March 14, 2019

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

The Honourable Claire Trevena  
Minister of Transportation & Infrastructure  
PO Box 9055 Prov Stn Govt  
Victoria, BC  V8W 9E2

Re: Island Corridor Foundation – E&N Railway

Dear Premier Horgan and Minister Trevena,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN). The RDN Board has requested that I express to you its support for the work of the Island Corridor Foundation (ICF) under its new leadership, and also its support for the revitalization of the E&N Railway along the corridor.

We are aware of meetings that have taken place recently involving the provincial government and the ICF, as well as the letter from thirteen South Island Mayors. We believe strongly that there is need to protect the corridor for the long-term transportation needs of the Island, and we further believe that rail is an important component of that transportation planning. Many studies have already been done. Now there is an increasing urgency to take action. We cannot afford to lose this transportation corridor.

The RDN Board is conscious of the rights and claims of First Nations along the corridor, and also of their significant role already as partners in the Island Corridor Foundation. Therefore, given the important future for rail on the Island, supporting the corridor would be another tool in working towards reconciliation.

We are also very aware of the significant cost associated with the necessary improvements to the line. However, an incremental approach starting with service to Langford and moving up Island has merit. There also may be opportunities for rail between Nanaimo and adjacent communities as part of the early works. The concept of rail tourism has strong support.

The Regional District of Nanaimo asks you to take timely and meaningful action. Vancouver Island leaders have made it clear that they consider reconciliation, climate change, and efficient transportation as priorities. Surely support for the ICF and rail revitalization, which addresses all three issues, would show leadership in a logical and legitimate manner.

Sincerely,

Ian W. Thorpe,  
Chair, Regional District of Nanaimo

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