



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-403

From: Trevor Ouellette, IT Manager

Date: May 4, 2023

Subject: Expressions of Interest PRRD Broadband and Cellular Gap Fulfilment

RECOMMENDATION: [Corporate Unweighted]

That the Regional Board extend an invitation to representatives from I-Valley to attend the July 26, 2023 Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee meeting as invited guests to present their response to the Request for Expressions of Interest issued by the PRRD seeking internet service providers interested in partnering with the Regional District to delivery connectivity services.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

On August 11, 2022, Regional Board passed the following resolution:

MOVED, SECONDED, and CARRIED

That the Regional Board defer consideration of submissions received in response to the Request for Expressions of Interest 39-2022 Peace River Regional District Broadband and Cellular Gap Fulfilment until the first Broadband and Internet Mobility Committee Meeting held after the assent voting for "Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2487, 2022" is complete, which is scheduled for November 23, 2022.

On May 12, 2022, the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

MOVED, SECONDED, and CARRIED

That the Regional Board issue a Request for Expressions of Interest for qualified Internet service providers interested in delivering connectivity services through a partnership model in the region.

Consideration of "Request for Expression of Interest 39-2022 PRRD Broadband and Cellular Gap Fulfilment" was deferred by the Regional Board to the November 23, 2022, Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee (BIMC) Meeting to allow for assent voting for "Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2487, 2022" to be completed.

The assent vote concluded on October 15, 2022. The Regional Board received the assent voting results for the Regional Connectivity Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2487, 2022, and adopted the Bylaw during the November 10th, 2022, Regional Board Meeting.

Twelve Internet and cellular service providers downloaded the Request for Expressions of Interest (ROEI), with three providers submitting a response; I-Valley, Shaw Business and Valo Networks Ltd. [Summaries of the submissions received](#) were provided to the Committee on July 20, 2022.

Previously, both Shaw Business and Valo Networks Ltd have participated in meetings with the board or the Broadband Internet and Mobility Committee as delegations and held discussions. However, I-Valley has not yet had the chance to do so. It is possible that I-Valley could offer valuable information regarding their proposed partnership for Internet Connectivity. To ensure that I-Valley has the opportunity to present their proposals and ideas, it is recommended that a meeting be scheduled with them. This will aid in making well-informed decisions and selecting the most suitable option for the organization. Moreover, engaging in a discussion with I-Valley about their proposal may have potential benefits for PRRD.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board procure the services of I-Valley for consulting services to connect the Committee with experienced telecom engineers, industry experts, and government liaisons to evaluate various funding models and create network implementation roadmaps.
2. That the Regional Board extend an invitation to all representatives of all three companies (Valley, Shaw Business, and Valo Networks Ltd) who submitted a proposal to the REoI to attend the July 2023 Broadband Committee meeting to discuss the potential services that the service providers can offer.
3. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Not Applicable to Strategic Plan

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

\$100,000 was included in the Regional Connectivity Service 2023 budget for Consulting Services.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):**OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):**

The *Community Charter*, Section 175 - Liabilities under agreements (which applies to a Regional District as per the *Local Government Act* s. 403) provides that the Regional District must not enter into an agreement if the agreement is for more than five years or could exceed five years by the exercise of rights of renewal or extension unless it first obtains the approval of the electors.

External Links

1. [Report No. ADM-BIMC-010 – Request for Expressions of Interest PRRD Broadband and Cellular Gap Fulfilment](#) (July 20, 2022 Broadband and Internet Mobility Committee Meeting, Agenda Item 9.2)