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Ministry of Community Services
Ministry of Economic Development
Western Economic Diversification Canada

\$2M FOR COWICHAN INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

LADYSMITH – A joint investment of more than \$2 million from the federal and provincial governments will mean major infrastructure enhancements for Ladysmith and Duncan communities. The funding is provided through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (CBCMRIF), which enables communities across B.C. to become healthier, greener and more sustainable places to live.

The announcement was made today by James Lunney, MP for Nanaimo-Alberni, and Ron Cantelon, MLA for Nanaimo-Parksville.

“With these investments, Duncan residents will have a reliable, safe supply of drinking water, and the Ladysmith area will have improved road links to nearby communities,” said Lunney, on behalf of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, President of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, and Minister of Western Economic Diversification. “These investments will improve the health and well-being of Cowichan communities, and help them grow as vibrant and productive places to live, work and raise families.”

Ladysmith will receive an investment of \$1.8 million to upgrade 1.5 kilometres of the Chemainus Road, which includes construction of sidewalks and bike lanes, reconstruction of asphalt, and installation of a storm drainage system. This road is a major link between three growing communities – Ladysmith, Saltair and Chemainus. These safe, efficient roadways will encourage residents and visitors to access businesses and amenities in the area.

“This is a badly needed upgrade to a road that had been deteriorating over the years,” said Cantelon. “Parts of this road were falling into the ocean and had become a safety concern. This work will improve the transportation corridor for residents in the region.”

The second project will see a federal-provincial investment of more than \$265,000 toward water system improvements in Duncan. Upgrades to the system will include the installation of a new storage reservoir, disinfection and filtration systems, a standby diesel generator and updated instrumentation. As a result, residents will benefit from improved fire protection and drinking water safety.

“These funds will allow the town to immediately undertake an essential upgrade to a key highway and railway transportation corridor that services not only the community of Ladysmith, the residents of Saltair and Chemainus, but also the whole southern Island,” said Ladysmith Mayor Rob Hutchins. “I can not overstate the value of this financial partnership that both the federal and provincial governments have undertaken with the citizens of the Town of Ladysmith. We are extremely grateful.”

“This investment will make a big difference to a small water utility in a rural part of our region, which in turn means an increase in quality of life for residents,” said Jack Peake, chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

Launched in June 2006, the majority of the CBCMRIF program funding supports communities of fewer than 250,000 people in minimizing the costs of local infrastructure upgrades or new construction projects for taxpayers.

At least 60 per cent of the funding will assist with “green projects,” and is geared towards enhancing environmental sustainability, such as water and wastewater systems, public transit, and environmental energy improvements. Other infrastructure projects will support local roads, cultural and recreational facilities, tourism, and broadband connectivity. Funding for these projects is conditionally approved pending the successful completion of an environmental assessment.

The total amount available through the CBCMRIF, with federal and provincial investments and matching local government contribution, is over \$220 million. More details on the program are available through the CBCMRIF website, at www.canadabcmrif.ca.

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