PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

REPORT

To: Chair and Directors   Report Number: ADM-BRD-146

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager   Date: February 11, 2021

Subject: Canadian Internet Registration Authority Internet Performance Test

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RECOMMENDATION: *[Corporate Weighted]*
That the Regional Board enter into an agreement with Canadian Internet Registration Authority, for a Canadian Internet Registration Authority Internet Performance Testing Subscription, at a cost of $3000 (excluding taxes), for a 12 month term; further, that the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer be authorized to sign the agreement on behalf of the PRRD.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:
Staff have contacted the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) to inquire about the development of a PRRD Internet Performance Test 'Landing Page'. Discussion at the Fiber Working Group has included the inaccuracy of mapping eligibility in Provincial and Federal Grant Applications. According to Federal Granting Programs, certain areas in the PRRD do not qualify for funding as the areas are inaccurately shown to have sufficient connectivity. Through the PRRD Landing Page, residents can conduct a CIRA Internet Performance Test that will allow the PRRD to gather specific data about the true state of connectivity in the region. Other Regional Districts and Local Governments across BC (and Canada) are using this tool to help show the true status of the internet, and to help inform eligibility for connectivity grant programs.

The CIRA Internet Performance Test is a quick and easy way for residents to test their Internet Connection. CIRA Internet Performance Tests provide specific data about the actual state of connectivity and this data can be used to support the need to bring high speed internet services to an area/region. Researchers use the information gathered by the CIRA speed test to understand better and improve the Canadian Internet. It also provides detailed technical diagnostic information and assists with determining eligibility for federal connectivity granting programs.

The CIRA Internet Performance Test is composed of test servers located throughout Canada at various Internet Exchange Points, allowing CIRA to run a variety of tests measuring everything from network speed and latency to blocking and throttling. Unlike other speed tests that test connection speed from the computer to the internet service provider's network, the CIRA Internet Performance Test will test the connection from the computer to the Internet as a whole (within Canada). It will give a more wholesome comparison of the capabilities of performance on Canada's Internet infrastructure.

The CIRA Internet Performance Test uses a test called the Network Diagnostic Test provided by M-Lab that connects the resident's computer to a server within the Canadian Internet Exchange Points. As each user performs a test, their data is anonymously collected and aggregated into a large dataset that

spans Canada. Residents can compare their connection speeds with other people in their neighbourhood, municipality, electoral area, and even across the country.

Smart Community Performance Testing
By partnering with CIRA, the PRRD will get a customized local government internet testing portal that residents will access through a unique PRRD branded domain name.

The PRRD Landing Page site will run the CIRA Internet Performance Test, collect and store the data in real time, and provide at least two online reports that allow the user to visualize performance data. The information generated results in the calculation of overall average connection speed of internet performance tests conducted within a set of geographic boundaries provided by the PRRD and broken down by municipalities and electoral areas.

CIRA will collect a single data record for each internet performance test performed from locations within the geographic boundaries specified by the geo-spatial mapping provided by the PRRD. All data collected will be available to the PRRD. CIRA will maintain the Landing Page on behalf of the PRRD and all infrastructures required to run internet performance tests. The CIRA Landing Page will include the PRRD logo. A link to the Columba Basin landing page already in operation is included below for reference.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:
1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:
☒   Advocacy
☒ Increased broadband connectivity for rural communities - Situational/Gap Analysis and Investment

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):
The cost for the Landing Page is $3,000 excluding taxes for a twelve (12) month term. As the total cost of the transaction is under $5,000, a direct award is permitted under the PRRD Procurement Policy.

COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):
The PRRD will actively promote CIRA on its website and encourage residents to conduct the CIRA test.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):
None at this time.

External Links:
1. [Columbia Basin CIRA Landing Page](#)