

August 22, 2018

To Whom It May Concern,

RE: Green Infrastructure Funding Grant

The Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Environmental Health Program began servicing the Bella Coola/Hagensborg area in 2001. During this time, we directed the Hagensborg Waterworks District (HWWD), an Improvement District under the Local Government Act, to improve their water quality to meet the requirements under the *Drinking Water Protection Act and Regulation*. Currently, untreated surface water is delivered through a large, aging, distributed system that is on a long-term boil water advisory.

HWWD has been proactive in working with VCH and is moving towards compliance; however, the enormous costs involved for capital asset investment are delaying the infrastructure upgrades required to meet their legislative requirement to deliver potable water to the water users. This not only creates potential health risks to the local community, but also to the travelling public, as they access businesses and services within the district. Currently only a couple of public schools in the District treat their water. The goal for HWWD is to provide potable water to 100% of the residential and commercial properties within the Improvement District. VCH's role with regards to this infrastructure grant will be to review HWWD's plans for the upgrades to the water system to ensure they are of sound engineering design and allow HWWD to meet their goal.

In 2008, the BC Ombudsman released *Report No.32 Trending Water: Challenges in Providing Safe Drinking Water in British Columbia*. In order to act on recommendation # 16 from the report and prevent water systems within health authorities from being on a drinking water advisories for longer than 18 months, there must be access to infrastructure funding, such as that provided by the Ministry of Community Services. We therefore strongly support HWWD grant application to obtain capital to allow for the design and construction of a water treatment system and upgraded distribution system.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the undersigned by phone at 604-983-6701 or via email at geoff.mckee@vch.ca.

Sincerely,



Geoff McKee, MD, MPH
Medical Health Officer
Vancouver Coastal Health

cc. Phil Muirhead, VCH Drinking Water Officer