



June 29, 2022

Ref: 117648

Brad Sperling
Chair, Peace River Regional District
1981 Alaska Avenue
Dawson Creek, B.C. V1G 4H8
Email: prrd.dc@prrd.bc.ca

Dear Chair Sperling:

I wanted to take the time to say thank you for completing the Request to Participate (RTP) process on BC Bid earlier this year. We know you are busy and appreciate the time you spent to give us feedback on the program. It was very helpful.

The aim of the RTP process was to present the Province's current understanding of the underserved households and to have respondents provide feedback and insight into what type of technology would be viable in which areas to help us reach our connectivity goals. The responses to the RTP were highly informative as we worked to validate our data.

We received 33 responses to the RTP from a mix of organizations and appreciated learning more about your priorities for your region. Thank you for sharing the CIRA survey data with us, and thoughts around satellite technology. Our priority for the new program is to connect as many households as we can with terrestrial builds, as they currently remain the most reliable and affordable option for British Columbians. However, we anticipate that LEO satellite technology will have a role to play to fill any remaining gaps and we will be keeping a close eye on this through the first few intakes.

You mentioned the need to have additional transport fibre in the region, and while we cannot fund overbuilds, there may be an option for backbone to transit served areas to enable last mile to underserved homes in the area. This will need to be assessed depending on the application we receive and benefits to British Columbians, but our program staff would be happy to discuss this further with you if it would be helpful. In addition, thank you for sharing your priority areas for cellular coverage. Having spent time in your area with you and Mayor Foster last year, I can appreciate that feedback from a first-hand perspective.

As you know, the government has committed to expanding high-speed internet services to reach the CRTC minimum target speed of 50/10 Mbps to all households in B.C. by 2027.

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The expansion of connectivity will be realized through a \$830 million memorandum of understanding with federal government for joint provincial/federal funding and the new Connecting Communities BC program. The first intake for funding applications is expected to open later this summer. Information on how and when to apply for the new program will be on the [Connectivity in B.C. website](#) later this summer. Our data is also updated as new project announcements are made. Check regularly for updates in the [B.C. Data Catalogue](#).

If you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss any of these points further, you may reach out to [Jeanne Holliss, Executive Director, Connected Communities](#) who can direct you to the best person to talk to, and assist with setting up a meeting.

Thank you for all you do to connect your region. We appreciate your feedback, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to assist the Province in our goal of connecting all communities in British Columbia to high-speed internet services.

Sincerely,

Lisa Beare
Minister

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