



November 24, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Capital Regional District
PO Box 1000, Victoria, BC V8W 2S6

To: Robert (Bob) Lapham, CAO

Re: First Nations' Inclusion in CRD Governance

The WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council (WLC), is an organization that has the mandate to represent the WSÍKEM (Tseycum), STÁUTW (Tsawout) and the WJOŁEŁP (Tsartlip) First Nation in relationship building with the CRD and other organizations in our territory.

The WLC Board of Directors received a presentation and had discussion regarding the CRD's proposed approach to supporting more inclusive governance on September 17, 2020. At this meeting, the Directors expressed the need for this type of engagement but also a concern regarding its limitations. The concerns raised have been addressed within the current model, and the WLC Board has been reassured that this initiative is not a derogation of WSÁNEĆ rights, nor does it replace a Duty to Consult. It is our view that this is a complimentary approach and supports responsible decision-making and relationship-building between the member WSÁNEĆ Nations and CRD. At the CRD Board of Director meeting on October 28th 2020, with support from the WLC, Chief Jimmy spoke in support of this initiative.

With that said, the WLC remains dedicated to enhancing recognition of, and respect for, WSÁNEĆ Douglas Treaty rights and WSÁNEĆ Aboriginal Rights and Title and does not think that this initiative places First Nations' leadership at the appropriate level of decision-making. However, we also think this work is in alignment with CRD Board Priority of Reconciliation with First Nations, the Special Task Force on First Nations Relations Final Report, CRD Statement of Reconciliation, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, and it is a good place to start.

On November 19, 2020, the WLC Board of Directors formally passed a motion supporting First Nations inclusion in CRD Governance as presented. The WLC supports the CRD's approach towards First Nations inclusion in CRD governance as a first step, and, after two years of participation, we will assess this level of involvement in order to make recommendations for improvement.

Sincerely,

Gord Elliott
Director of Operations
WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council