



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-310

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager

Date: July 14, 2022

Subject: **Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding**

RECOMMENDATION: *[Corporate Weighted]*

That the Regional Board enter into a revised Memorandum of Understanding with the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Northern B.C. Tourism, and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, which outlines guiding principles, roles, and responsibilities between parties for the management and oversight of the Gotta Go project, for a period of five years ending April 1, 2026; and further, that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the PRRD.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

In 2016, the North Peace Economic Development Commission (NPEDC) contracted a review of the rest areas and facilities available along major transportation corridors throughout the North Peace. The review identified the need for additional investment in washroom facilities in the region; in particular, the review noted that more facilities were needed along the Alaska Highway.

The Gotta Go initiative aims to develop and manage roadside facilities along remote areas of the Alaska Highway throughout northeast BC. These facilities will include wheelchair accessible washroom amenities, picnic benches, a tourism informational kiosk, signage for safety and emergency management, and increased communication technologies.

The Gotta Go Partners (Parties) include the PRRD, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM), Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), Public Services & Procurement Canada (PSPC), and the Northern BC Tourism Association (NBCTA).

The Parties have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to outline guiding principles, roles, and responsibilities between the Parties and establish a coordinated approach for establishing, maintaining, and funding the development of adequate roadside facilities along the Alaska Highway. The parties agree that there is an opportunity to promote First Nation recognition, tourism, history, and community while improving public safety, cleanliness, access, connection, and fulfilling public infrastructure needs.

In October 2018, the Gotta Go partners piloted a test site at Trutch, km 319 of the Alaska Highway. The site includes two accessible outhouse facilities, garbage cans, a cellular booster tower, a DriveBC camera, and picnic tables. Informational kiosk and additional signage are still to come.

Based on the success of the Trutch location, the Parties identified the pullouts at Sikanni Brake Check (km 250) and Steamboat (km 536) as future sites and received a grant in the amount of \$285,750 from the

Northern Development Initiative Trust for the development of the sites. The new sites became operational in 2021.

On March 11, 2021, the Regional Board passed the following resolutions:

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED

That the Regional Board enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, Northern B.C. Tourism, Public Services and Procurement Canada, and the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, which outlines guiding principles, roles and responsibilities between parties for the management and oversight of the Gotta Go project, for a period of five years; and further, that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the PRRD.

MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED

That the Regional Board authorize that \$60,000, payable from Economic Development - Function 140, be issued to the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, for operation and maintenance of the Gotta Go roadside facility located at Km 319 of the Alaska Highway, upon all Parties signing the Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding.

CHANGES TO THE PREVIOUS MOU

The Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) originally intended to sign the MOU with the remaining Parties. Since then, it has been decided that PSPC will not be signing the MOU with the rest of the Parties. Due to the fact that PSPC will not be signing the MOU, they have been removed from the MOU. The following section has been removed from the MOU:

Party D – Public Service and Procurement Canada (PSPC):

- a) Purchase a portion of the cost of the design of the three sites: Sikanni Brake Check, Trutch, and Steamboat.
- b) Purchase four (4) annual studies, and one (1) final study for the collection and analysis of data from the three sites.
- c) For 10.4(a) and 10.4(b), at a combined cost of \$75,000 per annum, for five (5) years.

Although PSPC will not be signing the MOU, they would like to be a silent partner and pay their agreed-upon contribution yearly without entering into the MOU. The \$75,000 from the original commitment will be sent to the NRRM for the Trust. Eventually, PSPC will be taking over the funding for the maintenance of all Gotta Go sites, and will be covering the costs through their Federal Alaska Highway Maintenance Contract.

All other commitments from the Parties remain the same.

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE REVISED MOU

Maintenance Trust Fund

- The Parties have agreed that a Maintenance Trust Fund will be created to fund the maintenance of all three sites, and that each Party will supply predetermined funding to the Trust.

Peace River Regional District

- Install and maintain a cell booster for a period of no less than three years at KM 319 –Trutch.
- Conduct an elector approval process in 2021 for a Gotta Go Service Function.
- Will be responsible for maintenance costs at KM 319 - Trutch and KM 155 Sikanni for a period of no less than 5 years, depended upon approval of a Gotta Go service function.
- Upon all Parties signing the MOU, \$60,000 will be contributed to the Maintenance Trust Fund for maintenance costs at the Trutch and Sikanni locations.

B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

- One time contribution of \$150,000 to assist in the establishment of new sites and maintenance thereof.

Northern B.C. Tourism Association

- Coordinate the development of a Corridor Experience Master Plan for the Alaska Highway which will define and guide the development of future interpretive and tourism experiences within the region that attract and appeal to visitors and residents of all ages and motivations.
- Coordinate the development of the content and design of the signage and kiosks at each of the rest stops and work with partners to include the Indigenous perspective and elements of universal design.
- NBCTA will commit to holding the design files and will work with the partners to make any updates to sign content if necessary.

Northern Rockies Regional Municipality:

- In-kind contribution: hold and manage the Maintenance Trust Fund, in reference to section 9.0, which will be funded by all Parties part of this project.
- In-kind contribution: hold and manage maintenance contracts for all sites, which will be funded by the Maintenance Trust Fund.
- Will contribute \$50,000 annually to the Maintenance Trust Fund for maintenance costs at Steamboat and for the 'Public Washroom Partnership Program' with the highway operators, for a period no less than 5 years.
- As requested by the Parties to the Gotta Go Program, an accounting of transactions specific to the Maintenance Trust Fund will be provided.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Partnerships
 - ☒ Collaboration with Local and First Nations governments
- ☒ New and Emerging Issues
 - ☒ New Financial Contribution Services

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

The balance of funds in Economic Development - Function 140 remaining from 2020 for Gotta Go is \$115,738. If approved by the Board, \$60,000 will be issued to the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality from this surplus. Funding partners for Gotta Go in 2020 include the City of Dawson Creek, the District of Hudson's Hope, the District of Tumbler Ridge, the District of Chetwynd, the District of Taylor, and Electoral Area B.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

On August 12, 2022, the Regional Board adopted Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021, after the successful completion of an Alternate Approval Process. The service area boundary for the new service includes Electoral Area B, Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd, Tumbler Ridge, and Taylor. As per the Gotta Go service function and MOU, the PRRD has agreed to pay maintenance costs for the Trutch and Sikanni locations. The PRRD and NRRM are developing a service agreement to maintain the Trutch and Sikanni locations. The draft service agreement will be presented to the Regional Board in August for approval.

Attachments:

1. Revised Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding – July 2022
2. Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding with Proposed Changes

External Links:

1. [August 12, 2021 Board Report - Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service – Alternate Approval Process Results](#)
2. [Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021](#)
3. [Certification of Alternate Approval Process Results, July 30, 2021](#)