



October 14, 2021

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Chair Brad Sperling and Directors  
Peace River Regional District  
Box 810 - 1981 Alaska Avenue  
Dawson Creek, BC V1G 4H8  
Via email: [prrd.dc@prrd.bc.ca](mailto:prrd.dc@prrd.bc.ca)

Dear Chair Brad Sperling and Directors:

I would like to personally thank you and your delegation for meeting virtually with me and my Ministry staff during the 2021 Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Annual Convention. While COVID-19 has continued to challenge our ability to meet face-to-face at UBCM, I was very grateful to have the opportunity to meet with you in person during my visit to your region, Chair Sperling. Thank you again for hosting us.

It was a pleasure to hear from you in my first convention experience as Minister of Citizens' Services, and I appreciated hearing about the issues and opportunities for connectivity in your region. Topics raised during the virtual meeting included:

- Sharing the regional district's learning on connectivity.
- Creating a central repository for information sharing.
- Federal spectrum license allocation.

We recognize that connectivity is critical to enabling and supporting the delivery of accessible and responsive services that people in B.C. count on. Fast, affordable connectivity provides people with equitable access to opportunities for education, work, and business, as well as to access online services and to be able to stay connected with those who matter to them most.

Since 2017, our government has invested \$190 million into expanding connectivity, with almost \$90 million committed to new connectivity projects throughout B.C. since October 2020 as part of the Connecting British Columbia program's Economic Recovery Intake. We have made great progress connecting more people than ever before. However, we know there is more to do and we will need to work together to solve the remaining infrastructure challenges in the province.

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Thank you very much for sharing your connectivity learning from your working group. We agree that it is incredibly important to share information, and we appreciate that you are advocating for that and reaching out to neighboring districts to offer advice.

I also appreciated your recommendation to create a repository for connectivity materials so other local governments can share learning. My staff are currently talking to CivicInfo BC about setting up a repository for connectivity plans, and they will be in touch with you soon to discuss this further.

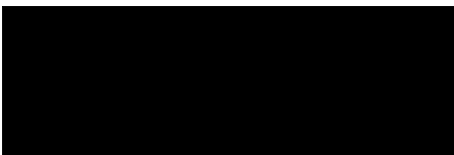
Thank you also for sharing your advocacy on the federal policy for spectrum license allocation and management. I am going to take this away and look further into spectrum licensing with my staff in the Connectivity Division. I have heard from other communities that the current policy is not encouraging connectivity expansion in rural communities and I would like to explore this more. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

As mentioned in the call, my staff have scheduled a meeting to discuss your connectivity needs in more detail. This can include possible opportunities resulting in the transport line from Dawson Creek to Prince George for last mile to Chetwynd and Taylor, and other gaps you may have. Should you need anything in the meantime, please reach out to Assistant Deputy Minister, Connectivity, Susan Stanford at 778-698-2349 or [Susan.Stanford@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Susan.Stanford@gov.bc.ca), or Howard Randell, Executive Director of Network BC at 250-415-6867 or [Howard.Randell@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Howard.Randell@gov.bc.ca). My door is also always open.

I found it very valuable to hear from you and other communities throughout the week. Meetings such as this help me better understand the issues your community is facing around connectivity.

Thank you again to your delegation for taking the time to meet with me. I look forward to seeing you—hopefully in person—at the UBCM Convention next year.

Sincerely,



Lisa Beare  
Minister

pc: Mike Bernier, MLA  
Peace River South

Dan Davies, MLA  
Peace River North

Connected Communities, [ConnectedCommunitiesBC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ConnectedCommunitiesBC@gov.bc.ca)