



MAYOR'S OFFICE
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VICTORIA, B.C.

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Her Worship Mayor Lisa Helps
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps:

Thank you again for the productive conversation on December 3, 2015, respecting governance and service integration opportunities for the Capital region, and for your continued participation in this dialogue.

As promised in my December 7, 2015 letter, I have now had an opportunity to reflect on what was articulated at the meeting. Although opinions varied, I believe a number of common interests were identified which could benefit from further collaborative discussion. To this end, I have enclosed a *Framework for Discussion* which I believe could assist the region in this regard. The Framework outlines a potential approach, goals and roles for facilitated fact-finding to help identify the real issues and opportunities for Capital region communities. This could be a basis for a Terms of Reference for a consultant.

As a next step, I would appreciate your feedback on the Framework by February 5, to allow the Province to assist the region in moving forward in the most effective way possible. Please send your comments to Ms. Michelle Dann in the Governance and Structure Branch, Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development, by email at: Michelle.Dann@gov.bc.ca.

If there appears to be a shared understanding on the Framework or only minor changes are required, then the Province will proceed to next steps – in particular, seeking to retain an appropriate consultant. However, if your feedback indicates that a further opportunity for discussion is warranted before you are ready to move forward, then I am happy to convene another meeting with all the area Mayors. I will advise further, once I have had a chance to review your feedback.

I look forward to receiving your thoughts on the Framework. I thank you in advance for your contributions to this important topic and wish you a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Peter Fassbender
Minister

Enclosure

A FRAMEWORK FOR COMMENT

CAPITAL INTEGRATED SERVICES AND GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE

PURPOSE

Capital region citizens (through the 2014 referendum results) and local governments (through meetings with CSCD Ministers) have expressed a common interest in gathering facts about current service delivery, improving the understanding about service delivery best practices and exploring further the opportunities to better integrate service and governance.

The proposed Initiative will help facilitate a discussion among local governments in the Capital region toward identifying any potential opportunities to enhance the efficient delivery of service that citizens need. The Initiative will provide the opportunity for individual perspectives to be heard and may lay the groundwork for local governments to pursue options for greater integration of services and governance.

PRINCIPLES

Principles to guide the Initiative:

- *Aim for efficiency* – there is only one taxpayer and it is the responsibility of all governments to ensure the most efficient and effective delivery of public services.
- *Start with the facts* – a full understanding of current arrangements will be an important first step in positioning the region's local governments with respect to service and governance opportunities and challenges.
- *Respect different views* – a structured conversation on governance and service integration provides a way for local governments to inform and hear from their public and key stakeholders, and enables any local government in the region to participate if they so choose.
- *Supporting future choices* – the Initiative is not about reaching a specific, unilateral outcome; it is about understanding the opportunities for service and governance integration in order to help local governments make future choices.
- *Collaboration is key* – success depends on local governments in the Capital area participating, being engaged and fully committed to this conversation with one another and with their citizens.

COMPONENTS OF AN APPROACH

The Initiative presents an opportunity for the province to support local governments to collect information and facts on the integration of services and governance. This information and research will assist local government to further their conversations and engagement with citizens and stakeholders. The goals of an approach would include:

- *Support Fact Finding* –collecting and sharing information and facts about the current state of services and governance in the Capital region; local governments can use that to inform and engage with their public.
- *Increased Understanding* – researching and sharing best practices among local governments in the Capital area and learning from other jurisdictions; helping local governments research underlying issues or barriers to effective integrated service delivery.
- *Share Findings* – local governments consider the way forward to explore potential opportunities for further integration and reporting out on the consultant's work and progress made to date.