

Capital Regional District

625 Fisgard Street, PO Box 1000, Victoria, BC, Canada V8W 2S6 T: 250.360.3000 www.crd.bc.ca

February 22, 2021

File: 0550-01

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
Attention: Resolutions Coordinator
Local Government House
525 Government Street
Victoria, BC V8V 0A8
Via email: avicc@ubcm.ca

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: 2021 AVICC RESOLUTION - COVID SAFE RESTART GRANT INEQUITY FOR ELECTORAL AREAS

At the February 10, 2021 Capital Regional District (CRD) Board meeting, the Board of Directors adopted the attached resolution to submit for consideration at the 2021 AVICC Convention.

Should you require further information or have any questions, please contact Marlene Lagoa at 250-360-3127 or by email at mlagoa@crd.bc.ca.

Yours truly,

Kristen Morley.

General Manager, Corporate Services

Corporate Officer

Attachments: (2)

Certified Resolution

Background Information



RESOLUTION

AVICC Resolution: COVID Safe Restart Grant Inequity for Electoral Areas

I, Kristen Morley, Corporate Officer for the Capital Regional District, hereby certify that the following is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Capital Regional District Board at its Meeting held on February, 10, 2021 regarding a resolution to be submitted for consideration at the 2021 AVICC Convention.

That the following resolution be submitted to AVICC:

WHEREAS the Capital Regional District, received a funding allocation of \$1.421M under the Safe Restart grant based on two per capita amounts formulae: \$8.13 for rural populations and \$3.10 for all populations, and a flat funding amount, and

WHEREAS the Safe Restart program takes into account the unique structure of regional districts as a service provider, with differing per capita amounts, there is a significant disparity between the per capita allocation for Electoral Areas versus local municipalities with a similar population.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that AVICC and UBCM advocate to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to provide more equitable Safe Restart Grant funding to Regional District Electoral Areas in comparison to the funding provided to local municipalities.

Dated this 22nd day of February 2021.

Kristen Morley Corporate Officer



BRIEFING NOTE WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2021

SUBJECT AVICC RESOLUTION: COVID SAFE RESTART GRANT INEQUITY FOR ELECTORAL AREAS (Directors Holman & Howe)

ISSUE SUMMARY

The adjusted COVID Safe Restart per capita amount provided to municipalities is greater than the per capita amount provided to electoral areas.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD), as a regional district, received an allocation of \$1.421M under the grant. The provincial formulae was based on two per capita amounts: \$8.13 for rural populations and \$3.10 for all populations (including rural), and a flat funding amount. While the grant program takes into account the unique structure of regional districts as a service provider, with differing per capita amounts, the per capita allocation for Electoral Areas versus local municipalities is vast. The adjusted per capita amount provided to municipalities resulted in a much higher allocation for larger municipalities when compared to regional districts and rural populations. The ceiling limit also resulted in a reduced per capita rate for the regional population.

As a local service provider in the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island, and Southern Gulf Islands EA, the communities were significantly impacted by COVID-19. Rural areas, such as EA and First Nations, with smaller populations received a smaller amount which has impacted their restart and recovery efforts for local government operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

Whereas the Capital Regional District, received a funding allocation of \$1.421M under the Safe Restart grant based on two per capita amounts formulae: \$8.13 for rural populations and \$3.10 for all populations, and a flat funding amount.

And whereas, the Safe Restart program takes into account the unique structure of regional districts as a service provider, with differing per capita amounts, there is a significant disparity between the per capita allocation for Electoral Areas versus local municipalities with a similar population.

Therefore be it resolved that AVICC and UBCM advocate to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to provide additional Safe Restart Grant funding to Regional District Electoral Areas to equal the funding provided to local municipalities.

CONTACT

Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer

Capital Regional District | Email: rlapham@crd.bc.ca | Tel: (250) 360-3124

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: December 2, 2020 Staff Report: COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local

Government

Appendix B: Letter dated January 14, 2021 from Colin Plant, Chair, CRD Board



REPORT TO GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE **MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 02, 2020**

SUBJECT **COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide recommendations on the allocation of the grant received by the Capital Regional District (CRD) from the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments.

BACKGROUND

In September 2020, the Province announced joint Provincial and Federal funding to support local government operations as part of BC's Economic Recovery Plan. This plan identified a number of initiatives to help support communities and local governments in responding to COVID-19, including \$540 million summarized below.

The Safe Restart Funding for Local Governments includes:

- 1. Development Services: \$15 million
 - i. for work identified through Development Approvals Process Review
 - ii. application based
 - iii. details expected to be released before year end
- 2. Strengthening Communities: \$100 million
 - i. addressing the needs of vulnerable populations
 - ii. application based
 - iii. details expected to be released before year end
- 3. COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments: \$425 million
 - i. for local government operations impacted by COVID-19

This staff report details the CRD's portion of the \$425 million COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments, which totals \$1.4 million. The allocation letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is provided in Appendix A, which further outlines the Province's formula, eligible expenses, and reporting requirements. The funding is unconditional and was received on November 19, 2020, Appendix B details grant allocations for other Regional Districts (RD) and Municipalities across the Province.

Eligible Expenses

The Province provided the following eligible expense categories for the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant:

- 1. Addressing revenue shortfalls;
- 2. Facility reopening and operating costs;
- 3. Emergency planning and response costs;
- 4. Bylaw enforcement and protective services like fire protection and police;
- 5. Computer and other electronic technology costs (to improve interconnectivity and virtual communications):

- 6. Services for vulnerable persons (i.e., persons living with disabilities, mental illness or addictions, persons experiencing homelessness or other vulnerabilities); and
- 7. Other related costs.

Program Stipulations

The funding must be fully allocated (not expensed) to services by December 31, 2021. Funding can be used for expenses in 2020 and beyond; there is no deadline by which the funds must be spent. The CRD is required to track and report use of funds. The Province has provided two reporting requirements:

- 1. Include how the funds were allocated as part of the audited financial statements.
- Complete an annual report (as a schedule of the audited financial statements), to include funding received, how the funds were used, and balance of any unspent funds. The CRD will continue to provide annual reporting until funds are fully expended.

Province Funding Allocation Formulae for Regional Districts

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing sets the amount of the grant to each local government using various formulae. The grant for Regional Districts is based on three components: a flat rate of \$300,000, plus two per capita formulae; \$3.10 per capita for total RD population (with a cap of \$900,000) and \$8.13 per capita for total Unincorporated Areas (UA) within the RD. Table 1 summarizes the CRD calculations.

Table 1 - CRD Grant Funding Calculation per Provincial Formulae

Basis of Formula	Population	\$ Per Capita	Funding Formula	Funding Ceiling	Grant
Flat Rate	435				\$300,000
RD Population	412,220	\$3.10 ²	\$1,277,000	\$900,000	\$900,000
UA Population	27,2111	\$8.13	\$221,000		\$221,000
Total Funding					\$1,421,000

UA population includes JDF, SSI, SGI, and First Nation Reserves.

Population was derived through BC Stats and Statistics Canada data from 2018. Appendix C details population for each municipality and unincorporated area within the CRD from the same source data. Following the Provincial formulae, Table 2 summarizes the per capita funding to each unincorporated area.

Table 2 – Unincorporated Area (UA) Grant Funding per Provincial Formula

\$8.13 Per Capita	%	Population	Grant
Juan de Fuca (JDF)	19.5%	5,309	\$43,000
Salt Spring Island (SSI)	41.8%	11,374	\$92,000
Southern Gulf Islands (SGI)	17.9%	4,865	\$40,000
First Nation Reserves	20.8%	5,663	\$46,000
Total UA Funding	100.0%	27,211	\$221,000

² Funding ceiling results in an effective per capita rate of \$2.18 for the RD population.

Refer to Appendix D for the summary of the grant funding distribution to both Regional Services and Local Area Services.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Governance and Finance Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

1. That staff allocate the \$1.4 million CRD COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Government in alignment with the Provincial allocation formulae to Regional Services and Local Area Services as summarized in Appendix D;

2. That the Regional Services allocation be distributed to the Regional Corporate Emergency

Service Budget:

3. That the Local Area Services allocation be apportioned to the respective Electoral Areas where staff will engage EA Directors to determine allocation to specific services.

Alternative 2

The COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments report be referred back to staff with specific amendments.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications - Alternative 1

On March 18, 2020, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) issued an event task number for the COVID-19 pandemic and confirmed funding would be available to local governments for eligible emergency response expenses. Eligible expenditures incurred by the CRD have and will be claimed through EMBC. Reimbursement claims are based on a comprehensive set of guidelines with detailed eligibility requirements. Due to the overwhelming quantity of claims EMBC is processing, it is unknown to what extent or when funds will be reimbursed. The estimated total EMBC claim for the CRD is approximately \$300,000 for 2020 expenses.

Based on initial review and in alignment with eligible categories of the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant, staff recommends Regional Funds be allocated to support CRD's regional emergency management service and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC, which includes support of Electoral Areas). Table 3 below summarizes the estimated 2020 expenses and grant balance to be carried forward into future years.

Table 3 – Grant Allocation for Regional and Sub-Regional Services

Eligibility Category	2020 Estimated Net Impact ¹
Corporate EOC costs	\$302,200
	\$943,800

Excludes EMBC claims of approximately \$300,000.

The 2020 estimated impact is driven by incremental EOC operations and COVID-19 related costs including labour, vehicle and equipment rentals, operating supplies, computer and other

technology costs to enhance interconnectivity and virtual communication, protective equipment and facilities management. Staff will continue to consult with Electoral Area directors on impacts and allocation to specific Local Area services.

CONCLUSION

As part of BC's Economic Recovery Plan, the Province has made a commitment to help local governments and their recovery from the impacts of COVID-19. The CRD is receiving an unconditional grant of \$1.4 million through the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments. The allocation is based on per capita, with differing amounts for the total CRD population and unincorporated population. The allocation of the grant to the specific service is at the discretion of the Board within the eligible parameters set by the province.

RECOMMENDATION

The Governance and Finance Committee recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

 That staff allocate the \$1.4 million CRD COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Government in alignment with the Provincial allocation formulae to Regional Services and Local Area Services as summarized in Appendix D;

2. That the Regional Services allocation be distributed to the Regional Corporate Emergency

Service Budget;

3. That the Local Area Services allocation be apportioned to the respective Electoral Areas where staff will engage EA Directors to determine allocation to specific services.

Submitted by:	Lia Xu, MSc., CPA, CGA, Finance Manager, Local Services
	Nelson Chan, MBA, FCPA, FCMA, Chief Financial Officer
	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Allocation Letter for Safe Restart Funding

Appendix B: Regional and Municipal Allocations for Safe Restart Funding Appendix C: Demographics, Population Estimates, July 1 Capital Region

Appendix D: Summary of the Grant Allocation



November 2, 2020

Ref: 257735

Bob Lapham Chief Administrative Officer Capital Regional District PO Box 1000 Victoria BC V8W 256

Dear Bob Lapham:

The provincial government understands the fiscal impacts that COVID-19 has placed on local service providers. To help address these challenges, in September the Province of British Columbia announced nearly \$2 billion in joint federal/provincial spending, including: \$540 million for local governments, \$418 million for community infrastructure, and \$1 billion for transit, TransLink and ferries.

The \$540 million for local governments was further divided into three funding streams. Two streams ("Development Services" for \$15 million and "Strengthening Communities" for \$100 million) will be application-based funding. More information on these funding streams will be forthcoming.

The third stream will provide direct grants to local governments. This funding stream is called the "COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Governments" and will provide up to \$425 million for local operations impacted by COVID-19. This funding will support local governments as they deal with increased operating costs and lower revenue due to COVID-19. It will also ensure local governments can continue to deliver the services people depend on in their communities. Eligible costs will include:

- addressing revenues shortfalls;
- facility reopening and operating costs;
- emergency planning and response costs;
- bylaw enforcement and protective services like fire protection and police;
- computer and other electronic technology costs (to improve interconnectivity and virtual communications);
- services for vulnerable persons (e.g. persons living with disabilities, mental illness or addictions, persons experiencing homelessness or other vulnerabilities); and
- other related costs.

Bob Lapham Page 2

As you may recall, during the early months of COVID-19, the provincial government required all municipalities to fully remit requisitions to regional districts by August 1, 2020, despite any shortfalls in municipal tax collection. This was designed to ensure regional district requisitions were kept whole in 2020. Because of this earlier action, the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments will place a funding emphasis on municipalities. However, there is still considerable funding under this grant program for regional districts.

I am pleased to advise you that **Capital** is the recipient of a \$1,421,000 grant under the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant for Local Governments. This amount will be directly transferred to your regional district in the coming days.

Under section 36 of the Local Government Grants Regulation, the amount of the grant to each local government is set by Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. The determination of this amount was based on a formula that applies to all regional districts. The funding formula for regional districts is based on three components: a flat funding amount plus two per capita amounts. The flat amount will be \$300,000 to each regional district.

The first per capita amount will be based on the total regional district population (rural and municipal). This will provide \$3.10 per person. There will be a funding limit on this first per capita amount. The limit is \$1.8 million for Metro Vancouver and \$900,000 for all other regional districts. The higher limit for Metro Vancouver is in recognition of their larger population. The overall purpose of these limits is to ensure that the very largest regional districts do not receive a disproportionate share of funding compared to smaller and mid-sized regional districts.

The second per capita amount will be based on the rural population of a regional district (i.e. the population outside the boundaries of an incorporated municipality). This second per capita amount will provide \$8.13 per rural population. This second per capita amount is in recognition of the additional burden on regional districts because they are the primary local service provider in rural parts of British Columbia.

This overall formula is designed to ensure that larger regional districts receive more money than smaller ones, but that smaller and rural regional districts receive higher per capita funding than larger ones. This is in recognition that small regional districts often lack a diverse revenue base and the economies-of-scale to easily restart their operations.

An example of the funding formula (for a regional district of 65,000 people) is provided as an attachment to this letter. If you wish, you can apply this formula to your 2018 total population of 412,220 and rural population of 27,211 to determine your total funding amount. 2018 population data was used because it is the last year in which we have complete financial and demographic data for each regional district.

Before December 31, 2021, (a little over a year from this letter) the regional board must fully allocate the grant funds to the appropriate services. This allocation will be entirely at the discretion of the board. Ministry staff are available to assist regional district staff should they have any questions on allocation.

To ensure optimal transparency on the use of funds, there are two reporting requirements for regional districts. First, as part of the 2021 audited financial statements, the regional district must provide a report on how the funds were allocated to various regional and local services.

The **second** reporting requirement is an annual report on how the grant funds were spent in that year. This will be a schedule to your audited financial statements, under section 377 of the Local Government Act. The schedule will include the amount of funding received, the use of those funds, and the year-end balance of unused funds. This report may be consolidated for the entire regional district, rather than reporting on a service-by-service level. Your regional district must continue to annually report on the use of grant money until the funds are fully drawn down.

If you have questions or comments regarding this letter, please feel free to contact Jennifer Richardson, Grants Analyst, Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Branch, by email at: Jennifer.Richardson@gov.bc.ca, or by phone at: 778-698-3243.

The provincial government welcomes this opportunity to support COVID-19 restart and recovery throughout British Columbia. We believe that this funding will contribute to the long-term recovery of local governments who are both critical service providers and crucial drivers in the British Columbia economy.

Sincerely,

Kaye Krishna Deputy Minister

Attachment

pc: Jennifer Richardson, Grants Analyst, Local Government Infrastructure and Finance Branch Nelson Chan, Chief Financial Officer, Capital Regional District

Attachment 1: Example Calculation for a Regional District with 65,000 People

Rockridge Regional District

Variables:

A GIIGDIC3:				
*		Per Capital	Funding	Flat Funding
	Population	Amount	Limit	Amount
Total RD	65,000	\$3.10	\$900,000	n/a
Rural Part of RD	20,000	\$8.13	n/a	n/a
Other	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$300,000

Calculation:

	Α	В	C=AxB	D	E=min(C or D)
		Per Capital	Pop-Based		
Cost Item	Population	Amount	Funding	Ceiling	Funding
Total Population	65,000	\$3.10	201,500	900,000	201,500
Rural Population	20,000	\$8.13	162,600	n/a	162,600
Flat Amount					300,000

TOTAL

664,100

Funding is based on a flat amount (\$300,000) plus two per capita amounts.

One per capita amount is based on total RD population times \$3.10 per person. This first per capita amount is subject to a funding ceiling of \$0.9M (or \$1.8M for Metro). In the above example, this amount equals \$201,500.

The second per capital amount is based on the rural population (i.e. outside municipal boundaries) times \$8.13 per person. In the above example, this equals \$162,600.

The total funding is the sum of these three amounts. In the above example, this equals \$664,100.

The RD population data is for 2018 (from BC Stats as at Oct 1, 2020) https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates
"Municipal and sub-provincial areas population, 2011 to 2019.xls"

Summary of Regional District Allocations: COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant

Regional Districts	Total Funding
Alberni-Clayoquot	485,000
Bulkley-Nechako	583,000
Capital	1,421,000
Cariboo	837,000
Central Coast	340,000
Central Kootenay	760,000
Central Okanagan	1,107,000
Columbia Shuswap	645,000
Comox Valley	723,000
Cowichan Valley	903,000
East Kootenay	641,000
Fraser Valley	1,362,000
Fraser-Fort George	747,000
Kitimat-Stikine	559,000
Kootenay Boundary	489,000
Metro Vancouver	2,325,000
Mount Waddington	367,000
Nanaimo	1,169,000
North Coast	390,000
North Okanagan	741,000
Okanagan-Similkameen	773,000
Peace River	700,000
Qathet	424,000
Squamish-Lillooet	502,000
Strathcona	539,000
Sunshine Coast	521,000
Thompson-Nicola	947,000

Demographics





	2011 Pop'n Estimate	2016 Pop'n Estimate	2017 Pop'n Estimate	2018 Pop'n Estimate	2019 Pop'n Estimate	2020 Pop'n Estimate	% Growth 16-18
	/ 4 / 4 /	47.404	47.700	40.044	10.000		3.6%
Central Saanich	16,134			18,011	18,089		
Colwood	16,440	17,665	17,941	18,321	18,867		6.8%
Esquimalt	16,594	18,533	18,469	18,758	18,716		1.0%
Highlands	2,167	2,320	2,391	2,437	2,481		6.9%
Langford	30,156	37,234	39,002	40,557	42,653		14.6%
Metchosin	4,859	4,894	4,989	5,117	5,168	+	5.6%
North Saanich	11,195		11,618	11,745	11,876		2.3%
Oak Bay	18,164	,		18,564	18,568		-0.5%
Saanich	111,818		120,258	121,055	122,173		2.5%
Sidney	11,252		12,097	12,172	12,235		2.0%
Sooke	11,702		14,013	14,300	14,657		7.7%
Victoria	82,348			92,689	94,005		4.3%
View Royal	9,568			11,283	11,567		6.5%
Unincorporated Areas	25,220	· ·		27,211	27,456		4.2%
Juan De Fuca E.A.	4,536			5,309	5,363		5.9%
Salt Spring Is. E.A.	10,345				11,592		6.5%
Southern Gulf Is. E.A.	4,869				4,888		1.1%
First Nation Reserves	5,470				· ·		0.8%
CAPITAL REGION	367,617	400,562			418,511		4.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 17-10-0142-01 and 17-10-0139-01

Factsheet Updated: Nov 2020



Summary of Municipal Allocations: COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant

Municipalities	Total Funding
100 Mile House	752,000
Abbotsford	8,338,000
Alert Bay	315,000
Anmore	882,000
Armstrong	1,608,000
Ashcroft	659,000
	730,000
Barriere	380,000
Belcarra	
Bowen Island	1,273,000
Bumaby	9,827,000
Burns Lake	732,000
Cache Creek	461,000
Campbell River	4,618,000
Canal Flats	381,000
Castlegar	2,184,000
Central Saanich	3,455,000
Chase	879,000
Chetwynd	955,000
Chilliwack	6,488,000
Clearwater	894,000
Clinton	373,000
Coldstream	2,623,000
Colwood	3,476,000
Comox	3,067,000
Coquitlam	8,293,000
Courtenay	4,149,000
Cranbrook	3,765,000
Creston	1,648,000
Cumberland	1,312,000
Dawson Creek	2,793,000
Delta	7,059,000
Duncan	1,570,000
Elkford	938,000
Enderby	1,062,000
Esquimalt	3,538,000
Fernie	1,597,000
Fort St. James	666,000
Fort St. John	3,778,000
Fraser Lake	485,000
Fruitvale	787,000
Gibsons	1,512,000
	557,000
Gold River	1,263,000
Golden	1,359,000
Grand Forks	264,000
Granisle	
Greenwood	381,000
Harrison Hot Springs	675,000
Hazelton	268,000
Highlands	897,000
Норе	1,833,000
Houston	1,066,000
Hudson's Hope	499,000
Invermere	1,181,000
Jumbo Glacier	

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	Port Hardy	1,376,000
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Municipalities	Total Funding
Port Moody	4,647,000
Pouce Coupe	426,000
Powell River	2,928,000
Prince George	6,110,000
Prince Rupert	2,799,000
Princeton	1,013,000
Qualicum Beach	2,359,000
Queen Charlotte	435,000
Quesnel	2,503,000
Radium Hot Springs	459,000
Revelstoke	2,105,000
Richmond	9,331,000
Rossland	1,257,000
Saanich	7,453,000
Salmo	533,000
Salmon Arm	3,598,000
Sayward	268,000
Sechelt	2,563,000
Sechelt (IG)	387,000
Sicamous	927,000
Sidney	2,758,000
Silverton	231,000
Siocan	262,000
Smithers	1,656,000
Sooke	2,981,000
Spallumcheen	1,604,000
Sparwood	1,282,000
Squamish	3,760,000
Stewart	366,000
Summerland	2,724,000
Sun Peaks	387,000
Surrey	14,769,000
Tahsis	249,000
Taylor	644,000
Telkwa	602,000
Тептасе	2,728,000
Tofino	822,000
Trail	2,115,000
Tumbler Ridge	827,000
Ucluelet	764,000
Valemount	501,000
Vancouver	16,371,000
Vanderhoof	1,438,000
Vernon	4,997,000
Victoria	6,522,000
View Royal	2,613,000
Warfield	710,000
Wells	241,000
West Kelowna	4,602,000
West Vancouver	5,068,000
Whistler	2,685,000
White Rock	3,769,000
Williams Lake	2,618,000
Zeballos	200,000
- Lenalius	200,000

Appendix D: Summary of the Grant Allocation

Total Funding	Allocated Funding
Regional District Services	\$1,200,000
First Nation Services	\$46,000
Allocation for Regional Services	\$1,246,000
Juan de Fuca Services	\$43,000
Salt Spring Island Services	\$92,000
Southern Gulf Islands Services	\$40,000
Allocation for Local Area Services	\$175,000
Total COVID-19 Safe Restart Grant	\$1,421,000



Executive Office 625 Fisgard Street, PO Box 1000 Victoria, BC, V8W2S T: 250,360,3125 F: 250,360,3130 www.crd.bc.ca

January 14, 2021

File: 1850-20

The Honourable John Horgan
Premier, Province of British Columbia
Room 156 Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
Via email: premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Premier:

RE: CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT: SAFE RESTART GRANTS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the December 9, 2020 meeting of the Capital Regional District (CRD), members of the CRD Board passed a motion recommending that the CRD Board Chair, write and meet with the Premier and Minister responsible to advocate for additional funding for the COVID-19 Safe Restart Grants for Local Government for Electoral Areas (EA) and First Nations.

The CRD, as a regional district, received an allocation of \$1.421M under the grant. The provincial formulae was based on two per capita amounts: \$8.13 for rural populations and \$3.10 for all populations (including rural), and a flat funding amount. While the grant program takes into account the unique structure of regional districts as a service provider, with differing per capita amounts, the per capita allocation for EA versus local municipalities is vast. The adjusted per capita amount provided to municipalities resulted in a much higher allocation for larger municipalities when compared to regional districts and rural populations. The ceiling limit also resulted in a reduced per capita rate for the regional population.

As a local service provider in the Juan de Fuca, Salt Spring Island, and Southern Gulf Islands EA, the communities were significantly impacted by COVID-19. We recognize that regional districts were kept whole due to tax requisitions in 2020, and as such there is a greater emphasis on municipalities. However, rural areas, such as EA and First Nations, with smaller populations received a smaller amount which has impacted their restart and recovery efforts for local government operations.

The CRD Board requests that the province consider providing equal funding to regional districts and municipalities.

Yours sincerely.

Colin Plant

Chair, Capital Regional District Board

cc: · C

CRD Board

Robert Lapham, Chief Administrative Officer, CRD