



## News Release

For Immediate Release

### Critical Upgrades to the Lake Cowichan Water Treatment System

Town of Lake Cowichan receives Federal Gas Tax Fund funding

July 5, 2016 - Lake Cowichan, British Columbia - The Town of Lake Cowichan will receive \$5 million from the Government of Canada towards the \$6.3 million water treatment plant upgrades planned for the community.

Over the last many months the Town of Lake Cowichan has been dealing with episodes of deterioration in water quality and has not been able to comply with the Drinking Water Treatment Objectives for Surface Water in British Columbia. The Federal funding will allow the Town to move forward with the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) which is in close proximity to the water reservoir at Indian Road which currently supplies water by gravity to all of the water users. The funding has come at a timely moment as the Town has been mandated to implement the appropriate water system improvements by the end of 2017.

The WTP would include chemical pre-treatment, filtration, UV disinfection and chlorine disinfection. The expectation of the users of the water purveyed by the Town of Lake Cowichan is that they have access to good quality drinking water and that boil water advisories become a thing of the past. Additional concerns persist regarding raw water intake location and quality of the source water. The Town of Lake Cowichan has been required to implement the appropriate system improvements by the end of 2017.

The Government of Canada is contributing \$5 million to this project through the federal Gas Tax Fund while the Town of Lake Cowichan is contributing the balance of the total costs of \$6.3 million.

This project is one of seven announced today that are being funded through the Strategic Priorities Fund under the federal Gas Tax Fund for 2016.

Each year, the Government of Canada provides close to \$266 million in indexed funding for local government infrastructure projects across British Columbia through the federal Gas Tax Fund. The funding can be spent on any eligible project the community prioritizes across a broad range of eligible project categories, or it can be pooled with other communities for regional projects, banked for later priorities or used to pay for financed projects.

The Union of BC Municipalities administers the Federal Gas Tax Fund in British Columbia in partnership with the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

### Quotes

"Through the federal Gas Tax Fund, the Government of Canada is allowing communities in British Columbia, and across Canada, to prioritize their infrastructure investments and decide how best to spend federal dollars. Whether it's about protecting local waters, modernizing community centres or just turning on the tap to drink clean fresh water, these seven community projects will contribute to building the strong, inclusive and sustainable communities Canadians desire to live in."

*The Honourable Amarjeet Sohi,  
Minister of Infrastructure and Communities*

"This Province continues to support its communities by ensuring residents have access to safe, high-quality drinking water through important infrastructure projects like upgrades to the water treatment plant in Lake Cowichan. We are pleased to work with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and the Government of Canada to provide the Town of Lake Cowichan with a reliable source of funding for investments like this through the federal Gas Tax Fund."

*The Honourable Peter Fassbender,  
Minister of Community, Sport and Cultural Development*



“Local governments in British Columbia appreciate the support provided through the Federal Gas Tax Fund to upgrade aging facilities. Water system investments like this one in Lake Cowichan are helping communities to improve water quality and keep pace with regulatory requirements.”

*Al Richmond,  
President, Union of B.C. Municipalities*

“It is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to thank the Government of Canada (and UBCM) for recognizing the importance of Lake Cowichan and its need for a first class water system. Given the financial challenges we face with our infrastructure needs, the funding provided by the federal government through the Gas Tax Fund will be of immense assistance in allowing us to meet the mandated deadline for the required water treatment upgrades and thereby ensure that our residents have access to good drinking water. On behalf of Council and most importantly, all of our residents, I wish to again express our thanks and appreciation to the federal government for the substantial financial assistance being provided to us through this grant.”

*Ross Forrest,  
Mayor, Town of Lake Cowichan*

## **Associated Links**

Investing in Canada, the Government of Canada’s new \$120 billion infrastructure plan:

<http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/index-eng.html>.

Federal infrastructure investments in British Columbia: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/map-carte/bc-eng.html>.

Federal Gas Tax Fund: <http://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/gtf-fte-eng.html>.

Projects announced today under the Strategic Priorities Fund in British Columbia: <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1094209>.

Local government link: <http://www.town.lakecowichan.bc.ca/press.shtml>

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