Name of Local Government: Village of Pemberton/Lil’wat Nation

Project/Program Title: Winds of Change, A Healing Vision

Project Summary Paragraph
Please provide a summary of your project/program in 150 words or less.

WINDS OF CHANGE (WOC) is a collaborative public policy initiative of Lil’wat Nation, Village of Pemberton and the Squamish Lillooet Regional District to reduce the harm associated with drug and alcohol misuse.

Broadly speaking the Winds of Change is a harm reduction strategy guided by the following vision statement:

"We are neighbours, friends and relative working together to reduce the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol on our communities. We respect our differences and find strength in the common goal of a healthy and safe environment for our children and families."

This is a unique partnership that is tackling a challenging and persistent social issue and has been successful in bringing drug and alcohol misuse to the forefront in the Pemberton Valley. It has not been an easy journey. It had a tragic beginning which resulted in both communities coming together to produce a vision of wellness for everybody. That vision is contained in the report Winds of Change: A Healing Vision. The report sets out 13 recommendations in four categories: North Wind, West Wind, South Wind and East Wind.

Winds of Change is driven by a 18 member Steering Committee made up of elected officials from local government and First Nations, health and social service providers, law enforcement, youth workers, and the local school district. The Winds of Change initiative has had significant impact in raising public awareness of addictions and the resources available to residents; strengthening the cooperation between First Nation and non-First Nation governments and citizens; and influencing public policy and service allocations that improve counseling and treatment options for residents.

Project Analysis
Please answer the question in 300 words or less in 11 pt Arial font (our judges value directness and brevity). If you experience difficulty answering a particular question, consider the aspects of your program that may relate to the question and show us how they are linked.

1. OBJECTIVE
   Please explain the decision-making and thought process behind your decision to take on this initiative.

   This initiative was a response to a tragic alcohol-related incident in the community. There was significant public pressure to develop a response to ensure that support and preventative
measures were established. Working together to develop the response was natural given that the tragedy impacted both communities.

2. CHALLENGES
   Please provide examples of challenges you faced in taking on this program/project and how you overcame them.

   Although there was consensus between the communities on initiating a response, it was necessary to establish clarity around purpose and what could be done effectively.
   The Committee worked for about a year to get to the initial strategy document and the result was the ‘Winds of Change: A Healing Vision’ document (see enclosed), which identifies 13 recommendations to further the Winds of Change initiative. The document was then revisited after five years, which included a public reassessment that helped refocus and reenergize the Committee.

   As with many social services, securing ongoing/long term funding can be a challenge. The WOC initiative has been very fortunate to receive a five-year funding commitment from local government; however, it is imperative that the Committee seeks alternate sources of funding (private/public) for project specific initiatives.

3. BENEFITS
   Please provide examples of how this program/project benefited the community.

   During the 8 years that the Committee has been in existence, several strengths and benefits have been realized including:

   - Proven and successful advocacy for service or policy changes that will improve treatment and counseling services, which has resulted in improvements to local services such as ElderGo bus service, youth role model campaign, age friendly community project, joint economic development forum, Wellness Gathering, Winds of Change Recognition Awards

   - Provision and facilitation of a regular forum for information sharing between elected leaders and service organizations.

   - The committee’s work has resulted in increased cooperation and collaboration between elected officials of the Village of Pemberton and Lil’wat Nation.

4. INNOVATION
   Tell us why you consider this project/program to be an innovative and/or creative initiative.

   Through the Winds of Change initiative, great strides have been made in addressing social issues that exist within the Pemberton Valley; as well as, it has also built trust and understanding between the communities from casual social interaction to formal Community to Community quarterly Joint Council Meetings. This unique partnership is the first of its nature in the Province. The Winds of Change committee is no stranger to forging new grounds; the joint committee was also the first in BC to develop a senior and elder community plan.

   The WOC initiative is a tangible example of two diverse communities working together for the greater good of the area and its people.
5. GOALS
What did you set out to accomplish with the program/project? How effectively did you meet your goals?

The goals of the Committee have been set out in the Winds of Change Strategy: A Healing Vision that considered a comprehensive approach and applied a four-step process:
1. Understanding the community – this includes social, cultural and economic factors
2. Strategy development – this involves setting priorities and planning ways to respond.
3. Action – the implementation of the strategy in which various community groups contribute to the solution.
4. Evaluation – determining if a difference has been made and using the data collection to modify our plans and actions.

From this process 13 recommendations for action and change were established and incorporated into four main themes – representing four winds of change:

North Wind: Promoting Healthy Lifestyle Choices
South Wind: Increasing Awareness
East Wind: Improving Services
West Wind: Community Leadership and Responsibility

Some of the most notable and successful initiatives led, initiated or supported by the community include:
- Pemberton Valley Age Friendly Community Plan
- Feasibility Study – Drug & Alcohol Treatment Centre
- Published articles about addictions and healthy lifestyle choices
- Youth Role Model Campaign – poster series & youth forum
- Annual Wellness Gathering – joint wellness campaign to promote healthy lifestyle messages
- Annual Team Building event for committee and local officials
- Increased awareness and profile through presence at community events
- Expand committee membership to include representation from relevant local organizations, and to share workload
- Update of the Winds of Change: A Healing Vision strategy in 2011
- ElderGo service, a dedicated transit service specifically for Pemberton/Lil’wat Nation elders to access essential services such as doctors appointments and do errands. This service was of utmost importance during the winter months as many seniors become isolated, and unable to leave their homes due to the weather.
- Support the development of recreational and leisure infrastructure: skate park, bike park, water park, senior activities
- Joint economic development workshop for local area officials
- Produced Resource Directory – listing essential services and resources for both communities
- Recommendation to local governments to review all existing regulations related to tobacco and alcohol
- Develop an integrated communications approach that includes a smaller print piece, supported by an electronic media kit, a website (www.thewellnessalmanac.com), and a community outreach campaign
- Hosted the Wellness Gathering Trade Show and Recognition Awards Dinner
The Committee has also set out long term goals which include a local treatment centre and the fundraising/completion of the Friendship Trail, a trail that would connect the two communities of Mount Currie and Pemberton. This trail is particularly important for both communities as it will provide a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists to commute between community nodes 24 hours a day.

6. SUSTAINABILITY
What measures have you put in place to ensure the continued operation of this initiative? (e.g. staff time, resources, financial)

All local governments have seen the successes of the Committee, and as such have provided a five year commitment to fund the activities of the Winds of Change; as well as significant staff resources by the Village of Pemberton.

The Committee continually works with local government and community partners to seek alternate funding sources for project specific initiatives.

7. TRANSFERABILITY
How is this program/project transferable to other local governments?

This program could be easily replicated in other communities in BC where there are First Nations and Municipalities in close proximity to each other. It takes leadership commitment, a little funding, and a belief in the power of working together.

8. KNOWLEDGE SHARING
What helpful advice would you share with other communities looking to embark on a similar project?

The advice for other communities looking to embark on a similar initiative would be to ensure that there is a committed support from each organization involved; and that community leaders are committed to openness and patience, and acknowledging and respecting differences which can be critical to the success of the task force.

As it is a commitment of time (often volunteer) it is essential to have a clear and defined Terms of Reference for Committee members so that they have an understanding of the involvement and commitment.

The need is very acute and yet many of the solutions are out of reach of this initiative and depend on other levels of government.

9. TELL US MORE
Please share any other information you think may help us better understand your submission.

Winds of Change has brought substance misuse to the forefront of public awareness in the Pemberton Valley. It demonstrates that aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities can collaborate effectively when there is respect, openness and trust. It also demonstrates the lead
role that local communities can take to identify, and implement, appropriate harm reduction initiatives.

While the initial motion to work together was a reaction to a tragedy, the relationship between Pemberton and Mount Currie continues to grow. Both communities remain committed to Winds of Change as there is increased communication and cooperation between the two Councils. They now meet regularly to talk about other mutual issues and interests that affect all who live and work in the Pemberton Valley. The issue may be servicing, land use planning, or something outside of the local government realm such as a social or health issue. The key to building the relationship is to find the common ground.

10. PARTNERS

a.) Please list all the partners involved in this initiative. The Winds of Change Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from the following organizations:

i. Two (2) representative from the Village of Pemberton;

ii. Two (2) representative from the Mount Currie Band;

iii. Two (1) representative from the Squamish Lilooet Regional District;

iv. Two (2) representative from Vancouver Coastal Health Authority;

v. One (1) representative from the R.C.M.P.;

vi. One (1) representative from Sea to Sky Community Services;

vii. One (1) representative of Mount Currie Health Care Centre;

viii. One (1) representative of the Stl’atl’imx Tribal Police;

ix. Two (2) representative of the Youth from Each Community

x. One (1) representative of the Community at Large nominated jointly by the Village of Pemberton and Mount Currie Band.

xi. One (1) representative of the Youth Mental Health

xii. One (1) representative of the School District #48

xiii. One (1) representative of the Xit’olacw Community School

xiv. One (1) representative of the N’Quatqua Band

One staff member from the Village of Pemberton

b.) Why did you choose to work with this/these particular partner(s)?

As part of the initial process, it was determined that to implement the strategy there needed to be representation from various community groups and organizations who could provide constructive input, support and knowledge to the initiative.