are family-friendly and free to attend, fostering a welcoming atmosphere for all ages.The Elk Valley Pride Festival has become a cornerstone event in Fernie, contributing to the town's cultural vibrancy and tourism appeal. By promoting inclusivity and celebrating the 2SLGBTQ+ community, the festival enhances Fernie's reputation as an open and welcoming destination.

These annual events combined will total $73,000 per year or $219,000 over three years.

Biannual Event applications ($15,000 X2 per year)

With two intake periods (April 30th and Sept 30th) and Funding confirmation by May 31st and October 31st, these opportunities assist event organizers in elevating their events to draw in visitors and further animate the City in the shoulder season. For 2025, there will be only one intake (15k) in the fall once the RDs are approved.

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

This project supports goals 2,3,5,8

Goal 2: Maintain and Grow Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

CORE Events like Griz Days, Wednesday Socials, and Holiday Kickoff strategically target winter, summer, and shoulder seasons, boosting overnight stays outside peak periods.

Biannual Event Applications provide seed funding to nurture new or growing events specifically designed to attract visitors during slower tourism seasons, enhancing year-round destination vitality.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience Through Arts and Cultural Tourism

Events such as the Elk Valley Pride Festival and Wednesday Socials offer rich cultural programming that enhances the arts, heritage, and music scene, creating memorable visitor experiences.

Many events highlight local artists, musicians, and cultural organizations, enriching Fernie's cultural tourism profile.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

The growth and diversification of events across different times of the year distribute visitor demand more evenly, reducing congestion at peak times and better utilizing local infrastructure year-round.

Goal 8: Create Enhanced Focal Points for Visitor Staging and Gathering

Events use and activate key public spaces like Station Square, City Hall Grounds, and the Fernie Dirt Jump Park, enhancing and animating gathering areas essential to Fernie's visitor experience.

These events also support downtown businesses and create a lively, welcoming atmosphere for visitors.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

CORE EVENTS

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Wednesday Socials, Griz Days, and Wam Bam activate key public spaces like Station Square and Fernie's Dirt Jump Park, enhancing the usability and tourism appeal of these infrastructure assets.
- Events like Wam Bam directly support the enhancement and improvement of Fernie's dirt park facilities, helping diversify Fernie's recreational appeal beyond the traditional winter season.
- Holiday Kickoff and Elk Valley Pride Festival encourage year-round visitation, particularly in shoulder seasons (fall and early winter), helping to extend the economic benefit of tourism outside of peak periods.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- All listed events (Griz Days, Wednesday Socials, Wam Bam, Holiday Kickoff, and Elk Valley Pride Festival) are free, accessible, and family-friendly, offering inclusive experiences that attract a wide range of visitors.
- The Elk Valley Pride Festival specifically showcases local 2SLGBTQ+ culture, promoting diversity and celebrating community spirit, aligning with RMI's objectives.
- Events feature live music, cultural activities, performances, and interactive experiences, all of which significantly enhance the quality of the visitor experience.
- Free events like the Wednesday Socials and the Pride Festival ensure accessibility for visitors of all ages and abilities.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- Several events promote community sustainability by encouraging local shopping (Holiday Kickoff) and supporting local athletes and recreation (Wam Bam).
- Free, outdoor, community-driven events like Wednesday Socials and the Pride Festival promote low-impact tourism, helping to reduce the footprint compared to high-density indoor tourism models.
- Ongoing community engagement through these events encourages responsible visitor behavior and strengthens Fernie's community resilience.

BIANNUAL EVENTS APPLICATION

The Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI) also supports a Biannual Event Application opportunity, providing seed funding for new or growing events. With two intake periods annually, this program is designed to assist event organizers in:

- Launching new tourism events that align with RMI objectives, particularly targeting overnight visitation and enhancing year-round tourism offerings.
- Expanding and improving existing events to increase their appeal to regional, national, and international visitors.
- Encouraging shoulder season visitation (spring, fall, early winter), helping to balance Fernie's tourism economy throughout the year.

- Strengthening tourism infrastructure by animating public spaces, supporting local businesses, and fostering a vibrant, welcoming community environment.
- Driving overnight stays by developing multi-day event programming that encourages extended visitor engagement.
- By offering seed funding, the Biannual Event Applications help organizers to create more robust, professionally delivered events that contribute meaningfully to Fernie's tourism economy.

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☐ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☐ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The CORE Events List project supports diversity and inclusion by funding and promoting events that reflect and celebrate the broad cultural spectrum of Fernie's community and visitors. Notably, events like the Elk Valley Pride Festival provide a platform for 2SLGBTQ+ voices and foster a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere for people of all identities and backgrounds. The Wednesday Socials, featuring diverse musical acts and free public access, ensure inclusive community participation and enjoyment across age groups and demographics. The project also strengthens sustainability by supporting non-profit, low-impact events that activate public spaces without overburdening infrastructure, while encouraging year-round tourism that spreads visitor traffic beyond peak periods. Additionally, the inclusion of biannual event funding helps nurture emerging or seasonal events, promoting economic resilience and reducing dependence on high-season tourism. This approach aligns with Fernie's broader goals of sustainable destination development and equitable community celebration.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$294,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding	In-Kind
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$294,000

Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title		Project Lead		
Grooming Collaboration		Tourism Fernie		
RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date		Completion Date
Tourism Programs, Services, or Events	Ongoing	2025-10-01		2027-04-01

Project Description & Rationale Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

This project ensures consistent and expanded winter trail grooming across Fernie's multi-use trail network to support growing visitation and enhance winter tourism experiences. The collaboration among local trail organizations maintains and grooms over 90 km of trails for Nordic skiing, fat biking, walking, and snowshoeing. The collaborative work improves trail access, safety, signage, mapping, and amenities, such as parking and toilets. RMI funds sustain a reliable, high-quality winter trail system grooming that supports active winter tourism and aligns with Fernie's Tourism Master Plan.

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

1. Grooming of multi-use and Nordic-only trails (~90 km total)
2. Snow clearing and maintenance of parking areas (e.g., Hedonism, Montane) and related amenities
3. Regular communication and grooming updates via TrailForks and social media
4. Coordination of volunteer and paid grooming crews
5. Data collection via trail counters and surveys
6. Trail animation and event support (e.g., community ski days)

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

This project supports goals 2,4,5,6,7,8

The Winter Grooming Collaborative aligns with multiple RDS goals by enhancing Fernie's winter trail network to support year-round tourism, improve infrastructure, and manage visitor impact. It contributes to Goal 2 by increasing winter visitation through accessible, high-quality outdoor experiences. By expanding non-motorized trail options such as fat biking, walking, and Nordic skiing, it supports Goal 4 and active transportation. The project also addresses Goal 5 by managing trail capacity and reducing pressure on individual areas through improved maintenance, signage, and distributed use. It supports Goal 6 by sustainably maintaining access to natural attractions, while Goal 7 is advanced through improved mapping, signage, and grooming communication that enhance navigation and accessibility. Finally, upgrading trailhead amenities and defining key access points supports Goal 8 and the creation of welcoming visitor staging and gathering areas.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

This project aligns with RMI objectives by:

- Increasing winter tourism activity and shoulder season visitation
- Enhancing visitor experience through well-maintained and signed trail networks
- Providing inclusive and accessible infrastructure and routes
- Promoting sustainable, low-impact recreation options in Fernie

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☒ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☒ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

Indigenous Tourism: Opportunity to integrate Ktunaxa cultural elements into trail signage and mapping as part of ongoing wayfinding updates.

Diversity & Inclusion: Access to trails and amenities (toilets, parking, signage) support all users regardless of age or ability.

Emergency Preparedness: Clear signage, maps, and staging areas support safe navigation and emergency response, especially during winter conditions.

Sustainability: Promotes non-motorized recreation, reduces environmental impact, and aligns with Fernie's sustainable tourism and infrastructure plans.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$38,000 per year (X3) =$114,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding (Partial funding of Dike trail grooming)	$7,500
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$121,500

Project Title	Project Lead
Animation Infrastructure	FDAC, COF

RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	New	2025-06-02	2027-04-01

Project Description & Rationale Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

Fernie's downtown core offers an authentic small-town atmosphere set against the dramatic backdrop of the Canadian Rockies, creating a distinctive and memorable visitor experience. To strengthen this appeal, the project focuses on enhancing the downtown streetscape by installing amenities and visual improvements that support pedestrian activity, cultural vibrancy, and sustainable tourism. By allocating annual budgets through the RDS Infrastructure, Amenities, and Capital category, Fernie can ensure continuous investment in new enhancements and restorative projects to existing infrastructure. This approach will preserve the downtown's unique character, promote year-round tourism, and support the long-term sustainability and resilience of Fernie's destination experience.

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

1. Installing two murals over 2 years to improve downtown aesthetics and promote self-guided arts and cultural tours. (**50K**)
2. Purchasing flower baskets and plantings to assist the iconic views with seasonal streetscape additions **(9K)**
3. Reconditioning the downtown planters for improved seating to provide a place to rest while shopping in the downtown core. **(30K)**
4. A one-time purchase of Christmas decorations to enhance the streetscape downtown during the winter months **(40K)**
5. New and replacement of event infrastructure (Generator, cabling covers, tables) **(10k)**

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

This project aligns with RDS goals 2,3,5,6,8

Goal 2: Rebuild Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

By improving downtown's visual appeal with murals, seasonal plantings, and festive decorations, Fernie strengthens its attractiveness across all seasons (spring, summer, fall, and winter), encouraging consistent visitor traffic and more extended stays.

Enhancements to the downtown environment complement existing and future events, helping drive off-peak and shoulder season visitation.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience Through Arts and Cultural Tourism

Adding murals directly supports arts and cultural tourism by creating engaging, walkable art experiences and encouraging self-guided tours.

Improving the streetscape with flowers, seating, and decorations elevates the visitor experience, encouraging exploration, satisfaction, and positive reviews.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

Enhancing and maintaining the downtown area distributes visitor activity more evenly across Fernie's public

spaces, easing pressure on other heavily trafficked attractions.

Comfortable, attractive spaces encourage lingering and responsible visitor behavior, aligning with sustainable tourism goals.

Goal 6: Maintain and Responsibly Enhance Access to Natural Attractions and Recreational Amenities

Streetscape improvements, including seating and planters, support visitors of all ages and abilities as they explore downtown on foot, creating a more accessible and enjoyable link between urban and natural attractions.

Goal 8: Create Enhanced Focal Points for Visitor Staging and Gathering

Investments in murals, flower baskets, planters, seating, and holiday decorations enhance the downtown core as a key gathering and staging area.

New and replacement event infrastructure strengthens Fernie's ability to host festivals and concerts, supporting both planned and spontaneous visitor engagement.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Installation of murals directly enhances the visual appeal of Fernie's downtown, contributing to a vibrant, walkable environment that encourages longer visitor stays and supports arts and cultural tourism.
- Purchasing seasonal flower baskets and plantings improves the streetscape aesthetics, aligning with the goal of maintaining and enhancing tourism-related public spaces.
- Reconditioning planters into seating areas strengthens infrastructure for pedestrian use, offering rest spaces that support downtown experiences.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- Murals promote self-guided arts and culture tours, enriching the visitor experience by encouraging exploration and deeper engagement with Fernie's cultural identity.
- Seasonal decorations (flower baskets in summer, Christmas decorations in winter) create a welcoming, festive atmosphere that draws visitors downtown year-round and enhances their emotional connection to Fernie.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- By investing in beautification and infrastructure improvements rather than major new construction, the project promotes low-impact, sustainable development that enhances existing assets. This allows for further engagement with the downtown business community to shape and inform the scope of a more comprehensive downtown revitalization.
- Promoting pedestrian activity (through street appeal, self-guided tours, and resting areas) reduces car dependency downtown, supporting a low-carbon tourism model.
- Ongoing restorative work ensures that the quality of amenities and streetscape elements is preserved over time, promoting sustainability and responsible tourism destination management.

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☐ Indigenous Tourism ☐ Diversity & Inclusion ☐ Emergency Preparedness ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$139,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding	
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$139,000

Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title		Project Lead	
Gathering Hub and Staging Enhancements		COF, TF, FTA	

RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	New	2025-06-02	2027-03-01

Project Description & Rationale: Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

The Staging and Gathering Hubs Enhancement project strengthens Fernie's tourism infrastructure by developing a network of key spaces for visitor gathering and staging areas. By identifying and promoting these hubs through the **Signage interpretive and wayfinding project**, and identifying a list of standard amenities, the project creates a seamless, welcoming experience for all visitors. Importantly, it supports better destination management for adventure tourism users, such as mountain bikers, Nordic skiers, fat bikers, and hikers. It provides clear, accessible staging points that help manage trail traffic, promote responsible use, and enhance safety. The project fosters year-round tourism, draws more activity into the areas that can accommodate tourism traffic, and directly advances the Tourism Master Plan's goals of managing the visitor experience.

This project is essential to inform the subsequent RDS strategy development when we look to bridge the gap of gathering and staging areas' amenities through larger future RDS projects (e.g., Bathrooms, water, sewer, etc).

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

1. Create a staging and gathering hub list of locations
2. Create an infrastructure amenities list for gathering and staging areas (water fountains, washrooms, garbage/recycling, bike repair, shade, seating, bike racks, lighting, signage, etc.).
3. Work with Trail groups and landowners to implement standard amenities at staging areas, secured through agreements.
4. Educational signage and public information about respectful space usage.
5. Creating a staging area map template for implementation into named staging and gathering areas, wayfinding, and interpretation

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

Supports RDS goals and indicators: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

Goal 2: Rebuild Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

This project promotes visitation across all four seasons by improving access and usability of trail-related staging areas for adventure activities like mountain biking, fat biking, Nordic skiing, and hiking.

Clear infrastructure and staging hubs encourage longer stays by improving access to recreational opportunities beyond the resort core.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience Through Arts and Cultural Tourism

While primarily focused on outdoor recreation, this project supports broader cultural engagement through interpretive signage, wayfinding elements, and community-driven education materials that improve visitor understanding and respect for place.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

This is a primary alignment: the project improves destination management by dispersing users across designated, well-equipped areas, helping reduce congestion at high-use trailheads and minimizing environmental degradation.

Agreements with trail groups and landowners ensure proper stewardship and long-term capacity planning.

Goal 6: Maintain and Responsibly Enhance Access to Natural Attractions and Recreational Amenities

Clearly mapped and properly equipped staging areas ensure safe, sustainable, and inclusive access to trails and natural assets.

Infrastructure such as bike repair stations, garbage and recycling bins, and water fountains ensures responsible use while protecting natural surroundings.

Goal 7: Improve Getting Into and Around Fernie

Integrating staging hubs with wayfinding and interpretive signage improves navigation, accessibility, and overall usability of Fernie's trail and recreation network.

Creating a connected map system and consistent hub infrastructure makes Fernie more walkable, rideable, and visitor-friendly.

Goal 8: Create Enhanced Focal Points for Visitor Staging and Gathering

This project directly fulfills this goal by developing a network of key staging and gathering hubs with essential amenities and clear signage.

These enhanced focal points will serve as practical resources and welcoming spaces that elevate the visitor experience.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Develops a coordinated network of visitor hubs that offer consistent amenities (seating, signage, shade, gathering spaces) to enhance visitor comfort and experience.
- Improves accessibility by ensuring hubs are barrier-free, clearly mapped, and integrated with wayfinding infrastructure, supporting visitors of all ages and abilities.
- Supports year-round tourism by providing staging points for seasonal adventure activities like mountain biking, Nordic skiing, fat biking, hiking, and more.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- Creates a welcoming, accessible visitor journey with consistent, well-equipped hubs promoted through maps and signage, contributing to a positive, memorable experience.
- Enhances trailhead experiences, helping to attract and manage visitors throughout the year.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- Promotes sustainable trail and land use by concentrating visitor activity at managed hubs, reducing wear on sensitive natural areas and minimizing tourism's environmental footprint.
- Encourages responsible recreation and active transportation, supporting low-carbon tourism through biking, hiking, and skiing access.
- Enhances emergency preparedness by providing identified, well-marked gathering points that can support coordinated visitor management and response during natural events like floods and wildfires.

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☒ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☒ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The Staging and Gathering Hubs Enhancement Project supports Indigenous tourism, inclusion, emergency preparedness, and sustainability by creating accessible, well-equipped visitor spaces. It provides opportunities to integrate Indigenous cultural content into signage, building on past collaborations with the Ktunaxa Nation. Standardized amenities to ensure all users feel welcome. Clearly marked staging areas improve safety and emergency response, while concentrated use and educational signage promote responsible recreation and reduce environmental impact.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$50,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e., provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding (Existing capital budget for tables, benches, and garbage cans)	$20,000
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$70,000

Project Title		**Project Lead**	
Signage, interpretive, wayfinding, and emergency preparedness		Contractor/COF/TF	
RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	New	2025-07-01	2028-03-30

Project Description & Rationale: Please briefly describe the project and its rationale.

This project enhances Fernie's tourism infrastructure through a unified signage system incorporating Ktunaxa First Nations storytelling, modern wayfinding, wildlife, natural hazard identification, maps with safe pedestrian routes, and emergency preparedness. It aligns with multiple strategic plans, including the Signage Master Plan, Trails Master Plan, Tourism Master Plan, and Active Transportation Master Plan

The goal is to promote and improve accessibility, ensure visitor safety, and directly link heritage and culture sites and staging areas with modernized directional signage, integrated emergency messaging, and easy-to-read maps. This includes removing outdated references and incorporating accessible features like QR codes, tactile signage, and audio descriptions.

This project relies on the successful completion of other RMI initiatives such as:

- Tourism Trails and Staging/gathering areas being located and defined (Integrated Trail development, remediation, and impact management)
- A list of ideal amenities for Staging/gathering areas being developed and implemented (Gathering Hub and Staging Enhancements)
- Downtown animation activities are being incorporated (Animation projects)

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

Detailed Project Works
1. Design and install interpretive signage featuring Ktunaxa Nation storytelling. (ERA and YQT)
2. Remove or replace outdated, culturally insensitive signage (e.g., Ghostriders, Minor's Walk).
3. Develop wayfinding signage guiding visitors to downtown and key staging areas, parking, or destinations. (Contractor)
4. Integrate emergency preparedness signage in high-traffic and vulnerable areas. (contractor and emergency services)
5. Collaborate with YQT for digital and accessible technologies (QR, voice, tactile). (ERA and YQT)
6. Ensure consistency with Signage Master Plan, Trails Master Plan, ATMP, Town Loop, and staging areas. (Contractor)
7. Coordinate work planning and contractor support across the City, Tourism Fernie, Elk River Alliance (ERA), Fernie Trails Alliance (FTA), and YQT
8. Incorporate accessibility standards for visitors and citizens. (Contractor)

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.
Supports RDS goals and indicators: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7

Goal 1: Ensure Indigenous Engagement and Cultural Exchange

Designing interpretive signage that features Ktunaxa Nation storytelling directly supports meaningful Indigenous engagement, cultural education, and knowledge sharing.

Replacing outdated and culturally insensitive signage reflects a commitment to reconciliation and respectful cultural representation.

Goal 2: Rebuild Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

Improved signage creates a safer, more accessible visitor experience, encouraging longer stays and better distribution of visitors throughout Fernie, year-round.

Highlighting diverse trail and cultural destinations through wayfinding encourages exploration beyond traditional hotspots.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience Through Arts and Cultural Tourism

Integrating cultural, historical, and recreational information, the new signage network enriches the visitor experience and deepens engagement with Fernie's heritage and landscapes.

Features like QR codes, tactile signs, and audio descriptions make arts and cultural exploration accessible to all visitors, including those with disabilities.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

Clear, strategic signage helps distribute visitor traffic more evenly across trails, downtown, and gathering hubs, reducing pressure on high-use areas and supporting sustainable tourism management.

Goal 6: Maintain and Responsibly Enhance Access to Natural Attractions and Recreational Amenities

Emergency preparedness signage, accessible route mapping, and safety messaging ensure responsible use of trails and natural assets while prioritizing visitor safety and conservation.

This project strengthens Fernie's ability to manage the increasing demand for outdoor recreation sustainably.

Goal 7: Improve Getting Into and Around Fernie

Wayfinding signage that connects downtown, staging areas, trails, and key destinations directly improves navigation, enhances walkability, and supports the Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP).

Accessible design features promote inclusive mobility for visitors of all ages and abilities.

Program Objectives: Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

Aligns with RMI Objectives: Tourism Infrastructure, Visitor Experience, and Sustainability

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

Enhancing Indigenous and Cultural Tourism Infrastructure:

Integrates Ktunaxa First Nations storytelling into interpretive signage based on the "Ethno-Historical Research Project," enriching Fernie's cultural tourism appeal and supporting year-round visitation beyond the traditional ski season.

Downtown Signage Modernization:

Upgrade outdated references (e.g., Ghostriders, Minor's Walk) and develop new wayfinding signage focused on cultural and heritage self-guided tours. This will encourage visitors to explore Fernie's downtown, heritage buildings, and public art. It also includes using Indigenous words to complement blade signage where possible.

Accessibility Improvements:

Implements tactile features, readable font sizes, audio descriptions, and QR code technology for multilingual and barrier-free access, ensuring all visitors, including those with mobility or sensory challenges, can engage

with tourism infrastructure. By incorporating the Active transportation master plan collector routes, we promote the safest routes, improving walkability/rideability and accessibility whenever possible.

Wayfinding for Active Transportation:

Aligns with Fernie's Active Transportation Master Plan by improving pedestrian, cycling, and mobility-aid navigation routes, enhancing access to tourism sites sustainably and inclusively.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

Accessible and Inclusive Storytelling Experiences:

Creates a more welcoming visitor experience through inclusive interpretive signage with audio outputs and visual aids, improving cultural understanding and deepening engagement with Indigenous and local heritage.

Digital Enhancements for Engagement:

Introduces QR codes and voice-description features to deliver flexible, self-paced tours that cater to diverse visitor needs, enhancing interactivity and visitor satisfaction.

Cross-Sector Collaboration to Elevate Visitor Services:

Coordinates efforts between the City of Fernie, Tourism Fernie, Ktunaxa Nation Council, Fernie and Arts and Culture stakeholders to ensure a unified and high-quality visitor experience highlighting Indigenous culture and local history.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

Emergency Preparedness Signage:

Embeds visitor safety messaging and pre-positioned emergency response information into wayfinding and key public areas (e.g., trailheads, staging areas), enhancing community and visitor resilience to natural hazards such as wildfires and floods.

Promoting Sustainable Tourism Practices:

By encouraging downtown exploration via active transportation (walking, cycling), the project minimizes tourism's environmental impact and supports a low-carbon visitor experience.

Summary

This project strongly supports RMI objectives by:

- Developing and modernizing accessible tourism infrastructure and signage;
- Delivering remarkable, inclusive, and culturally rich visitor experiences;
- Implementing sustainable practices to mitigate environmental impacts and enhance visitor safety and community resilience.

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☒ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☒ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The project supports Indigenous tourism, diversity and inclusion, emergency preparedness, and sustainability through thoughtful design and strategic enhancements. Developed in partnership with the Ktunaxa Nation, it integrates Ktunaxa storytelling and language into map signage and wayfinding to authentically reflect Indigenous culture. To promote inclusion, it incorporates tactile, audio, and multilingual features, ensuring accessibility for visitors of all ages and abilities, while also improving active transportation routes for safer, barrier-free navigation. Emergency preparedness is strengthened by embedding safety messaging into signage at key points like trailheads and staging areas, helping mitigate risks related to natural hazards such as wildfires and floods. The project also encourages walking and cycling to reduce environmental impact, supports low-carbon tourism, and aligns with Fernie's sustainability-focused Master Plans to ensure responsible land and infrastructure stewardship.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$150,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding	
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$150,000

Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title		Project Lead	
Station Square Enhancements		COF/FDAC	
RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	New	2025-06-02	2027-04-01

Project Description & Rationale: Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

The Station Square Enhancement project transforms a central downtown space into a vibrant and inclusive venue for tourism-oriented gatherings, cultural performances, public seating, and shaded rest areas. The project supports the development of year-round tourism by offering a flexible venue for events, fostering community connection, drawing visitors into Fernie's downtown core, and promoting Station Square as the downtown staging area that can accommodate expected pedestrian traffic throughout the year. It aligns with the Tourism Master Plan's goal of enhancing arts, heritage, and cultural tourism and managing the destination.

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

1. Installation of permanent or modular shade structures at Station Square for heat mitigation.
2. Hardscape surface for events
3. Enhancement of public seating and rest areas for tourists and event attendees.
4. Purchasing of Station Square events support equipment (Seating, signage, barricades, etc.)
5. Educational signage and public information about respectful space usage.
6. Collaboration with local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, and Tourism Fernie and Fernie and District Arts Council to manage traffic and parking concerns in downtown related to Station Square and consider the future planning of a vendor and tent permitting framework.
7. Engagement with artists and cultural organizations to animate the Station Square space. (YQT, FDAC, FDHS)

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

Supports RDS goals and indicators: 2, 3, 5, 7, 8

Goal 2: Rebuild Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

By transforming Station Square into a year-round, pedestrian-friendly venue, the project creates a consistent draw for visitors in all seasons, especially supporting shoulder season and winter tourism through festivals, markets, and performances.

Improved event infrastructure fosters multi-day stays and broader seasonal tourism activity in Fernie.

Goal 3: Enhance the Visitor Experience Through Arts and Cultural Tourism

The project promotes cultural animation by engaging artists, heritage organizations, and performers to activate Station Square.

Educational signage, events, and cultural displays will deepen visitor engagement and showcase Fernie's unique arts and heritage offerings.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

Closing Station Square to vehicle traffic and improving pedestrian amenities helps disperse crowds more effectively downtown, balancing visitor use of civic spaces and encouraging sustainable visitation patterns.

Educational signage promoting respectful space usage reinforces responsible tourism behavior.

Goal 7: Improve Getting Into and Around Fernie

Enhancing a central, walkable gathering space supports Fernie's goal of promoting a pedestrian-first downtown, which is consistent with the Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP).

Collaborative planning for parking, traffic management, and future vendor permitting ensures smooth integration with downtown access and mobility goals.

Goal 8: Create Enhanced Focal Points for Visitor Staging and Gathering

The project centers on turning Station Square into a premier visitor staging and gathering hub, with new amenities like shade structures, seating, and flexible event space.

Event support infrastructure (seating, signage, barricades) improves Station Square's functionality and appeal as a central activation site for downtown events.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Enhances Station Square into a vibrant, flexible venue supporting tourism-related gatherings, events, and cultural performances year-round, broadening Fernie's appeal beyond its primary seasons.
- Improves accessibility through public seating, shaded rest areas, and gathering amenities that are barrier-free and welcoming for visitors of all ages and abilities.
- promoted through wayfinding and maps, enhancing the predictability and quality of the downtown visitor infrastructure.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- Provides an accessible, flexible venue for cultural tourism programming, including performances and community events that showcase local and Indigenous culture.
- Fosters community connection and encourages longer visitor stays by offering vibrant, well-supported gathering spaces integrated into the downtown experience.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- Supports sustainable tourism by encouraging pedestrian activity downtown, reducing vehicle reliance, and promoting a low-carbon visitor experience.
- Designs Station Square with multi-season use in mind, maximizing year-round sustainability.

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☐ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☐ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The Station Square Enhancement Project promotes diversity and inclusion by developing accessible, barrier-free gathering spaces that welcome visitors of all ages and backgrounds. The project encourages sustainable tourism by fostering pedestrian activity, reducing environmental impacts, and concentrating visitor flows in a managed, amenity-rich hub. Offering a year-round, multi-use space supports responsible destination management and aligns directly with Fernie's Tourism Master Plan goals for cultural tourism and sustainable growth.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$415,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e., provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding	
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$415,000

Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title		Project Lead	
Integrated Trail Development, remediation, and impact management (3-year funding plan)		FTA	

RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	Ongoing	2025-06-04	2027-04-01

Project Description & Rationale Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.

As summer visitation, trail usage, and trail-based events have steadily increased in Fernie over the past five years, the tourism industry has identified visitor impact mitigation, trail restoration, and sustainable development as priorities to maintain the quality and reputation of Fernie's trail network. The Fernie Trails Alliance (FTA), Tourism Fernie, and other trail groups collectively manage, maintain, and develop our recreational trail network, supporting various user groups, including hikers, mountain bikers, Nordic skiers, and fat bikers.

During the last RMI cycle, we partnered with the FTA and other local non-profit groups to advance sustainable trail initiatives, including trail realignments and new development projects to diversify the user base and reduce pressure on heavily trafficked routes. The FTA continues to engage with the Ktunaxa Nation to ensure that trail development and restoration efforts are culturally sensitive and align with protecting Indigenous cultural landscapes and ecosystems.

The increasing volume of trail use peaks during the dry summer months, when trails are most vulnerable to erosion due to the lack of moisture binding the soil. This high usage period coincides with lower local use, burdening the trail infrastructure. As a result, the FTA and other not-for-profit maintenance groups have had to invest more resources into trail repairs, restoration, and creating new trails that are both sustainable and capable of handling greater visitor volumes.

Through the Integrated Trail Development, Remediation, and Impact Management Project, the FTA and its supporting partners will use trail counter data and on-the-ground expertise to identify trails experiencing overuse, prioritize remediation efforts, and modify trails to improve safety, sustainability, and visitor satisfaction. In addition, new signage will be installed along trails and at trailheads to enhance navigation, promote visitor safety, and educate users about responsible trail stewardship and environmental best practices.

In addition, the Elk River Alliance (ERA) will support riverbank restoration efforts along the Town Loop Trail, which has been affected by increased use and beaver activity. This work will improve ecological health, trail aesthetics, and user experience, contributing to Fernie's broader goal of integrating environmental sustainability with recreational and tourism infrastructure.

This project ensures Fernie continues to offer exceptional trail-based tourism experiences while protecting the health of the natural environment for future generations.

Detailed Project Works Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

7. Establish a lead organization (FTA) to oversee approved funds and reporting for other not-for-profit trail organizations.

8. Perform major remediation of existing high-traffic "tourism trails" suffering from erosion, overuse, or environmental degradation.

9. Develop a "Tourism trails" list based on TMP priority segments and data-supported tourism trails.

10. Establish a Town loop trail, considering previous trail master plans, and create a plan to address missing pieces to complete the loop and integrate it into the Signage, Interpretive, and Wayfinding Project

11. Riverbank restoration along the Town Loop Trail through ERA funding to improve natural areas adjacent to core tourism assets

12. Set expectations for measuring Trail impact monitoring and data collection. (MRDT (trail counters, on the ground surveys)

13. Engagement with landowners to ensure long-term access and alignment with legal agreements.

14. Annual reporting, all trail groups engagement, and multi-year funding strategy development.

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

This Project supports RDS goals 1,2,4,5,6,7,8

RDS Goal 1: Indigenous Engagement

- Alignment: The project involves continued engagement with the Ktunaxa Nation to ensure trail development is culturally sensitive and protects Indigenous cultural landscapes and ecosystems.
- Indicators Met: Integrates cultural awareness and promotes stewardship in collaboration with Indigenous groups.

RDS Goal 2: Rebuild and Maintain Year-Round Visitation

- Alignment: Enhancing the trail system ensures Fernie remains a desirable destination for visitors across all seasons, including summer, winter (Nordic skiing, fat biking), and shoulder seasons.
- Indicators Met: Supports year-round tourism and contributes to consistent MRDT and visitor center traffic.

RDS Goal 4: Active Transportation

- Alignment: The project includes creating and improving non-motorized routes, such as the Town Loop Trail, which enhances active transportation options for visitors.
- Indicators Met: Adds new supports for non-motorized access, improves signage and navigation.

RDS Goal 5: Sustainable Tourism Growth

- Alignment: Trail counters and monitoring will be used to manage capacity and reduce environmental pressure on popular routes, addressing overtourism and enhancing infrastructure resilience.
- Indicators Met: Supports sustainable growth by ensuring infrastructure can handle increased visitation without degradation.

RDS Goal 6: Maintain Natural Attractions

- Alignment: Major trail remediation, riverbank restoration, and erosion control are at the core of the project.
- Indicators Met: Increases kilometers of trails restored and monitored; supports sustainability of natural assets.

RDS Goal 7: Improved Navigation and Access

- Alignment: Includes wayfinding improvements and signage updates that will improve how visitors get around Fernie and access trail networks.
- Indicators Met: Wayfinding improvements and alignment with previous trail and transportation plans.

RDS Goal 8: Enhanced Visitor Staging Areas

- Alignment: Enhancements along the Town Loop Trail and signage projects serve as focal points and staging improvements for trail users.
- Indicators Met: Improvements to visitor focal points, including seating, interpretation, and signage.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Enhances and diversifies Fernie's trail network by modifying overused trails, realigning routes, and developing new trails that accommodate a broader range of users (hikers, walkers, mountain bikers, Nordic skiers, fat bikers).
- Upgrades trail signage and trailheads to improve navigation, visitor safety, and access, making the trail system more welcoming and accessible for visitors of all abilities.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- Maintains high-quality trails to ensure a safe, enjoyable experience, even during peak summer visitation when trail impacts are highest.
- Expands visitor opportunities by creating trails that appeal to a wider user base, supporting year-round outdoor tourism beyond the traditional winter focus.
- Showcases Indigenous cultural values through partnerships with the Ktunaxa Nation, adding depth to the visitor experience.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- Prioritizes environmental sustainability by focusing on trail remediation, erosion control, and sustainable trail design to protect sensitive ecosystems.
- Educates visitors about environmental stewardship, responsible recreation, and best practices through enhanced trailhead and on-trail signage.
- Strengthens climate resilience by building and maintaining trails that are more resistant to erosion and degradation, helping Fernie's trail network adapt to changing environmental conditions.
- Supports sustainable destination management by using trail data to manage visitor flow and trail impacts, ensuring the long-term health of the trail system..

Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☒ Indigenous Tourism　　☐ Diversity & Inclusion　　☐ Emergency Preparedness　　☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The Integrated Trail Development, Remediation, and Impact Management Project directly supports the sustainability of Fernie's trail network by repairing and rerouting overused trails, reducing erosion, and protecting surrounding ecosystems. The project ensures that trails remain durable and safe under increasing visitor pressure through climate-resilient trail construction techniques and strategic visitor management using trail counter data. New signage and education initiatives promote responsible recreation and environmental stewardship, helping visitors minimize their impact. By concentrating use on sustainably designed trails, the project preserves the quality of the trail experience and the natural environment, ensuring future generations can enjoy Fernie's trails.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$210,000
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	
Municipal Funding	
Other	
Total Cost of Project	$210,000

Resort Municipality Initiative 2025-2027 Project Outline

Project Title		Project Lead	
Winter Visitor & Ski Shuttle		Tourism Fernie	
RMI Program Category	Project Status	Start Date	Completion Date
Tourism Infrastructure, Amenities, Capital	New	2025-06-02	2025-10-31
Project Description & Rationale Please provide a brief description of and rationale for the project.			

The winter visitor and ski shuttle program has been a staple of the RMI and MRDT funding programs and a long-standing partnership between Tourism Fernie, Resorts of the Canadian Rockies, and the City of Fernie. Its primary purpose is to transport visitors between accommodations, downtown, and the ski resort daytime and evening throughout the winter ski season.

In 2022, three small buses were purchased via RMI funding. Given the cost of operating one bus and the limited (max 12 pple) seating on each bus, there is a need to purchase a larger single bus for the service. There is an opportunity to look at selling two of the smaller buses to support the cost of the larger bus and using the 3rd bus as the backup bus.

It may also be advantageous for Tourism Fernie to take over the buses and the service for efficiency and cost savings overall in this process and the service operations.

Detailed Project Works: Please describe the detailed project works that will be completed with RMI funds.

15. Purchase a larger (ie, 24 passenger) shuttle bus and decal it.
16. Sell two of the existing smaller shuttle buses.
17. Operate the new larger bus starting the 2025-2026 winter season.
18. Confirm Tourism Fernie's ability and role in taking over vehicle ownership to ensure it continues as a tourism asset and service, and achieve cost savings and efficiencies.

Project Goal(s) Please describe which of your RDS goals this project will support.

Supports RDS goals and indicators: 2, 5, 7

Goal 2: Rebuild Overnight Visitation and Maintain Year-Round Consistency

The ski shuttle supports winter overnight visitation by providing reliable, easy transportation between accommodations, downtown, and the ski resort, reducing friction in the visitor experience and encouraging longer stays.

Enhancing shuttle capacity directly supports peak season tourism infrastructure and improves service for high-demand periods.

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Tourism Growth by Managing Visitor Capacity

By consolidating from multiple small buses to one larger, more efficient vehicle, the project helps manage tourism traffic more sustainably and reduces operational complexity.

It supports a shared transportation model, easing parking pressure and vehicle congestion around key areas like the ski hill and downtown core.

Goal 7: Improve Getting Into and Around Fernie

This project directly addresses transportation access, which is central to this goal.

Investing in accessible, branded public transit for visitors improves how tourists navigate Fernie without relying on personal vehicles, aligning with the Active Transportation and Transit goals in the RDS and ATMP.

A larger-capacity bus improves service reliability and the ability to efficiently accommodate higher visitor volumes.

Program Objectives Please describe which of the RMI program objectives this project supports and how.

1. Develop and/or Enhance Tourism Infrastructure and Amenities

- Enhances the winter shuttle program by moving more people around with less costs and emissions.

2. Deliver Remarkable Visitor Experiences

- A larger bus will provide a better visitor experience as the smaller buses are tiny and suitable for kids not adults in ski gear.

3. Implement Sustainable Tourism Projects and Initiatives

- A larger bus means fewer emissions
- A larger bus allows for the ability to move more people at one time.
- A larger bus addresses the issue of a lack of drivers. We can't afford or have access to more drivers always to have two small buses operating

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Please indicate if the project supports one or more of the following initiatives:

☒ Indigenous Tourism   ☒ Diversity & Inclusion   ☒ Emergency Preparedness   ☒ Sustainability

Please describe how the project supports the selected initiatives:

The shuttle bus services all people who need to utilize the shuttle. The shuttle can support messaging to its ridership related to local First Nations, diversity and inclusion (working with Fernie Pride Society), and "In Case of an Emergency. As detailed above, a larger bus will reduce emissions and support the higher demand in ridership that he small buses can't support. A larger bus also means one driver in a limited labour pool.

Funding Sources	
Total RMI Funding	$130,000 in 2025
MRDT Funding (if applicable)	Supports the driver wages and marketing program
Other Provincial Funding (i.e. provincial agencies such as DBC or Creative BC)	TBD
Municipal Funding	
Other (sale of two smaller buses)	$ 50,000
Total Cost of Project	$180,000