



Electoral Area & Municipal Regional District Tax
Director's Committee

MEETING AGENDA

August 17, 2021 – 11:30 am
RDMW Office – 2044 McNeill Road, Port McNeill, BC

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84801739935?pwd=aU51MVFIVy9KNnVrbzBRajdNRTJFZz09>

Page CALL TO ORDER

- 1 **1. Approval of Agenda** – Agenda (August 17, 2021)
- 2-5 **2. Approval of Minutes** – EA & MRDT Committee Minutes (July 20, 2021)
- 3. Reports**
- 6-7 a) Manager of Operations Report (August 12, 2021)
- 8-9 i) Application for Gas Tax-Community Works:
 Woss Water Supply Emergency Generator Power Back Up
- 10-12 b) Administrator's Reports (August 12, 2021)
- i) Application for Gas Tax-Community Works:
 Connected Coast Last Mile Internet Connectivity
- 13-14 ii) 2021 Internet Funding through Gas Tax
- 15 iii) Recreational Funding Donation for Rebuilding Village of Lytton
- 4. Correspondence – None**
- 5. Next Meeting – To be announced**

ADJOURN



Electoral Area Director's & RTAG Committee

MINUTES

July 20, 2021

RDMW Office – 2044 McNeill Road, Port McNeill, BC

CALL TO ORDER: 11:04 am

Attendance:

EA/PA Directors: Chair Andrew Hory, Kevin Cameron (Zoom), Sandra Daniels (Zoom), James Furney, Rod Sherrell

Other Directors: Dennis Buchanan

Staff: Greg Fletcher, Administrator; Patrick Donaghy, Manager of Operations; Nicole McDowell, Recording Secretary

1. Agenda

21-23 It was moved and seconded, that the agenda dated July 20, 2021 be approved. **CARRIED**

2. Minutes

21-24 It was moved and seconded, that the minutes dated June 15, 2021 be adopted. **CARRIED**

3. Reports

a) Arena Manager's Report (July 20, 2021):

i) Gas Tax Application: Trash/Recycling Bear Proof Bins

Also noted:

- *This is a general report on potential for getting trash bins*
- *If using Gas Tax, they must be sponsored by a local service; Coal Harbour Local Community Committee and Woss Residents' Association are sponsoring their bins*
- *Received quotes from two different places, \$16,000 and \$26,400*
 - *It is shipping that costs a fortune; therefore, if we go with shipping to store at Home Hardware (Port Hardy) then they can be purchased for the \$12,000 retail*
 - *We are suggesting to proceed with the \$16,000 quote that includes freight*

- *We always need these bins; regardless whether we buy them through the Parks service or use Gas Tax funds*

Q: Have you had them built in the past?

We didn't have the bins built; we had the foundations built; which became super problematic for shipping because a Hiab was needed to install

Q: Would you sell extras to municipalities?

That is an option; however, we would likely need them in one of our regional parks, so they would be kept in stock; RD Parks service could purchase and put money back into Gas Tax, since they are always needed, and it is often a debate on whether to pack bins in and out.

21-25
GT2021-01 It was moved and seconded, that the Gas Tax Application 2021-01 to purchase six Trash/Recycling Bear Proof Bins, up to \$16,000 be approved. **CARRIED**

21-26 It was moved and seconded, that the Arena Manager's Report be received and filed. **CARRIED**

- b) Administrator's Report Regarding Funding for Broadband Infrastructure (July 20, 2021):
ii) Attachment #1: 2016 Gas Tax Policy

Also noted:

- *Review of Gas Tax Funding policies & applicability to funding Broadband connectivity*
- *In 2014, the Province, through UBCM, amended the Gas Tax Policy:*
 - *They added things like recreation, roads, short line rail, deep sea shipping & Broad band internet*
 - *The committee set specific criteria regarding recreation funding but did not address the other new categories*
 - *Typically, RDs don't have jurisdiction or capacity for these things*
 - *Street Lighting – had previously set aside \$200,000 for conversion to LEDs which is no longer required because of BC Hydro's decision to directly fund this change*
- *In 2019 an agreement was made with Telus to provide last mile fibre optic internet service connections to all Coal Harbour Households with the RDMW investment ensuring connections for sewer, fire, and water local services with a 10% project contribution using gas tax funds*
- *Internet Connectivity has long been an Economic Development priority for the Regional Economic Development service*
 - *Initially (2005-2012) part of the strategy to diversify and support clean IPP power projects connected through the 'smart grid'*
 - *Lobbied & supported fibre optic backbone build out, implemented by Telus from 2012 to 2017*
 - *Focused lobbying helped get last mile service for Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Hyde Creek and Cell phone coverage for Woss*
- *Reviewed report insert "RDMW Communities Internet Connectivity Availability":*
 - *noted that the data was from the carriers for their service plans (maximum rates) and user survey for the actual; currently only fibre based services meet the new standard*

Q- *Can other carriers access the proposed Connected Coast community backbone hubs?*
- *Yes*

- iii) Attachment #2: RDMW 2019-23 Gas Tax Project Funding

Also noted:

- *Updated draft 2019 to 2024 spreadsheet version was presented at meeting:*
 - *Updated to include identified potential Connected Coast last mile projects, Paul Getman's 8 sewer lift station automatic battery backup systems (the prototype was tested during the power failure) and other known projects that were already approved in 2020 and 2021*
 - *It also included possible funding for the extension of the Rotary Trail to Hyde Creek*
- *This report just shows what 'could be done' with Gas Tax funding...even with internet funding included... would be \$8,000 leftover in Gas Tax when current funding agreement ends in 2024*

Q: *How do we go forward?*

- *Other purpose of doing this, is to ensure we do not over extend ourselves ... for example, \$90,000 was allocated to Malcolm Island Recreation back in 2015, but nothing started due to capacity issue*
- *Usually \$10-15,000 in interest ...not shown on this spreadsheet*
- *\$1,022,000 currently in Gas Tax fund including approved projects underway*

Q: *Asset must be owned by a Gas Tax recipient?*

Some sort of ownership stake is indicated and as in the Coal Harbour example this has been satisfied by providing infrastructure needed by a local service. Collectively, any potential revenues arising from this stake could be returned to the Electoral Area Administration service.

Addition to Agenda:

“Last Mile Network Infrastructure Partnering Agreement” (City West and SRD)

- *Document shared with RDMW with permission from SRD*
- *Key line is the cost sharing determination in section 4.3; the agreement would need to be customized to suit the local conditions for all rural; communities that have potential funding partners*

21-27 It was moved and seconded, that an agreement be drafted with Connected Coast to provide Last Mile Fibre Optic Internet Service to the following places: Winter Harbour (Area B), Holberg (Area B), Mahatta River (Area B), Malcolm Island (Area A), and Telegraph Cove (Area D); and that applications be prepared to provide gas tax funding for up to 10% of the network infrastructure costs associated with respective local Last Mile networks

CARRIED

21-28 It was moved and seconded, that the Administrator’s Report be received and filed.

CARRIED

c) Completion Report: GT2020-06 Coal Harbour Waste Water Plant Upgrades

Also noted:

- *Project is complete*
- *With staff shortages, we do not have cost report finalized for today; to be presented next month*

21-29 It was moved and seconded, to accept the Gas Tax Completion Report for GT2020-06 Coal Harbour Waste Water Plant Upgrades, with final numbers to follow next month.

CARRIED

Next Meeting – To be announced

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:01 pm

CERTIFIED CORRECT

SECRETARY

CHAIR

RDMW 2019-23 Gas Tax Project Funding

Starting Balance= \$935,359 est

Estimated Gas Tax funding for Possible projects

Project Category	Other Project Categories addressed	Asset Management Plan in Place for service?	GHG Reduction ?	Service Op Cost Savings?	Funded in 2018, not started	Estimated Gas Tax funding for Possible projects					5 year Totals	
						2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
Community Energy Systems											220000	
Area A: Other Service Buildings	REC		Y	Y		40000	40000	40000	20000		140000	
Area B: Other Service Buildings	REC		Y	Y		20000		10000			30000	
Area C: Other Service Buildings	REC		Y	Y			10000				10000	
Area D: Rec Service Building	REC		Y	Y		30000	10000				40000	
Disaster Mitigation											85000	
HC Fire	CES		Y	Y	77000						0	
CH Fire	CES		Y	Y		25000					25000	
Sointula Fire	CES		Y	Y		25000					25000	
Woss Fire	CES		Y	Y		25000					25000	
Local ESS & other support			N	N				10000			10000	
Solid Waste											280000	
"A" MI Solid Waste			Y	Y			10000		10000		20000	
"B" Quatsino SW			Y	Y		25000			10000		35000	
"B" WH Solid Waste			Y	Y			10000				10000	
"B" CH Solid Waste			Y	Y			10000		50000	50000	110000	
"C" SW (7Mile @50%)			Y	Y			10000	50000		25000	85000	
"D" Woss Solid Waste			Y	Y			10000		10000		20000	
Sewer & Water Infrastructure											215000	
CH Sewer	SW, CES	Y	Y	Y		20000			20000		40000	
CH Water	CES	Y	Y	Y		5000	30000	20000	10000		65000	
MI Sewer	SW, CES		Y	Y		5000		20000			25000	
HC Sewer	SW, CES		Y	Y		5000	10000		10000		25000	
Woss Water	CES		Y	Y		5000					5000	
Woss Sewer	SW, CES		Y	Y		5000			50000		55000	
Transit & Transportation											30000	
Community Bus Shelters			Y	N		20000					20000	
Tcove Road	RCH		N	Y				10000			10000	
Recreation,Culture & Heritage											445000	
Area A			N	N	90000	40000	30000	30000	30000	30000	160000	
Area B			N	N	45000	10000	50000				60000	
Area C			N	N				20000			20000	
Area D			N	N		20000	50000	30000			100000	
Other (50%, incl Mt Cain)	CES, SW, S&W		Y	Y		5000		50000		50000	105000	
						212000	330000	280000	290000	220000	155000	1275000
Estimated New Revenue							215000	215000	215000	215000	215000	
Balance Forward						\$723,359	\$608,359	\$543,359	\$468,359	\$463,359	\$523,359	

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

REPORT

TO: Electoral Directors Committee

FILE NO.

FROM: Patrick Donaghy, Operations Manager

SUBJECT: Manager of Operations Report

Date: August 12, 2021

The italicized contents of this report were presented to the Woss Resident's Association on August 11, 2021 and was endorsed through an open vote to be presented to the Electoral Directors Committee for its August 17th meeting.

The wildfire event on July 9, 2021 with its near proximity to the community of Woss and the related power loss was a warning about the need of a reliable water supply for the protection and comfort to the residents of Woss. At the Woss Residents Association (WRA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) on July 12, 2021, members passed a resolution requesting that the Manager of Operations research the opportunities and costs for an emergency back up generator to ensure the water system could continue to serve the community during power outages in as little time as possible. The following report is the response to that request.

Woss is currently serviced by two wells (Well #1 and Well #2) of which Well #2 is served by a Berkeley Model 7T30-350 Pump which is powered by 30 Hp electric motor and provides approximately 375 gallons per minute. Well #1's pump is powered by a 20 Hp motor and can provide 200 gpm but is normally idle and needs to be purged of accumulated contaminants in the well prior to being allowed to feed into the Woss distribution network for public health considerations. Given initial power requirements to start the electric motors, Well #1 and Well #2 need a generator that can provide 25 KW and 50 KW respectively, based on the guidance provided by Duncan Electric, the RDMW's long-term service provider.

At the AGM, it was recommended by a knowledgeable member of the audience that should an emergency generator be purchased, the RDMW should favour one fueled by propane due to the fuel's long-term stability as opposed to gas or diesel alternatives.

Subsequent assessment of considerations related to an emergency backup generator include the following:

- *The ability to operate either well would provide greater resiliency during an emergency as water could be sourced even if one of the submersible pumps were to fail.*
- *To be able to operate either pump, a minimum 50 kw generator would be required, and the pump would need to be mobile or wiring between both pump locations would need to be installed*
- *The RDMW is in the initial stages of developing an extensive network of back up power systems based on lithium batteries that while not appropriate to meet the needs of serving well pump station, could be recharged by a generator.*
 - *In the case of Woss, one potential use for the backup battery would be for the community hall where the heat pump could support the community during power outages as a warming center in the winter and a cooling center during "heat dome" incidents.*
- *A mobile generator could also strengthen intercommunity mutual aid on the North Island, whereby a community's emergency resources that are not being used can be used to assist another community in need.*
 - *To be able to support other communities, the generator would need to follow a 'to be determined' standard for connections*
- *An emergency generator would need to be properly housed in a structure that was insulated, dry and secure, so it could be relied upon to function when required*
- *Accessing fuel for the generator for prolonged operating times would be easier if diesel based given abundance of users.*

- *This fueling challenge could be mitigated with maintaining sufficient propane stores to meet a targeted operating period. Given propane's storage stability, stock piling should not be a challenge*
- *If the emergency generator could be selected to meet multiple considerations beyond the base function of powering a single well, the justification for funding, via the Gas Tax, can be more likely made reducing the financial cost implications for Woss*
- *Environmentally, propane generators produce less air emissions, which makes them easier to fund through many grant sources. Diesel generators according to sum reviews can last longer with lower maintenance due to the lower operating temperatures.*

Based on the input provided at the WRA AGM, and additional considerations listed above, the Manager of Operations identified the optimal scenario to meet the needs of Woss as follows:

- *A propane fuelled generator with a +50-kw capacity that is mounted on a trailer to allow for the provision of electricity in multiple locations.*

Given this targeted out come, a recommended solution has been identified in a used 60 kw 3 phase generator that is mounted on a trailer that can power both Well #1 and Well #2 for a cost of approximately \$35,000 from Duncan Electric. The generator can be delivered in a couple of weeks and the supplier is one that the RDMW has had a long continuous relationship with track record of success relating to the Coal Harbour and Sointula sewer services. Duncan Electric has the capacity to customize the genset to meet specific needs related to emergency support for the RDMW. A review of propane generators on the internet show that the Duncan Electric proposal is price comparable, has a far quicker delivery time, and will be sourced from a Vancouver Island supplier with a strong existing relationship to the RDMW.

Should the genset be accessible for mutual aid support to other communities, if Woss is not requiring its use, the generator could be eligible for Gas Tax funding.

Additional costs that would need to be incurred which could be covered by Gas Tax partially or in total include the following:

- *Electrician to make wiring upgrades to Well #1 and Well #2* Est. \$5,000
- *Heated and insulated storage shed. This structure should be built to also meet existing shortfalls for storing equipment in Woss.* Est. To Be Determined
- *Purchase of a large propane tank would allow for extended usage:*
 - *500-gallon tank costs approximately \$4,400 and would power the 60-kw generator for an estimated 150 hrs*
 - *420 lb tank would cost approximately \$1,300 with additional tanks costing approximately \$1025. A 420 lb tank would last 30 hrs with a 60-kw generator.*
- *Additional cost maybe incurred if opportunities are realized to increase the utility of the generator following additional analysis.*

In conclusion, the WRA should review the finding of this report and contact the Manager of Operations, if there are any questions regarding this report, or on related matters.

If the Committee has any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

Patrick Donaghy PEng, MSc
 Manager of Operations



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

2044 McNeill Road, P.O. Box 729, Port McNeill, B.C. V0N 2R0

Phone: 250-956-3161 or 250-956-3301 fax: 250-956-3232

APPLICATION FOR GAS TAX-COMMUNITY WORKS

NAME OF APPLICATION: Woss Water Supply Emergency Generator Power Back Up

LOCATION AND ADDRESS OF PROPOSAL:

COMMUNITY Principally Woss but also RDMW as a whole **IN ELECTORAL ARE.** **D**

If **REGIONAL** **Regional Wide Service** or **List Impacted Communities and areas**

SERVICE: Woss Water Service

RDMW Land Tenure:

TYPE OF APPLICATION:

Local Roads/Bridges Public Transit Drinking Water Wastewater Solid Waste
Community Energy Systems Recreational Infrastructure Cultural Infrastructure Tourism Infrastructure
 Disaster Mitigation Capacity Building

NEW DEAL FUNDING REQUIRED Project Budget Attached Community Support Attached

Factoring extra allowances prudent in the current uncertain conditions, \$65,000 is being requested from Gas Tax with any residuals being returned.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The community of Woss has two wells serving its water system that are both dependent upon electricity to access the aquifer that is the sole water source. Power outages usually result in the community cistern being emptied after a day of normal use. When the water runs out, drinking water must be trucked in and the water needed for fire suppression is absent from community hydrants.

After consultations with the residents of Woss, it has been determined that the best solution to serving the community is to purchase a mobile genset, preferably fueled by propane as opposed to diesel. Given the primary well in Woss requires a 3 phase genset with +50 kw capacity, the Manager of Operations has identified a used option that meets all requirements from a supplier with a long history of providing effective reliable service.

The portable genset will also be available for mutual aid to other North Island communities, should Woss not require its services while other communities do. This model of mutual support between North Island communities has been used in previous emergencies where Woss was the beneficiary.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total Price
60 kw 3 phase propane powered genset	1	\$35,000	\$35,000
Electrical Contractor			\$5,000
500-gallon propane tank	1	\$5,000	\$5,000
Storage structure for genset	1		\$20,000
		Sub Total	\$65,000

COMMUNITY WORKS OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED BY PROPOSAL:

Better performance of operations reduces costs and fosters greater reinvestment in the infrastructure; plus, back up system will create greater community resiliency when dealing with power outages.

TEST OF INCREMENTALITY *This project could not have been considered if New Deal funds were not available.*

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES (expected benefits)

The lithium battery array system will require less usage of portable generator during outages, which will make the generator more available for other needs mitigating the negative impact to residents during power failures.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	Staff Lead: Patrick Donaghy	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy to Finance
DATE RECEIVED: August 11, 2021		PROJECT NUMBER:
CONSIDERED BY NEW DEAL COMMITTEE ON: August 17, 2021		MOTION NUMBERS:
DECISION <input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Approved subject to: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Not Approved		
BUDGETED PROJECT COST: \$65,000		
NEW DEAL APPROVED FUNDING: \$		PROJECT CERTIFIED COMPLETED: _____
ACTUAL PROJECT COST: \$		DATE CONFIRMATION PROVIDED TO UBCM: _____



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

REPORT

TO: Electoral Area Directors

FROM: Greg Fletcher, Administrator

SUBJECT: **Connected Coast Last Mile Internet Connectivity**

DATE: August 12, 2021

As per Direction from Chair Hory, reports from the June and July EA meetings are being brought back for reconsideration with respect for continuing using gas tax funding to support high speed internet capacity for our rural communities. With the apparent majority of rural directors having now indicated support for the continued unitary approach for having the Electoral Area Administration Service continue responsibility for accountability for utilizing gas tax funds on behalf of rural community services. This report has been amended to reflect that approach while the attached report from July and earlier correspondence from Connected Coast will provide background information. The combined gas tax project application and associated agreement with Connected Coast service partner, CityWest, ensures that the funding process and associated agreement can be addressed in the open meeting.

The current gas tax application and the associated agreement are part of the second 'last mile' phase of the SRD's Connected Coast project which is providing a community-based fibre optic network connected by undersea cables. At this stage, Connected Coast/Citywest has obtained cost estimates for funding last mile service to approximately 700 households in five RDMW rural communities and have requested that the RDMW provide 10% of the estimated cost. Given that funding of 'broadband connectivity' is an eligible gas tax category and that the funding is on behalf of rural communities, the request has been forwarded to the Electoral Area Directors Committee.

Connected Coast is still on target to start work on the fibre optic backbone this month, with the first last mile associated services being started by the end of this year. RDMW communities could be served as early as 2022.

An associated gas tax application follows this report, and the draft agreement has been circulated in the Director's Package.

Recommendations:

That gas tax funding for up to \$190,000 be provided to the Rural RDMW/Connected Coast Last Mile Fibre Optic System subject to the following conditions: 1) funding is confirmed from other identified sources; 2) that the associated draft agreement be recommended to the RDMW for consideration to proceed to a final agreement with Citywest.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Fletcher,
Administrator



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

2044 McNeill Road, P.O. Box 729, Port McNeill, B.C. V0N 2R0

Phone: 250-956-3161 or 250-956-3301 fax: 250-956-3232

APPLICATION FOR GAS TAX-COMMUNITY WORKS

NAME OF APPLICATION: Rural RDMW/Connected Coast Last Mile Fibre Optic System

LOCATION AND ADDRESS OF PROPOSAL:

COMMUNITIES Malcolm Island, Telegraph Cove, Winter Harbour, Holberg, Mahatta River

IN ELECTORAL AREAS: A,B,D

SERVICE: Electoral Area Administration **RDMW Land Tenure:** Various utility corridors

TYPE OF APPLICATION:

Local Roads/Bridges Public Transit Drinking Water Wastewater Solid Waste

Community Energy Systems Broadband Connectivity Cultural Infrastructure

Tourism Infrastructure Disaster Mitigation Capacity Building

NEW DEAL FUNDING REQUIRED Project Budget Attached Community Support Attached

Based on a partnership agreement with Connected Coast ISP partner Citywest, the proposed budget of \$190,000 would provide potential last mile high speed (up to gigabit) fibre optic internet service connections to as many as ~700 households in 5 rural communities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

“The Connected Coast Project will provide subsea high speed fibre optic cable to communities along the BC Coast and around Vancouver Island. Once this ‘Backbone’ fibre reaches a community, an Internet Service Provider (ISP) will connect to the fibre cable. They then offer internet service directly to residential and commercial properties, providing a ‘Last Mile’ connection.

An ISP will complete fibre drops to properties by stringing fibre optic cable on existing utility poles or underground from the utility right of way directly to homes. A small access box will be attached to the outside of homes near other utilities. In most cases, the installation of last mile connections will be free of charge while crews are present in the community.

Whether property owners choose to purchase internet service or not, providing permission/approval for a property fibre drop is an investment, adding value and making homes or commercial building more attractive to future buyers and rentals.” (<https://connectedcoast.ca>)

COMMUNITY WORKS OBJECTIVES ADDRESSED BY PROPOSAL:

Rural communities exceeding 10up-50down Canada minimum internet standard.

Highly resilient vital communications links for rural communities served by the Connected Coast undersea fibre optic cable backbone

TEST OF INCREMENTALITY *This project could not have been considered if New Deal funds were not available.*

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES (expected benefits)

Number of Households actually connected to fibre services; actual improved internet performance as compared to baselines established in 2021; improved cellular services; increased employment & education opportunities

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Staff Lead: Pat English

Copy to Finance

DATE RECEIVED: August 11, 2021

PROJECT NUMBER:

CONSIDERED BY NEW DEAL COMMITTEE ON: August 17, 2021

MOTION NUMBERS:

DECISION Approved Approved subject to: _____
 Not Approved

BUDGETED PROJECT COST: \$1,900,000 Total; \$190,000 RDMW Gas Tax Contribution

NEW DEAL APPROVED FUNDING: \$ PROJECT CERTIFIED COMPLETED: _____

ACTUAL PROJECT COST: \$ DATE CONFIRMATION PROVIDED TO UBCM: _____



REPORT

TO: Electoral Area Directors
FROM: Greg Fletcher, Administrator
SUBJECT: 2021 Internet Funding through Gas Tax
DATE: *Original: July 20, 2021 Background/baseline information*

This report will provide some background on gas tax policy and RDMW economic development policies with respect to priority placed on funding broadband connectivity.

Current Gas Tax funding Criteria:

The attached Gas Tax Policy was adopted in 2016 in response to changes in the UBCM funding criteria for gas tax eligibility during the 2015-2024 agreement period. This allowed many new eligible spending categories, including internet connectivity and recreation. At the time, the RDMW had received requests relating to capital improvements on its recreational services operated by societies. The policy was changed to limit funding to 50% funding for regional projects or recreational projects, provided that there was a service association. While no other new categories were named as having limits, it was assumed that many of these categories, including broadband connectivity, would require funding contribution if for no other reason that the categories were generally outside of the scope of local government responsibilities at that time. Another change in 2016 was to provide a 5 year planning framework to priority investments. Last year, BC Hydro assumed responsibility for streetlight LED conversion which had been a major expenditure in the first general plan. This freed up funds for other potential projects, including broadband connectivity. The funding continues to be pooled by all four electoral areas; this has provided opportunities for scale of economies and opportunities for innovation where communities are grappling with similar servicing issues.

Wideband as part of RDMW Economic Development Priorities

The RDMW has largely played an advocacy role for advancing internet connectivity including facilitating rural community access to programs offered through Network BC and encouraging collaboration between telecommunications, BC Hydro and IPPs to build a 'smart' power grid. Significant progress was made on this front culminating with the commencement of the Telus North Island fibre backbone project in 2013, and the focus shifted to positioning 'last mile' internet and cell phone services to RDMW communities: "*In view of the largely rural nature of the North Island and the low densities in many communities, it is likely that a major portion of the required investment will need to be funded by grants and other community contributions (RDMW UBCM submission, 2013)*". A study was commissioned and then completed by Design 9 Consultants, to provide an independent assessment of the technology opportunities and costs that would be needed to provided last mile broadband services to rural communities. After the fibre connection was completed in April, 2015, a survey informed by Design 9 findings, was completed by 244 residents in Hyde Creek who indicated their preferences and willingness to pay for various potential levels of service; 79% indicated a preference to at least meet the CRTC standard, then 5/25. The positive response to this survey helped persuade Telus to include Hyde Creek with the last mile roll-out in Port McNeill, completed in 2017. In the meantime, with the strong support of the Regional Board lobbying for a cell phone hot-spot in Woss, local resistance was overcome and 4g cell service (served by the fibre backbone) was provided to Woss by the end of 2016. The Board also supported and lobbied for the Connected Coast project that was approved in 2017 with proposed service to RDMW coastal communities at 27 landing points.

Current Status of Broadband Services on the North Island

The change in Gas tax policy in 2014, implemented in 2016, was meant to facilitate community contributions needed to meet the Canada wide for universal 10-50Mbps service by 2021. The attached chart shows the progress that has been made in the RDMW with respect to options available for communities to meet that target.

RDMW Communities Internet Connectivity Availability, 2021

2021-07-15

Community	Fibre ²	Starlink (low orbit)	Hybrid (Fibre/ co-ax)	Smart Hub 5g	Smart Hub 4g	Fixed wireless	ADSL	Cable	Xplornet (high orbit)
Maximum up/down ¹	1500/1500	50/150	13/120	19/165	5/25	5/25	3/25	2/15	1/25
Max Data (Gb)	Unlimited	Unlimited	1000	Unlimited	20	250	250	250	50
Latency ms	5	39	15	1	40	31	33	21	638
Malcolm Island									
Sointula									
Winter Harbour									
Holberg									
Quatsino									
Coal Harbour									
Hyde Creek									
Telegraph Cove									
Woss									
Alert Bay									
Port Alice									
Port Hardy									
Port McNeill									
	Meets 10-50 standard			<i>Does not Meet 10-50 standard</i>					
		Currently Available in 2021							
		Available in 2022/23							
		Possible 2023-25							

¹ Actual performance is less

² Only proven option without congestion bottleneck issues

In 2019, the Committee supported using Gas Tax funds to provide 10% of the funds needed to provide last mile fibre service to Coal Harbour. The project is now underway and by September Coal Harbour is expected to join Port Hardy, Port McNeill and Hyde Creek in exceeding the 10-50Mbs 2021 standard. With similar community contributions to the Connected Coast last mile project, 5 rural communities and Alert Bay could also enjoy this service by 2022 or 2023. Alternatively, communities can wait until commercial providers make other options available. As shown above, none of the alternative options will provide a comparable level of performance and reliability: all three soon available alternatives have far worse upload performance, are susceptible to congestion issues at bottlenecks and, with exception of 5g cell service, have much higher latency (lag time). In a recent survey of 37 household in Sointula, respondents measured their services actual performance compared to the rated maximums; average upload speeds were 56% of rated for Smarthub cell services, 48% for cable and 22% for satellite. This contrasts with North Island fibre service which has upload speeds of roughly 90% of rated capacity.

Moving Forward

An update to the five-year strategic gas tax spending plan could provide direction for all four rural communities to set their gas tax spending priorities. The last plan was done in late 2018 prior to any internet projects being contemplated for funding. The Coal Harbour project was done a year later but the plan was not amended. If this were completed, it would help ensure that the communities could continue to have the ability to support the continued track record of 15 years of consensus based funding from gas tax allocations. If consensus is not achieved on any application, the normal practice has been to try to amend the application to satisfy the concerns of those opposed. If this is not possible, then a vote is required. If the vote is negative, the matter can still be re-considered by having the Chair bring the matter back to the table. If a situation arises whereby an opportunity arises whereby a project supported by the host area director meets the gas tax and budgetary criteria but is rejected by the committee, the host Area Director can appeal to the Board as the body that ultimately approves the applications. If the Board accepts the appeal by the and determines that the application is valid and in the Board's interest, the Board can rule on the application contrary to the EA Committee's decision.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Fletcher, Administrator



REGIONAL DISTRICT OF MOUNT WADDINGTON

REPORT

TO: Electoral Area Directors

FROM: Greg Fletcher, Administrator

SUBJECT: Recreation Funding Donation for Rebuilding Lytton

DATE: August 12, 2021

At the last Board meeting, Director Furney suggested using EA Directors Recreation funds for a contribution of \$1/ per person to help the Village of Lytton rebuild its recreational infrastructure as a result of the tragic June fire which destroyed most of the town.

I noted that, if the donation was to be done as a lump sum contribution on behalf of the rural RDMW Directors, then it would exceed Director's \$1500 discretionary limit and would need to be considered by the Committee.

Here are the 2016 census populations of the electoral areas:

	Rural, off reserve	Total, Including on Reserve
A	714	829
B	237	466
C	568	1254
D	258	864
Total	1777	3413

Normally, Electoral Area funds are only used for the benefit of rural residents off reserve, but there is no limitation in policy.

If Directors choose to pool their resources, then they can collectively choose which amount, if any, they want to contribute. This could then form the basis of a challenge to other communities.

Alternatively, as each EA is below the \$1500 threshold, each Director can choose to set their own level of contribution on behalf of their constituents. Forms will be available at the meeting should this be the option chosen.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Fletcher,
Administrator