



October 6, 2021

Ref: 267848

Gail Given, Chair
Regional District of Central Okanagan
1450 K.L.O. Rd
Kelowna BC V1W 3Z4

Dear Chair Given:

Thank you for your previous correspondence requesting a restructure planning grant to undertake a governance and services study for the North Westside communities of the Central Okanagan West Electoral Area in the Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO). I also appreciated our conversations at this year's UBCM Convention.

Further to my letter of April 27, I am pleased to advise you that I have approved a Restructure Planning Grant to the RDCO in the amount of \$60,000 to facilitate a governance and services study of Electoral Area West, with an emphasis on the North Westside communities.

The purpose of this grant is to assist the RDCO with education on facets of governance and services in Electoral Area West, engaging the public to understand the concerns and interests of North Westside residents, and identifying robust options within the regional district framework for addressing the most pressing interests of the communities.

As I have previously mentioned, undertaking a restructure study is a major endeavor and requires a significant commitment of local and provincial staff time and resources. I appreciate that there has been sustained interest in this community to review the current governance framework and service provision by the RDCO, and the RDCO Restructure Planning Grant Committee was a great example of local government representatives and community members working together.

The study is not an incorporation study—it will not provide detailed technical or financial information on the impact of municipal incorporation. This study will address the misinformation and education issues noted in the 2017 study, synthesize the situation and issues to determine realistic options for addressing issues and concerns, and provide an outline of implementation or next steps. Considerations that may be identified in the study include local community size, community vision, community tax base trends, community business, industry, economic growth, and community interests.

.../2

Gail Given, Chair
Page 2

I understand the RDCO is dealing with the impact of severe wildfire conditions from the White Rock Lake fire, including previous evacuation orders and alerts to many communities within the North Westside of Electoral Area West. These are pressing issues and Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff are prepared to be flexible on the timing of this study to ensure your administration can focus on urgent response and recovery matters.

Ministry staff will follow up with RDCO staff regarding the terms and conditions of this grant, timing considerations and will co-ordinate the transfer of funds. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Barrie Nicholls, Program Analyst, Governance and Structure Branch, by email at: Barrie.Nicholls@gov.bc.ca, or by telephone at: 778 698-3574.

It is my hope that this work may serve as an important step towards building collective understanding and agreement on this important local matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josie Osborne', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Josie Osborne
Minister

pc: Brian Reardon, Chief Administrative Officer, Regional District of Central Okanagan
Marijke Edmondson, Director, Governance Structures, Governance and Structure Branch
Barrie Nicholls, Program Analyst, Governance and Structure Branch