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FOUR PROJECTS TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE POVERTY

Columbia Basin Trust provides over \$400,000 for action-oriented projects

(Columbia Basin) – Columbia Basin Trust is providing over \$400,000 to four projects that are taking concrete, innovative actions toward improving the situation of low-income people in the Basin.

“We heard from Basin communities that they wanted to address poverty, and our goal is to support their efforts to reduce poverty across the region,” said Aimee Ambrosone, Director, Delivery of Benefits at Columbia Basin Trust. “These four projects are taking tangible steps toward that goal by working to help people overcome difficult financial circumstances.”

From a recent request for poverty-reduction proposals, the Trust has selected four projects. The results of these projects, including lessons learned, will be shared with other communities in the region to help increase their reach.

The Nelson Social Planning Action Network (SPAN) Society is receiving \$150,000 to help alleviate poverty by connecting low-income parents to services through community cafes, educating youth in financial literacy and employability, and helping local employers improve the lives of low-wage employees.

“This project builds on our work over the past four years to address Nelson’s very high poverty rate,” said Rona Park, Chair of the “Nelson at its Best” Ending Poverty Initiative and SPAN Board member. “We have good reason to believe that if we expand upon some of our earlier efforts, and continue to work closely with those with lived experience of poverty, we will see significant changes in people’s perceptions of poverty and feelings of isolation and exclusion in our community.”

The Golden Community Social Services Coop is receiving \$112,000 to hire a coordinator to work one-on-one with people in need, giving them a local, personalized way to access services that may help them out of poverty.

“Our project will improve the accessibility of services for people in need,” said Jill Dewtie, Coordinator. “It will focus on connecting residents with the supports and resources available to them while treating each client as a dignified and worthy member of our community.”

The Greater Trail Community Skills Centre Society is receiving \$125,000 to tackle poverty on several fronts, including training people to help individuals access local services, developing a card that will provide reduced or free access to services like recreation or transportation, and other efforts like community kitchens where people meet regularly to plan, cook and share healthy, affordable meals.

“This project will start to implement key aspects of ‘Thriving for All,’ the Lower Columbia regional poverty reduction plan that was developed by the community in 2017,” said Morag Carter, Executive Director. “We are very excited to receive the funding from the Trust and we will work with the community to ensure that the projects improve the sense of inclusion for low-income households and begin to reduce poverty.”

The Ktunaxa Nation Council is developing a social enterprise that offers long-term, reliable employment for individuals living with special needs or challenged by unique circumstances who are currently unemployed or underemployed. The Trust is providing \$25,000 to help develop the enterprise, and will consider further support once a plan is in place.

Business Development Officer Justin Paterson said, “We are looking forward to partnering with the Trust to undertake this initiative, which will help the Ktunaxa Nation Council create meaningful employment opportunities for Ktunaxa citizens within the territory.”

The support of these projects is just one of the ways the Trust is strengthening social well-being in the Basin. The Trust is also addressing affordable housing, workforce development, literacy, economic development and early childhood development. Learn more about its social programs and initiatives at ourtrust.org/social.

Columbia Basin Trust supports the ideas and efforts of the people in the Columbia Basin. To learn more about the Trust’s programs and initiatives, and how it helps deliver social, economic and environmental benefits to the Basin, visit ourtrust.org or call 1.800.505.8998.

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PHOTO 1: The “Nelson at its Best” Ending Poverty Initiative, a project of the Nelson Social Planning Action Network Society, is addressing poverty with support from Columbia Basin Trust.

PHOTO 2: Staff and board members of the Golden Community Social Services Coop, which will be addressing poverty with support from Columbia Basin Trust.

PHOTO 3: Points like the ones in this graphic helped inform a poverty reduction plan for the Lower Columbia region. Thanks to support from Columbia Basin Trust, key aspects of this plan will now be put into action by the Greater Trail Community Skills Centre Society.

PHOTO 4: The Ktunaxa Nation Council is developing a social enterprise to address poverty with support from Columbia Basin Trust.

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