



January 13, 2022

Ref: 269207

Tyler Brown, Chair  
Regional District of Nanaimo  
6300 Hammond Bay Rd  
Nanaimo BC V9T 6N2

Dear Chair Brown:

Thank you for your letter of November 3, 2020, regarding funding to undertake a governance and services study in Electoral Area 'F' to review the existing governance and service structure, assess the costs and benefits of alternate governance structures and to undertake consultation with the community. I have also taken the opportunity to review the letter of March 31, 2021, sent by the former Chief Administrative Officer providing additional details on the request. I also appreciated the opportunity to discuss the matters with you directly during our phone call on October 11, 2021. I am happy to share my decision on the funding request with you.

I understand that two previous studies were undertaken: a local governance and issues study in 1996, followed by a boundary study in 2003. I also understand that this process did not proceed to a full incorporation process for a number of reasons:

- The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) was undertaking work on a Regional Growth Management Plan which required that all electoral areas establish land use planning requirements within two years of adopting the plan, and that this should be completed before an incorporation study can be conducted; and
- It was determined that there was not enough support and consensus in Electoral Area 'F' to justify funding an incorporation study.

Given that both of these studies were undertaken greater than 18 years ago, it is important to re-establish an understanding of the pressing services and governance issues that are faced in Electoral Area 'F' and to determine whether there is now enough support within the community to undertake a future incorporation study. The restructure process is a major endeavour, and a governance and services study provides the baseline information that will inform all future stages of the process.

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It is reasonable for a typical governance and services study to require more than a year to establish the process for the study, undertake preliminary and detailed analysis, to conduct public examination and engagement and to create a final report. As such, there is unlikely to be enough time to complete the governance and services study before the general local election in October 2022. While it is desirable to complete a study within an existing term, it is my view that such a study should not be rushed and we should have a clear expectation that the results of the study may fall under a different Board.

I also understand that Electoral Area 'G' has expressed interest in exploring the possibility of a structure change for the community of French Creek. Any study for Electoral Area 'G' would need to occur following completion of the study for Electoral Area 'F'. Should a study for Electoral Area 'F' indicate the need for additional studies such as a boundary analysis or incorporation study, the RDN would need to determine whether to prioritize these studies or to move ahead with a study for Electoral Area 'G'. There may be benefits to co-ordinating a study approach for both electoral areas to understand the needs in both communities before making any restructure decisions for both areas.

Given this is a longstanding issue and the RDN Board is supportive, I am prepared to provide the RDN with funding to undertake an analysis of local governance services and issues, with public engagement in Electoral Area 'F' communities on services and opinions of alternative governance structures.

I am pleased to make a commitment of \$60,000 to the RDN for this work, which would be a first phase in the restructure study process. The outcome of this work would determine whether a future incorporation study would take place or whether there would be a need to conduct a boundary analysis.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs will follow up with the RDN regarding the terms and conditions of this grant and the transfer of funds. Gareth Mogg, Senior Planning Analyst, Governance and Structure Branch, Local Government Division, is the lead for this project and can be reached by telephone at 236 478-3553, or by email at [gareth.mogg@gov.bc.ca](mailto:gareth.mogg@gov.bc.ca).

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josie', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Josie Osborne  
Minister

pc: Marijke Edmondson, Strategic Advisor, Assistant Deputy Minister's Office,  
Local Government Division  
Gareth Mogg, Senior Planning Analyst, Governance and Structure Branch