



Making a difference...together

Executive Services  
625 Fisgard Street, PO Box 1000  
Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

T: 250.360.3125  
F: 250.360.3076  
www.crd.bc.ca

March 19, 2019

File: 0400-20

Mr. Adam Olsen  
MLA Saanich North and the Islands  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4  
Via email: [adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Dear Mr. Olsen:

**RE: CRD ELECTORAL AREAS RURAL STATUS**

I am writing on behalf of the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board to convey the CRD's request for clarification of the current position of the Provincial government regarding the rural definition for the three CRD Electoral Areas (Juan de Fuca, Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring Island) as well as confirmation of their inclusion in the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

Please see correspondence related to the request attached.

Sincerely,

Colin Plant  
Chair, Capital Regional District Board

Attachment: Correspondence

cc: Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade & Technology  
CRD Board  
Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, CRD

January 4, 2018

File: 0400-50 Premier

Premier John Horgan  
West Annex Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Premier Horgan:

**RE: DISTRIBUTION OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL FUNDING THROUGH GRANT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT RURAL AREAS AND SMALLER COMMUNITIES**

Within British Columbia the distribution of Federal and Provincial funding through grant programs is critical to support rural areas and smaller communities. The Federal and Provincial governments have recognized that rural areas lack the service capacity or base to sustain services and have established specific grant programs or grant criteria and policy to enable rural areas to access these funds.

The Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas of the Capital Regional District (CRD) have been wrongfully classified as urban centers due to their inclusion with the CRD. As you know, the decision to exclude these rural districts from rural programs and funding does not reflect their geography, land use or capacity to sustain services. The inclusion of the electoral areas with the CRD does not provide for subsidies or the redistribution of funds to support local services. Further, the Islands Trust Act applicable to the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas establishes an obligation to preserve and protect the islands and their rural character on behalf of all the people of British Columbia.

The CRD Board has considered this issue and has resolved to request that your government correctly classify the CRD's three electoral areas as rural, so that they may qualify and receive the benefits from Provincial and Federal Government programs that are directed at rural communities.

Currently the CRD's three electoral areas are excluded from the provincially funded Island Coastal Economic Trust (I.C.E.T) and the federally funded Community Futures program. I.C.E.T. alone has contributed over 50 million dollars to coastal communities from Lake Cowichan to Port Hardy and from Gabriola Island to Lund. Every Gulf Island and rural community outside the CRD has been included. Although Nanaimo is considered a rural center, Salt Spring Island, Mayne Island, Pender Island, Port Renfrew, Shirley and Otter Point are considered urban.

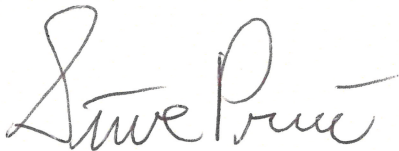
In addition to I.C.E.T., programs such as the HST exclusion on rural cottages, BC Rural Dividend grant program and specific grant programs directed at Provincial rural communities have specifically excluded the three electoral areas of the CRD. Community Futures, sponsored by the Federal Government has excluded the three electoral areas because they follow the Provincial classification.



In 2016, UBCM passed a resolution asking the Provincial Government to officially recognize and classify the three CRD electoral areas as rural communities. I would respectfully ask that your government include the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas in I.C.E.T., include them in all rural programs and grant opportunities and inform the Federal Government of your re-classification so that they may receive the benefits of the Community Futures program.

I understand that you have arranged for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to meet with the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Director, Mike Hicks, to discuss this request and that he has invited the other two electoral area Directors and our CAO to attend. On behalf of the CRD Board we appreciate your quick action to resolve this issue.

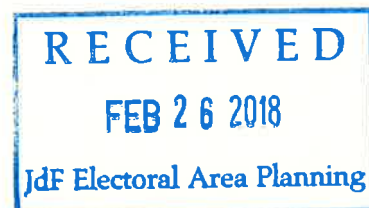
Sincerely,



Steve Price  
Board Chair, Capital Regional District

cc: The Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Mike Hicks, Director, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, CRD  
David Howe, Director, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area, CRD  
Wayne McIntyre, Director, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area, CRD  
Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, CRD





February 21, 2018

Ref: 231875

Adam Olsen, MLA  
Saanich North and the Islands  
215 – 2506 Beacon Ave  
Sidney BC V8L 4T9

Mike Hicks, Director  
Juan de Fuca Electoral Area  
Capital Regional District  
3-7450 Butler Rd  
Sooke BC V9Z 1N1

Dear Mr. Olsen and Director Hicks:

I appreciate your concerns regarding your communities' access to the Rural Dividend, the Island Coastal Communities Economic Trust and Community Futures programs. I also appreciated the opportunity to hear your perspectives respecting how senior government grant programs may exclude your rural communities.

The Rural Dividend Program (RDP) is under the responsibility of my colleague, the Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development. I am pleased that the RDP's goal is to assist small rural communities across British Columbia. Rural is defined as a community with a population of 25,000 or less, located outside the geographic boundaries of Metro Vancouver and the Capital Regional District (CRD). However, I understand that, following an initial request to the program, the RDP has consistently provided exceptions for the communities within the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area and Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area.

Over the three intakes to date, the RDP has funded multiple projects in these areas. I have enclosed a list of approved projects for rural areas of the CRD. I also understand that Minister Donaldson is currently reviewing the Program, and to ensure that he is aware of your views, I will share with him your correspondence and I also encourage you to connect with him directly.

The Island Coastal Communities Trust (ICET) is the responsibility of the Honorable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology. The boundaries of the ICET are defined in legislation and regulation. Any changes would need to consider the views of the Trust Board and other stakeholders. I am pleased to bring your concerns to the attention of Minister Ralston.

.../2

Mr. Olsen and Director Hicks

Page 2

Community Futures is a federal program which promotes socio-economic development across Canada and provides funds to community societies. Please note that societies created to access federal resources under this program umbrella are eligible for provincial Rural Dividend grants as well. I will discuss this issue with Minister Ralston, and suggest that he consider your concerns as he engages with his federal counterpart. I will also send a copy of this letter to the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, to ensure an appreciation for including small rural communities in any future programs.

Provincially, we will also ensure the consideration of small rural communities' eligibility in future grant programs. I look forward to working with both of you in the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Robinson', written in a cursive style.

Selina Robinson  
Minister

Enclosure

Honourable John Horgan, MLA  
Langford - Juan De Fuca

The Honourable Navdeep Bains  
Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Honourable Doug Donaldson  
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Honourable Bruce Ralston  
Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology

***List of Grants Provided to CRD Rural Communities***

1. Port Renfrew Tourism Trail
  - Organization: Capital Regional District: Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation
  - Funding Provided: \$10,000
  - Project Description: This project will include a feasibility study for Port Renfrew Tourism Trail. This trail will link the San Juan River Bridge to the Community Pier at Snuggery Cove, connecting tourists to local businesses.
  
2. Rural Accelerator
  - Organization: Capital Regional District: Salt Spring Island
  - Funding Provided: \$72,080
  - Project Description: This project will launch a structured program to support local businesses by offering training, mentoring, and access to capital.
  
3. Pacheedaht Campground Improvement & Expansion
  - Organization: Pacheedaht First Nation
  - Funding Provided: \$100,000
  - Project Description: The project is for improvement and additions to the Pacheedaht "North End" Campground to increase the service and experience offerings for customers.
  
4. Experience the Gulf Islands – Concept Plan Implementation
  - Organization: Salt Spring Island Chamber of Commerce & Southern Gulf Islands Tourism Consortium
  - Funding Provided: \$10,000
  - Project Description: This project will support a previously developed tourism strategy by: (1) completing outreach/engagement; (2) developing an inter-island committee and committee coordination for the tourism initiative; (3) secure a formal endorsement of the tourism initiative; and (4) develop an application for a larger project for the Rural Dividend to implement the tourism initiative.
  
5. Building Pender Islands Economy Through Edu-Tourism
  - Organization: Southern Gulf Islands Community Resource Centre Society
  - Funding Provided: \$77,760
  - Project Description: Project will develop and implement an Edu-Tourism project on the Pender Islands. The project will include Youth and Seniors Advisory Councils.
  
6. Port Renfrew Tourism Trail – Phase 1
  - Organization: Capital Regional District: Juan de Fuca Electoral Area Parks and Recreation
  - Funding Provided: \$89,194
  - Project Description: This project will fund Phase 1 construction of the Port Renfrew Tourism Trail project. The project will achieve an off-street trail route through the town of Port Renfrew, linking the Community Centre to Beach Camp, the waterfront and a range of tourism attractions and small businesses, with a clear focus on highlighting the recreation and scenic values of the community.

7. Salt Spring Island Farm Centre Program Development

- Organization: Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust Society
- Funding Provided: \$100,000
- Project Description: This project will support the development of the Salt Spring Island Farm Centre, which will provide future program and services to increase local food production, value-added processing, food education, and consumption of locally grown foods. Project activities include the refinement of business and financial plans, marketing and training.



February 28, 2018

Steve Price  
Board Chair, Capital Regional District  
625 Fisgard Street  
Victoria B.C. V8W 2S6

Dear Mr. Price:

Thank you for your letter dated January 4, 2018, regarding the issue of rural classification for the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island, and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas. I always appreciate the chance to hear from leaders working to improve their communities.

For the purposes of the Rural Dividend program, the B.C. government defines rural communities as those with populations of 25,000 or less outside of the Capital Regional District and Greater Vancouver Regional District.

However, given the unique circumstances of some communities within the geographic boundaries of urban areas, the program has made exceptions to these criteria where appropriate. This is true for the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island, and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas, as all are considered eligible for Rural Dividend funding.

In the coming months we will be examining opportunities to improve the Rural Dividend as part of a larger initiative to create a new Rural Development Strategy. I would welcome your input into this process, and encourage you to provide your advice on this and other rural development issues by visiting our website [www.engage.gov.bc.ca/ruraldevelopment](http://www.engage.gov.bc.ca/ruraldevelopment) before February 28 at 4 p.m.

In regards to funding opportunities from the Island Coastal Economic Trust and Community Futures, I would encourage you to follow up with those organizations directly, as these entities determine the eligibility requirements of their programs.

Once again thank you for your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Trudeau".

Claudia Trudeau  
Director

pc: Premier Office  
Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource  
Operations and Rural Development





Making a difference...together

Office of the Board Chair  
625 Fisgard Street  
Victoria, BC, V8W2S6

T: 250.360.3126  
F: 250.360.3076  
www.crd.bc.ca

June 19, 2018

File: 0400-20

Honourable Selina Robinson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Room 310 Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4  
[MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Honourable Robinson:

**RE: Reclassification of the three CRD Electoral Areas as Rural Communities**

Thank you for meeting with Wayne McIntyre, Mike Hicks and Robert Lapham on January 23, 2018 to discuss the reclassification of the three CRD electoral areas as rural communities so that they may qualify and receive the benefits from Provincial and Federal Government programs that are directed at rural communities.

I was advised that the take away from that meeting was that your office would be taking steps to make this change so that the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring and Gulf Islands electoral areas could be included in the Island Coastal Economic Trust (I.C.E.T.) and any other Provincial or Federal Programs available to rural communities in British Columbia.

It would be appreciated if you could provide an update on any additional measures being taken to include the three CRD electoral areas in I.C.E.T. as well as including them in all rural programs and grant opportunities.

Sincerely,

Steve Price  
Board Chair, Capital Regional District

cc: Hon. John Horgan, Premier, MLA Langford-Juan de Fuca  
Wayne McIntyre, Director, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area  
Mike Hicks, Director, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area  
David Howe, Director, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area  
Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, Capital Regional District



200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria BC V8R 1H8  
Telephone **(250) 405-5151** Fax (250) 405-5155

Toll Free via Enquiry BC in Vancouver 660-2421. Elsewhere in BC **1.800.663.7867**

Email [information@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:information@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Web [www.islandstrust.bc.ca](http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca)

July 11, 2018

File Number: 0400-30; 4700-20

via e-mail: [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca)

The Honourable John Horgan  
Premier of BC  
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria BC V8W 9E1

Dear Premier Horgan:

**Re: Designate Islands Trust Area for Rural Dividend Program Funding**

On behalf of the Islands Trust Council I am writing to request that the Province designate all islands in the Islands Trust Area as permanently eligible for Rural Dividend Program funding and other granting programs for rural communities, including the Island Coastal Economic Trust.

It has been a long-standing concern that the Salt Spring Island and Southern Gulf Islands electoral areas and Bowen Island have been ineligible for economic development and infrastructure programs intended for rural communities due to their inclusion within the Capital Regional District (CRD) and Metro Vancouver Regional District. The decision to exclude these rural areas from rural programs and funding does not reflect the islands' rural character, geography, land use or capacity to sustain services. Without access to these funding sources, rural island communities find it difficult to sustain community resiliency in the face of social and economic changes and to execute projects that improve community infrastructure.

In 2016, the Union of British Columbia Municipalities passed a resolution asking the Province to officially recognize and classify the three CRD electoral areas as rural communities. The three CRD electoral areas are now eligible for the Rural Dividend Program and I understand Bowen Island has been granted temporary eligibility. However, they remain ineligible for grants from the Island Coastal Economic Trust. We are requesting that the Province of BC make all islands in the Islands Trust Area permanently eligible for the Rural Dividend Program and the Island Coastal Economic Trust, and any other existing or future granting programs intended for rural communities.

The object of the Islands Trust as set out in the *Islands Trust Act* is to preserve and protect the Trust Area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the trust area and of British Columbia generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the government of British Columbia.

.../2

The Honourable John Horgan  
July 11, 2018  
Page 2

We appreciate your consideration of this request. There are many First Nations who have asserted Aboriginal interests in the Trust Area and many who have established harvesting rights. Although we copy First Nations on all correspondence such as this, we have not directly heard their positions on rural funding programs. Given our commitment to establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship with First Nations, we offer the Islands Trust position while being ready to respectfully consider their positions.

Yours sincerely,



Susan Morrison  
Acting Chair, Islands Trust Council  
[smorrison@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:smorrison@islandstrust.bc.ca)

cc: The Honourable Selina Robinson, Minister of  
Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Islands Trust Area MLAs  
Island Coastal Economic Trust Board of Directors  
Union of British Columbia Municipalities Executive  
Capital Regional District Board  
Bowen Island Municipal Council  
Cowichan Tribes  
Esquimalt First Nation  
Halalt First Nation  
Homalco First Nation  
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group  
K'omoks First Nation  
Klahoose First Nation  
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society  
Lake Cowichan First Nation  
Lyackson First Nation  
Malahat Nation  
Musqueam First Nation  
Nanwakolas Council  
Pauquachin First Nation  
Penelakut Tribe  
Qualicum First Nation  
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation  
Semiahmoo First Nation  
Shíshálh (Sechelt) First Nation  
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation  
Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) First Nation  
Songhees First Nation  
Squamish First Nation  
Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation  
Te'mexw Treaty Association  
Tla'amin (Sliammon) First Nation  
T'Sou-ke (Sooke) First Nation  
Tsartlip First Nation  
Tsawout First Nation  
Tsawwassen First Nation  
Tseil-Waututh (Burrard Inlet) First Nation  
Tseycum First Nation  
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge First Nation)  
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River First Nation)  
Islands Trust Council  
Islands Trust website



July 30, 2018

Ref: 238236

His Worship Mayor Steve Price, Chair  
Capital Regional District  
625 Fisgard St  
Victoria BC V8W 2S6

Dear Chair Price:

Thank you for your letter of June 19, 2018, regarding the reclassification of the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring and Gulf Islands Electoral areas as rural communities. I appreciate that the Capital Regional District (CRD) is looking for an update on any additional measures being taken.

The Province of British Columbia is committed to meeting the unique needs of small, rural and remote communities. As such, my meeting with Wayne McIntyre, Mike Hicks and Robert Lapham was a valuable opportunity to hear their perspectives on how senior government grant programs may exclude certain communities. During our meeting, concerns were brought forward regarding their access to the Rural Dividend Program (RDP), the Island Coastal Economic Trust (ICET) and the Community Futures program.

It is important to note that these programs are not under the responsibility of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The RDP is under the responsibility of the Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development. The ICET is under the responsibility of the Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology and is governed by an independent board. And lastly, Community Futures is a federal program which promotes socio-economic development across Canada and provides funds to community societies.

Nevertheless, our discussions remained productive and the Ministry determined that the three rural areas within the CRD, which have been previously considered urban for purposes of eligibility, in fact have all the characteristics of rural areas. I brought this assessment forward to both of my provincial colleagues as well as Minister Ralston's federal counterpart, the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development. My Deputy Minister, Jacqueline Dawes, also encouraged her colleagues across government that in the design of any future funding programs, to recognize that these electoral areas have rural development challenges in providing services and developing their economies.

.../2

His Worship Mayor Steve Price, Chair  
Page 2

You may be pleased to know that the RDP was amended and communities within the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island and the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral areas are eligible to apply for funding. On the other hand, the boundaries of the ICET are defined in legislation and regulation. Any changes would need to consider the views of the Trust Board and other stakeholders. I encourage you to contact Minister Ralston if you have not already done so.

As you are likely aware, the Province signed an integrated bilateral agreement with the federal government for the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). The ICIP will provide opportunities for communities to apply for new project funding, a valuable tool which will support long-term economic growth, the advancement of sustainable communities, and continued movement to a low carbon, green economy.

The ICIP includes the Rural and Northern Communities Stream which is dedicated to supporting British Columbia's rural communities and their wide-range of infrastructure priorities. Information regarding this program will be made available later this year. If you have any questions, I encourage you to contact the Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Branch by telephone at: 250 387-4060, or by email at: [infra@gov.bc.ca](mailto:infra@gov.bc.ca).

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Selina Robinson  
Minister

pc: Honourable John Horgan, Premier  
Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations  
and Rural Development  
Honourable Bruce Ralston, Minister of Jobs, Trade and Technology  
Mike Hicks, Director, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area  
Wayne McIntyre, Director, Salt Spring Island Electoral Area  
David Howe, Director, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area  
Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, Capital Regional District

**From:** [Minister of ISED - Ministre de ISDE \(IC\)](#)  
**To:** [Tianna Wong](#)  
**Cc:** [Schooley, Susan \(WD/DEO\)](#)  
**Subject:** Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development  
**Date:** Thursday, August 30, 2018 1:07:58 PM

---

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Thank you for your correspondence of August 2, 2018, sharing the Electoral Area Services Committee resolution requesting that Salt Spring Island, the Southern Gulf Islands, and Juan de Fuca be designated as eligible for Community Futures (CF) funding.

The Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that all Canadians can benefit from a growing economy, including those in rural and remote communities. I recognize that economic activity in these regions is important and that access to CF programming has been a longstanding concern. I understand that officials from Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) are exploring solutions to this complex issue with Islands Trust officials. I am encouraging my officials to continue this work to help determine what course of action may be feasible.

WD offers a range of economic development programs and services that are inclusive of all communities in the West—including Salt Spring Island, the Southern Gulf Islands, and Juan de Fuca—many of which have recently benefitted from community infrastructure initiatives such as the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program. Furthermore, these communities are eligible for the Western Diversification Program (WDP), WD's core funding program. The WDP welcomes project proposals from organizations that promote economic growth in response to changing and challenging economic circumstances in their communities. Eligibility is not based on a community's rural or urban classification; rather, proposals are evaluated on the potential for the project to contribute to the community's economic development.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, I invite you to contact Ms. Susan Schooley, Manager of Business Development and Trade in WD's British Columbia regional office, by telephone at 604-366-4182 or by email at [susan.schooley@canada.ca](mailto:susan.schooley@canada.ca).

I appreciate your bringing this important issue to my attention. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Navdeep Bains, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: Ms. Susan Schooley