



REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-161

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager

Date: March 11, 2021

Subject: Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding

RECOMMENDATION #1: *[Corporate Weighted]*

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.

RECOMMENDATION #2: *[Corporate Weighted]*

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.

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 the rest area portions of the region's road infrastructure. Particularly, it noted that more facilities were needed for travelers heading up 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.

The Parties have been developing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) intended 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, and connection. Gotta Go will also be filling a need for public infrastructure. In October 2018, the Gotta Go partners piloted a test site at km 319 (Trutch) of the Alaska Highway. The site includes two accessible outhouse facilities, garbage cans, a cellular

booster tower, and a DriveBC camera. Picnic tables have been purchased and are ready for placement. Informational kiosk and additional signage are still to come.

Based on the success of km 319 (Trutch), the parties have identified the pullouts at km 250 (Sikanni Brake Check), and km 536 (Steamboat) for the development of future sites. The Parties have received a grant in the amount of \$285,750 from Northern Development Initiative Trust, to be used for the construction of the km 250 (Sikanni Brake Check) and km 536 (Steamboat) locations.

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.

The NRRM will be responsible for holding and managing the Trust, and manage maintenance contracts for all sites, and will fund maintenance costs at km 536 (Steamboat).

MoTI and PSPC have both committed funding for the project that will be used for capital and operations.

The PRRD Funding Partners have agreed, in principle, that the PRRD will fund future maintenance costs for km 319 (Trutch), and km 250 (Sikanni Brake Check).

Anticipated costs for the proposed “Gotta Go” function include:

- Annual maintenance for each roadside facility – km 319 and km 250
- Development, maintenance and replacement costs of cellular boosters if required

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:

- ☒ Partnerships
- ☒ Collaboration with Local and First Nations governments

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):

The balance of funds in Economic Development - Function 140 remaining from 2020 is \$124,992. If approved by the Board, the \$60,000 that will be issued to the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality will come 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):

A communications plan will be developed for the establishment of the Gotta Go service establishment.

OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):

None at this time.

Attachments:

1. Gotta Go Memorandum of Understanding