

# WEST KOOTENAY BOUNDARY COMMUNITY INVESTMENT CO-OP

Vol. 5

*Quarterly Update*

Spring  
2026

PUT YOUR MONEY  
WHERE YOUR LIFE IS



West Kootenay Boundary  
COMMUNITY  
INVESTMENT CO-OP

## GOAL REACHED: DOLLARS PUT TO WORK LOCALLY

At our February 2025 Board strategic planning session, we set a goal to deploy \$100,000 in investment capital into our communities through co-op loans over the following 12 months.

We are pleased to share that we exceeded that goal, investing \$108,000 in local businesses between February 2025-2026.

This matters because these dollars make a real impact close to home. When capital is invested locally, it

helps support businesses, strengthen the local economy, and keep money working in the communities where we live. This milestone reflects the power of community investment and the trust our members place in the co-op.

*Thank you!*

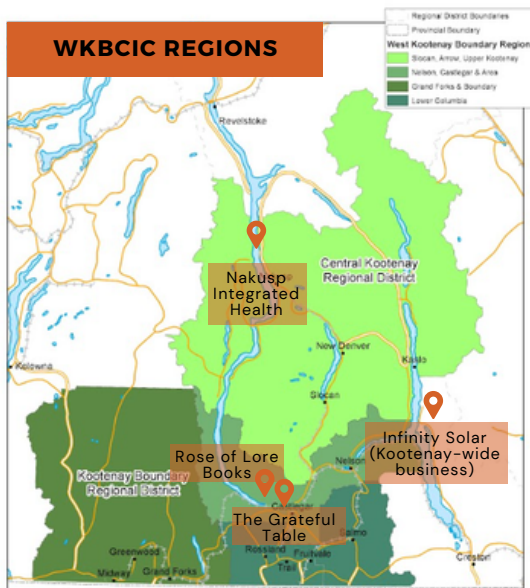
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## LIVING OUR CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

A co-operative is more than just an organizational structure: It is a way of doing business rooted in shared values and guided by principles that shape how co-operatives operate. These principles reflect self-help, democracy, equity, and concern for community.

We are proud to be part of a co-operative network that strengthens both local organizations and the people they serve.

### Co-operative Principle # 6: Co-operation among co-operatives



In support of a fellow co-operatives, we're pleased to share that the **Upper Columbia Co-operative Council is seeking Directors** to help guide and strengthen their work across the region.

#### Why join?

Your knowledge, skills, and experience matter. Joining the UCCC Board is a chance to support UCCC members, strengthen co-operatives in the region, connect with others across the sector, and contribute to meaningful work with a committed team.

#### Want to know more?

Contact the UCCC at [info@uccc.coop](mailto:info@uccc.coop) and request a nomination package, full of helpful information about qualifications, responsibilities, requirements and benefits.

*Welcome to our newest member!*

**CARI G.**

*Thank you for choosing to support a strong, local economy rooted in shared values and mutual benefit. By becoming a member, you are truly putting your money where your life is—investing in the people, businesses, and communities that make this region home.*

*Welcome to our newest director!*

**LAUREEN BARKER**

*We'd like to welcome Laureen to the WKBCIC board of directors. Laureen brings small business acumen and regional representation for the Nelson area to our board, and we're thrilled to have her lend her expertise to our team. Learn more about Laureen below in our new Getting To Know Your Directors section!*

## OUR 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Jeff Hayward**, President  
**Paul Butler**, Vice-President  
**Suzanne Paquette**, Treasurer  
**Eva Hernandez**, Secretary  
**Wake Williams**, Chair: Investment Committee  
**Tracey MacGregor**, Chair: Marketing Committee  
**Christine Tyres**  
**Colin Ludwar**  
**Laureen Barker**



## Ask your Director



Over the course of this year, we'll be introducing you to the people who help guide our co-op. Our board brings a range of experience, insight, and commitment to building a stronger local economy through community investment.

This feature gives members a chance to get to know our directors — who they are, what they care about, and what they bring to the table. We're starting with two in this issue, with more to come throughout the year.



### *Eva Hernandez*

#### **Why did you become involved with WKBCIC?**

I was seeking ways to support locally owned small businesses when I attended

a presentation about the potential formation of an investment co-op in the West Kootenay. I am a founding member and board member.

#### **How do you explain WKBCIC to someone who's never heard of it?**

Our co-op is made up of community members that have pooled their funds together to make loans to small local businesses in the West Kootenay and Boundary communities. We hold shares worth \$1,000 each and chose a co-op for the one member, one vote structure so that there is equality across all members, regardless of the dollars invested.

#### **What's one business you'd love to see more of in our region?**

I would like to see more manufacturing businesses in our region.

#### **If WKBCIC had a mascot, what would it be, and why?**

I think an elephant would symbolize our strong community spirit, caring and gentle approach as well as prosperity.

#### **What's one thing you've learned from serving as a director that surprised you?**

How challenging it is to find deal flow for loans. I thought that would be the easy part.



### *Laureen Barker*

#### **Why did you become involved with WKBCIC?**

As retired small business owner in Nelson I know how difficult it can be to get a

business off the ground. I'd like to help local entrepreneurs get started and expand to serve the local community.

#### **How do you explain WKBCIC to someone who's never heard of it?**

Investments in local businesses keep profits in the local economy.

#### **What's one type of business you'd love to see more of in our region?**

Finished lumber products manufacturing

#### **If WKBCIC had a mascot, what would it be, and why?**

Bees- they are cooperative, busy and self-sacrificing working for the betterment of the hive and local people.

#### **What's one thing you've learned from serving as a director that surprised you?**

Keith Parks has big shoes.

**Eva & Laureen:** What's one small way members can support community investment in their everyday lives (even outside of WKBCIC?)

*Shop Locally!*



INVESTMENT SPOTLIGHT:

## *The Grateful Table*

The West Kootenay Boundary Investment Co-op recently invested your dollars in The Grateful Table in Castlegar to help replace some aging equipment. This supports the continued operation of a business that has become a longstanding part of community life. For the co-op, this was not simply an investment in a restaurant. It was an investment in a local gathering place with deep roots, built on a family legacy of serving Castlegar for more than 25 years, first as The Greek Oven and later as The Wandering Greek Oven.

What makes The Grateful Table stand out is its philosophy. Owner and head chef George Salivaras describes the business as a place created so that “everyone can gather to enjoy amazing food, with an emphasis on gratitude.” That spirit of gratitude shapes more than the menu. It informs the atmosphere, the family-centred approach, and the restaurant’s commitment to healthy, ethical practices and locally sourced ingredients wherever possible. In that way, The Grateful Table is more than a place to eat. It is a place of connection, welcome, and continuity in the community.

We are proud to support businesses like this, where the return is measured not only in economic activity, but also in the strength of the relationships, traditions, and community spaces they help sustain.

*Support local!*

**THE GRATEFUL TABLE**

**400 COLUMBIA AVE, CASTLEGAR**

**GRATEFULTABLE.CA**

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