



# REPORT

To: Chair and Directors

Report Number: ADM-BRD-155

From: Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager

Date: March 11, 2021

**Subject: Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021**

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## **RECOMMENDATION #1: [Corporate Unweighted]**

That the Regional Board give Peace River Regional District Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021, first and second reading.

## **RECOMMENDATION #2: [Corporate Unweighted]**

That the Regional Board give Peace River Regional District Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021, third reading.

## **RECOMMENDATION #3: [Corporate Unweighted]**

That the Regional Board authorize the Corporate Officer to obtain the assent of the electors for Bylaw 2440 through an Alternative Approval Process in the District of Tumbler Ridge, the District of Chetwynd, the District of Hudson's Hope, the District of Taylor and Electoral Area B of the Peace River Regional District.

## **BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:**

On November 26, 2021, the Regional Board passed the following resolution:

*MOVED, SECONDED, CARRIED*

That the Regional Board authorize the establishment of a Service Function for the "Gotta Go" initiative.

In 2017, the North Peace Economic Development Commission (NPEDC) contracted a review of the rest areas and facilities available along major transportation corridors throughout the North Peace. The review clearly identified the need for additional investment in the rest area portions of the road infrastructure in the region, and particularly, noted that more facilities were needed for travelers heading up the Alaska Highway.

The purpose of the Gotta Go initiative is to develop and manage roadside facilities along remote areas of the Alaska Highway throughout northeast BC. These facilities will include wheelchair accessible washroom amenities, picnic benches, tourist information kiosks, signage for safety and emergency management, and increased communication technologies.

The Gotta Go Partners include the PRRD, Northern Rockies Regional Municipality (NRRM), Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI), Public Services & Procurement Canada (PSPC), and the Northern BC Tourism Association.

The Gotta Go Partners (Parties) have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) intended to outline guiding principles, roles and responsibilities between the parties, and establish a coordinated approach for establishing, maintaining and funding the development of adequate roadside facilities along the Alaska Highway. The parties agree that there is an opportunity to promote First Nation recognition, tourism, history, and community, while improving public safety, cleanliness, access, and connection. Gotta Go will also be filling a need for public infrastructure.

In October 2018, the Gotta Go partners piloted a test site at km 319 (Trutch) of the Alaska Highway. The site includes two accessible outhouse facilities, garbage cans, a cellular booster tower and a DriveBC camera. Picnic tables have been purchased and are ready for placement. An information kiosk and additional signage are still to come.

Based on the success of km 319 (Trutch), the parties have identified the pullouts at km 250 (Sikanni Check Brake), and km 536 (Steamboat) for the development of future sites. The Parties have received a grant in the amount of \$285,750 from Northern Development Initiative Trust, to be used for the construction of the km 250 (Sikanni Brake Check) and km 536 (Steamboat) locations.

The Parties have agreed that a Maintenance Trust Fund will be created to fund the maintenance of all three sites, and that each Party will supply predetermined funding to the Trust.

The NRRM will be responsible for holding and managing the Trust, and manage maintenance contracts for all sites, and will fund maintenance costs at km 536 (Steamboat).

MoTI and PSPC have both committed funding for the project that will be used for capital and operations.

The PRRD Funding Partners have agreed, in principle, that the PRRD will fund future maintenance costs for km 319 (Trutch), and km 250 (Sikanni Brake Check).

Anticipated costs for the proposed “Gotta Go” function include:

- Annual maintenance for each roadside facility – km 319 and km 250
- Development, maintenance and replacement costs of cellular boosters if required

### **Inspector of Municipalities and Elector Approval**

Before adoption of the bylaw, approval of the Inspector of Municipalities is required. After the attached bylaw receives three readings, the bylaw will be forwarded to the Inspector for approval. Approval is anticipated to be received around the middle of May.

After Inspector approval is obtained, but prior to enacting the Peace River Regional District Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021, the Regional District is required to obtain elector approval from eligible electors in the affected areas. Local governments can obtain the required elector approval through assent voting (previously called other voting or referendum), or the Alternative Approval Process (AAP). The alternative approval process is being recommended by the participants of the proposed service because it is less expensive and requires fewer resources compared to the elector assent (referendum) process.

AAPs help local governments better understand whether or not the community views a particular matter as "significant", and whether the matter warrants being taken to an assent voting for broader citizen engagement. Following approval of the Inspector, notice of the AAP will be published. Eligible electors have at least 30 days from the publication of the second notice to submit elector response forms to the local government Corporate Officer during an AAP.

If 10% or more of the eligible electors sign and submit response forms, the issue is considered 'significant' and the PRRD cannot proceed with the matter proposed in the bylaw without first conducting an assent voting process. When the AAP is complete, if less than 10% of eligible electors sign and submit response forms, elector assent will be deemed to have been given and the bylaw will be brought forward to the Board for adoption.

**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**

1. That the Regional Board provide further direction.

**STRATEGIC PLAN RELEVANCE:**

- Partnerships
- Collaboration with Local and First Nations governments

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION(S):**

Funding in the amount of approximately \$10,000 is required to conduct the AAP.

**COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATION(S):**

A communication plan will be developed to inform residents about the proposed service. As required, PRRD communications will be neutral and fact based. Residents will be provided information about the service being proposed, the financial impacts, how to obtain and submit an approved elector response form, and the deadline established for responses to be received by the Regional District.

**OTHER CONSIDERATION(S):**

If the Board authorizes an AAP method of obtaining assent of the electors, a further report will be brought to the Board outlining the estimated number of electors for the AAP and how that number was determined, and the statutory advertising requirements. The Board will be required to approve the elector response form, and establish the deadline for response.

**Attachments:**

1. Gotta Go Roadside Facilities Service Establishment Bylaw No. 2440, 2021
2. Gotta Go 5 Year Budget
3. Gotta Go Tax Calculation Summary Sheet