



Making a difference...together

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March 15, 2021

File: SGI Connectivity Planning

Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada
C.D. Howe Building
235 Queen Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0H5

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: TELUS Application: Universal Broadband Fund – Capital Regional District

We are writing in support of the TELUS application to the Mobile Stream of the Federal Universal Broadband Fund (UBF) for increased cellular service in the Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring Island Electoral Areas.

This initiative will improve existing wireless connectivity in the Capital Regional District (CRD) and will allow us to better serve our community members. It will greatly improve safety by enabling e911 calls and will enable tele-health, and tele-work. Reliable cellular coverage will also provide opportunities for commercial and industrial businesses to operate and develop in an increasingly virtual world.

On March 10, 2021, the CRD Board passed a resolution of support for the TELUS application to the Universal Broadband Fund to improve cellular service in the Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring Island Electoral Areas, on the condition that there is no competition with the Connected Coast grant application.

The CRD has recently completed a community based connectivity strategy for the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area. The plan considers how greater connectivity can advance each island's common goals of sustainable economic development, community health, and resilience. The broadband service provided by fibre optic cable meets CRD's connectivity goals, and while increased cellular service is also needed, it shouldn't be instead of funding for the more comprehensive Connected Coast subsea fibre and last mile proposal previously supported.

We are working to support the long-term sustainable growth of our communities. A key enabler to achieve this goal is the ability to connect government and social service offices, businesses and homes in the CRD to high-speed broadband and cellular networks. The funding assistance from the Universal Broadband Fund for the delivery of improved cellular service is invaluable to the prosperity of the CRD. Without the support of this fund, many communities would not be able to enjoy the level of connectivity that is required to fully participate in society.

Sincerely,

Colin Plant
Chair, Capital Regional District Board

cc: Dave Howe, Director, Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area
Robert Lapham, CAO, Capital Regional District
Kristen Morley, General Manager, Corporate Services, Capital Regional District
Brian Gregg, SitePath Consulting Ltd. briangregg@sitepathconsulting.com
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