



Cariboo Regional District  
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Margo Wagner, Chair & Director of Electoral Area H  
Cariboo Regional District  
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Dear Margo Wagner:

It was a pleasure to meet with you and the delegation from the Cariboo Regional District, the Fraser-Fort George Regional District and Thompson Nicola Regional District at the 2018 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention in Whistler. I really appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the connectivity challenges facing your regions.

Reliable connectivity is critical, especially during emergencies. The Cariboo Region has experienced this first hand in recent years, from historic wildfire seasons and flooding. Reliable voice and data communications are critical to help first responders during floods, fires and rock slides. Connectivity is also the foundation for communities that want to become digitally enabled and for citizens to be connected to those that matter most.

As mentioned in our meeting, there is currently funding available through the Connecting British Columbia program to improve last-mile connectivity infrastructure, develop regional connectivity infrastructure strategies, and to install new transport infrastructure. I would encourage the District to work with local internet service providers to identify what connectivity infrastructure is needed and support an application to the current intake. Program details are posted on Northern Development's website at [www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partnerprograms/connecting-british-columbia](http://www.northerndevelopment.bc.ca/funding-programs/partnerprograms/connecting-british-columbia). A new [Connectivity Handbook](#) is available to help develop a regional connectivity strategy.

Recently, the Canadian-Radio-Television-Commission (CRTC) announced the criteria for a new Broadband Fund to be launched in the spring of 2019. The new Fund will complement other federal and provincial programs to improve connectivity in Canada. My ministry is working closely with federal departments to ensure that the programs are positioned to benefit

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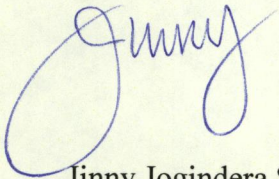
communities across the province. More information on the Broadband Fund can be found here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/radio-television-telecommunications/news/2018/09/crtc-announces-details-of-the-broadband-fund.html>.

In addition, the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program: Northern and Rural Communities component is another funding source for local governments to consider. Additional information is available at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/transportation/funding-engagement-permits/funding-grants/investing-in-canada-infrastructure-program/rural-northern-communities>.

During UBCM 2018, my ministry hosted the Connected Communities Digital-by-Design workshop to introduce a made-in-BC digital framework and self-assessment tool. This tool was developed by BC communities as a guide to assist communities to become digitally enabled. Communities that re-imagine their future through a digital lens, and plan for how digital and connectivity will improve community well-being are better positioned to realize economic, social and environmental benefits. My ministry is working with communities to refine this tool to incorporate digital planning to community planning. A Digital by Design 'How to Guide' can be found here: <https://e.issuu.com/embed.html#27484704/64359829>.

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me at UBCM 2018. If you have a project in mind or would like to receive further information on the Province's activities to expand high speed internet connectivity, please contact Howard Randell, Executive Director, Network BC, at 250 415-6867, or by email at [NetworkBC@gov.bc.ca](mailto:NetworkBC@gov.bc.ca).

Sincerely,



Jinny Jogindera Sims  
Minister

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