

**From:** Minister of ISED - Ministre de ISDE (IC) <ised.minister-ministre.isde@canada.ca>

**Sent:** September-19-18 8:23 AM

**To:** Lore Schick <LSchick@cariboord.bc.ca>

**Cc:** todd.doherty@parl.gc.ca; cathy.mcleod@parl.gc.ca

**Subject:** Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Cariboo Regional District

File No. 400-40

SEP 19 2018

Referred To CAO

Minister of  
Innovation, Science and  
Economic Development



Ministre de  
l'Innovation, des Sciences et du  
Développement économique

Dear Ms. Wagner:

Thank you for your correspondence outlining the importance of rural connectivity and providing input on the proposed measures in the *Consultation on Revisions to the 3500 MHz Band to Accommodate Flexible Use and Preliminary Consultation on Changes to the 3800 MHz Band*.

The Government of Canada believes that connectivity is crucial for all Canadians, including those living in rural and remote regions. As you note in your letter, the government has several ongoing initiatives aimed at improving rural connectivity. In addition to the Connect to Innovate program, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is taking action in its role as Canada's telecommunications regulator. It has created a new \$750-million fund to support expanded access in underserved areas. From April to December 2017, it conducted a public consultation to determine the new fund's criteria and operating details. The CRTC is anticipated to release its decision on this initiative and next steps later this year. You may wish to participate when next steps are announced.

Infrastructure Canada administers certain general programs where connectivity is eligible. For example, broadband projects are one of the eligible areas for investment under the \$2-billion Rural and Northern Communities Infrastructure stream of the Investing in Canada Plan. Under the plan, provinces and territories are responsible for prioritizing projects and engaging with municipalities and Indigenous communities. Learn more by visiting Investing in Canada Plan programs delivered through Infrastructure Canada.

Budget 2018 also commits \$100 million over five years to the Strategic Innovation Fund, with a particular focus on supporting projects that relate to low Earth orbit satellites and next generation rural broadband.

With respect to the options proposed in the 3500 MHz consultation, supporting the development of 5G networks is an important part of the government's telecom strategy, given the transformative benefits that 5G connectivity will bring to Canadian consumers

and businesses. In the 2014 decision that signalled the introduction of mobile service in the 3500 MHz band, the government committed to allowing existing licensees to continue providing fixed wireless services. The current consultation reaffirms the government's commitment to moving forward in a way that would allow rural Internet providers to continue operating. Given the potential impact on existing users, as well as on the future of wireless networks in Canada, it is essential to get this right. All submitted comments will be carefully considered before a decision is made.

Once again, thank you for writing and for your input on the consultation. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Bains". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of the last name being a large, stylized "B".

The Honourable Navdeep Bains, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: Mr. Todd Doherty, M.P.  
Ms. Cathy McLeod, M.P.



Cariboo  
Regional  
District

## OFFICE OF THE CHAIR

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July 9, 2018

VIA EMAIL: [ic.spectrumauctions-encheresduspectre.ic@canada.ca](mailto:ic.spectrumauctions-encheresduspectre.ic@canada.ca)

**E-MAILED**

Senior Director  
Spectrum Licensing and Auction Operations  
Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada

Re: Gazette Notice SLPB-004-18: Consultation on Revisions to the  
3500 MHz Band to Accommodate Flexible use and Preliminary  
Consultation on Changes to the 3800 MHz Band

Access to broadband connectivity is critical to rural households in Canada. The vitality of rural and remote communities depends on our ability to participate in the digital economy and engage with friends, family, educational opportunities, and government services over the internet. Fixed wireless spectrum is crucial to rural connectivity.

On behalf of the Cariboo Regional District Board, I would like to express deep concern about the proposed reduction of spectrum described in Option 1 (paragraph 46). Reducing the spectrum available for rural broadband networks will adversely affect broadband services in rural communities across Canada.

We urge ISED to choose Option 2 (paragraph 48), which does not reduce the spectrum holdings of small rural service providers. Better yet, we urge ISED to not reduce any spectrum holdings that are currently used for providing service in rural communities, and to make more spectrum available for providing fixed wireless services in rural communities.

We appreciate ISED's ongoing efforts to support rural broadband connectivity in Canada through funding programs. We encourage ISED to leverage these investments by ensuring that adequate spectrum will be available for last-mile broadband services.

Thank you for considering our submission.

Yours truly,

Margo Wagner  
Chair

building communities together