

Keremeos awarded grants of over \$4 million

The Village of Keremeos has been awarded two new grants worth over \$4 million.

The funding is from the federal Gas Tax Fund, and was announced on March 9 by the Government of Canada, along with the Government of British Columbia and Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM). 108 projects have been approved in BC for a total of almost \$193 million. Two of the approved projects were for Keremeos.

Keremeos' funding will be utilized to upgrade the waste water treatment plant (\$3,949,000), and to undertake condition assessments on the Village's sanitary and road system networks as part of our Asset Management Program (\$89,000). The upgrades to Keremeos' wastewater treatment plant will take place over the next three years, and the condition assessments on the sanitary and road systems will take place over the next year.

The funding has been provided to the Village at 100%, so these major initiatives will be accomplished with zero tax increase to our residents and businesses, and zero draw-down on the Village's financial reserves.

Wildfire prevention strategies

In December, 2017, the Village successfully secured grant funds to undertake a wildfire prevention strategy for the town.

With the grant funds, a Wildfire Management Specialist was hired to identify and map potential wildfire fuel sources, and then prepare a management plan to mitigate or eliminate those fuel sources. It is expected that the wildfire prevention strategy will be completed by June, 2018.

The Wildfire Management Specialist is optimistic that environmental partners in the community will assist with the cost of wildfire fuel removal in the perimeter outside of the Village boundaries.

The Village has also applied for a Community FireSmart grant to undertake a fire prevention strategy for the Riparian Park community. We are fortunate to have an involved and committed group of residents in the Riparian Park area ready to help promote a FireSmart initiative.



2018 Façade Improvement Program

The 2018 Keremeos business façade program is now accepting applications. The deadline for applications is **June 15, 2018**.

In an effort to encourage revitalization of business properties in our community, the Village of Keremeos is once again offering a Business Façade Improvement Program in 2018. In 2016 and 2017, a total of five local businesses have successfully applied to the program and beautifully updated their storefronts. The new facades have inspired others to give their businesses a facelift!

We have received **additional grant funding** for the Business Façade Improvement Program in 2018, from the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources' Rural Dividend Fund.



Businesses and owners of property zoned as C1 (General Commercial) and C2 (Tourist Commercial) who hold a valid business license with the Village may apply for grant funding to help offset the cost to renovate, restore or redesign their business storefront façade. Applications from the downtown M1 (Light Industrial) zones will also be considered. Successful applicants are provided with a 50% reimbursement grant up to a maximum of \$2,000 per building.

The selected applicants will be notified by the Village Design Committee by June 30, 2017. The number of grants awarded is dependent on the

total value of applications.

Further information about the Business Façade Improvement Program can be found by contacting the Village Office or by visiting our website at:

www.keremeos.ca/content/business-facade-improvement-program

Preserving precious habitat

The Village has submitted an application to the Ministry of Forests, Land and Natural Resources for a Licence of Occupation providing tenure over the Crown riverbed land, just east of the Keremeos boundary.

The Similkameen is one of few remaining wild rivers in the Southern Interior of British Columbia. This unique area is home to precious red- and blue-listed at-risk species of birds, reptiles and fish. The lower river in the dry Similkameen Valley make it particularly important for healthy ecosystems in the area and for the survival of the many species dependent on it.

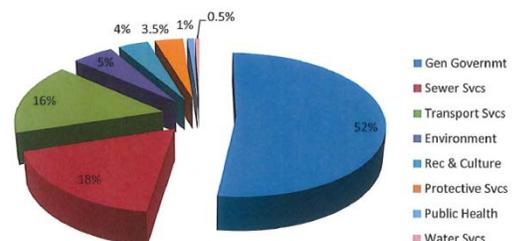
Increasingly, campers are heavily polluting the water, the riverbed, and the sensitive adjoining riparian areas. Regional District and Village staff remove many tonnes of garbage and discarded camping materials annually to avoid it being carried into the river at spring freshet. The Similkameen Riverbed area is also of high cultural significance to the Lower Similkameen Indian Band, and must be protected.

If the application is successful, the Village proposes to designate the area as a "conservation" park, where the Village's Park bylaw would apply. The bylaw would allow respectful public day-use only, and prohibit activities such as camping, fires, and smoking.

Have your say on the Village budget...!

Keremeos Council invites residents and property owners to a discussion regarding the Village's 2018 operating budget on **April 3, 2018 at 6:00 PM**.

The meeting will take place in the Council Chambers, at the Village municipal office 702-4th Street, Keremeos. Attendees will be given an opportunity to speak. A copy of the draft budget will be available at the Village Office as of March 26, 2018.



Downtown improvements

The long awaited water system upgrades along Seventh Avenue are underway, and will continue until approximately mid-May, at which time equipment will move to Sparks Drive to upgrade the water lines in that area. Updates on the project will be added to keremeos.ca as information becomes available.

Unfortunately, there is no way to complete the work without disruption, but we're doing our best to minimize the impact. Do not hesitate to contact the Village office at 250-499-2711 or email town@keremeos.ca with questions or comments.

Donations to the Pocket Park

We would like to make the Pocket Park at 619 Seventh Avenue a true community project!

Some remaining grant money will be put towards the Park in 2018, along with some parks reserve funds, but we will need donations to make it happen. Anything in the artist's rendering (right) can be purchased - trees, benches, picnic tables, pergola, concrete, sod.

Donors will receive a tax receipt, and a plaque on/near the donated items. Contact the Village office to inquire.

Think about what to name the Pocket Park! We will be looking for suggestions to provide to Council later in the year.

The downtown "Pocket Park" preliminary work will be starting soon with removal of the old trees dividing the area. The area will then be leveled, with retaining walls and a wheelchair ramp to the lane parking.

The Seventh Avenue sidewalk side of the Pocket Park will include a new community notice pillar, free to anyone who wishes to advertise things like yard sales or community events. The pillar will be constructed of reclaimed wood from the original historic Red Bridge, inlaid with metal.



The Keremeos welcome sign will also be enhanced this year!

The input collected at the downtown enhancement Open Houses in 2017 supported the idea of keeping the original sign rather than replacing it, but favoured dressing up the sign and surrounding area a little.

Reclaimed wood from the original historic Red Bridge will be used to construct a pergola over the sign, along with some integrated rock features and solar lighting. If the grant budget allows, we will add a couple of new trees as a backdrop, and a shaded place to rest.

Monitoring Similkameen River water levels

As the Similkameen snowpack is higher than average this year, Regional District Emergency Management staff and Village staff are closely monitoring the water levels in the river. To prepare for spring freshet, the Village's contract engineer will be inspecting Keremeos' section of the dike in the upcoming weeks, and the dike tree maintenance work ordered by the Province will continue over the next two years.

Should emergency staff declare a high water advisory, we will notify residents through the Resident Notification System.

541 residents/households/businesses have signed up for the Resident Notification System. If you haven't already signed up, we encourage you to do so at keremeos.ca or complete the form on the back of this newsletter and submit to the Village municipal office.

As an option to online sign-up, you may complete the form below and submit it to the Village of Keremeos Office, 702-4th Street, Keremeos:



Keremeos Resident Notification System Sign-up Form

First name

Last Name

House number

Postal Code

Street Name

Apartment Number

Email address (one per person)

Phone number(s) for automated call

Cell phone number(s) for text message

(You are automatically signed up for urgent messages and statutory notifications from the municipality)

- Also wish to receive Keremeos news to my email
- Contact info is for a business
- Contact wishes to make officials aware of an impairment

Terms:

Your municipal alert system is an emergency communication tool that should not be used as a sole source of information. If you feel threatened, you should not in any event, rely solely on this alert system and you must immediately take the necessary precautions to make yourself and your belongings safe from any danger. Although the system is an important tool to your municipality, in case of an emergency, it bears no warranty as to the accuracy, completeness or notification of any alert posted on or transmitted by the system. Your municipality, its officers, employees and right holders shall not be liable for damages arising directly or indirectly, should a warning not be received by a subscriber. By checking the box below, you accept the terms of this notice and waive accordingly the right to pursue your municipality, its officers, employees and right holders.

- I've read and accept the terms and conditions