INFORMATION NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

Date: April 7, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114904

ISSUE: BC Bid Replacement Project and FOI Request from Media

BACKGROUND:

BC Bid is government's online marketplace for procuring goods and services and the interface between vendors and government. Modernizing BC Bid is a priority public commitment in the BC Procurement Strategy and will provide a strong foundation for improving how procurement processes deliver benefit for people and businesses in communities across the Province. The new BC Bid solution from Ivalua and CGI will offer modern and consistent experiences for suppliers and provide government with data to support strategic decision-making.

Work on the BC Bid replacement began in January 2019 following successful negotiations with CGI. By Fall of 2019, government completed a pilot that identified change impacts and complexities to be addressed before implementation. Initial timelines had the full BC Bid solution launching in 2020. Due to government-wide financial restrictions, an unprecedented global pandemic, and the complexity associated with changing decades old processes and procedures, the implementation timeline was impacted.

The work of doing procurements across government is decentralized and each ministry has unique procurement practices. As such, there is no single approach that will work for shifting everyone to a new system. The new BC Bid will both modernize and standardize workflows and will result in fundamental changes for not just procurement professionals, but the program owners and approvers. The depth and breadth of the change to decades of static operational practices continues to unfold as the project progresses. The project team has worked collaboratively with each ministry partner to uncover and address complexity, determine the impacts of change, and support successful delivery of this critical service.

A project review conducted in 2020 identified opportunities to improve the implementation approach and incorporate what we heard from ministry partners about the impact of this change. We have taken steps to address resourcing challenges, enhance internal governance and project management rigor, while continuing to prioritize change management with our ministry partners, broader public sector, and the supplier community. A rigorous work plan review has been completed s.13
s.13

DISCUSSION:

On December 24, 2020, an applicant submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request related to the BC Bid project. The scope was broadly identified to include all contracts with the current vendor, CGI, as well as all bid and evaluation materials, contract changes and reviews. Standard protocol was followed and an estimate of 77 hours to gather and prepare the materials was provided back to the requestor by January 13, 2021. A fee estimate of $2,220 for this work was included. On February 12, 2021, a fee waiver was submitted by the requestor and was denied on March 10, 2021 by the Ministry of Citizens' Services (CITZ). (See Appendix A for details.)

Subsequent conversations with the requestor to clarify the scope of the request resulted in a revised FOI request sent to CITZ for new estimate on March 18, 2021. The scope narrowed to focus on the CGI contract for the BC Bid Replacement project and a new estimate of 15 hours and $360 was returned to the CITZ IAO on March 25, 2021. The response to the requestor with the revised estimate is awaiting direction from executive following briefings on this subject.

On March 30, the Government Communications and Public Engagement (GCPE) media relations unit received a request for information about the BC Bid project. Materials were prepared and reviewed for approval to release within 3 working days and were sent to The Tyee requestor by April 6, 2021. Also, on April 6, 2021, and prior to receiving the requested materials, The Tyee published an article about the BC Bid project, citing delivery delays and withholding of information requested through the FOI process.

NEXT STEPS:

GCPE continues to work with The Tyee to address the outstanding questions and statements within the article, however questions resulting from this article may arise for the Honourable Lisa Beare to address directly.

Some of the statements included in the article that may arise for response:

Article Content	Government Response
Project is more than a year overdue

The replacement isn't finished, and there is no indication when it will be

The government and the companies involved aren't saying what's caused the delay | s.13 |
| Government has refused to provide information on the project

The province is keeping records that would show what went wrong secret. | |
| The government's announcement [in 2017] gave no indication of what it was spending on the project

… a strained working relationship where every change, no matter how minor, added a cost for the government | |

s.13

Allegations the project had been bungled Three big technology companies bid... two pulled out... CGI won by default
The NDP government came to office in 2017 promising to strengthen B.C.'s access to information legislation, a system it heavily criticized in opposition, but appears to have lost interest since forming government.

Attachment(s):   Appendix A – Activity History for Freedom of Information Request #CTZ-2020-07409
                      Appendix B – Contract Award Disclosure on BC Bid

Contact: Leila Ball, Phone #250 217-0849

Appendix A – Activity History for Freedom of Information Request #CTZ-2020-07409

1. Received by CITZ Information Access Office (IAO) on December 24, 2020

   Request Details:
   "Any and all agreements or contracts entered since January 1, 2018 with CGI Information Systems and Management Consultants Inc., its subcontractors or associated companies, including but not limited to Ivalua Inc.; Any and all records evaluating proposals or bids received as part of the B.C. Bid Replacement procurement, such as scores, evaluation notes and reasons for award or non-award; Any and all records of modifications to the contract(s) for the B.C. Bid Replacement, including schedule and financial changes; and Any and all records of any audit, investigation or other such assessment, including informal, regarding the progress of the B.C. Bid Replacement project."

   Original Interpretation: scope includes all contracts with CGI since January 1, 2018.

   Fee Estimate Response
   - Submitted to requestor around January 13, 2021
   - Estimate for locating/retrieving was 77 hours (including 3 free hours)
   - Cost estimate for 74 hours, $2,220

2. February 12, 2021, CITZ IAO received a request for a fee waiver on FOI CTZ-2020-07409, which is seeking various records regarding the BC Bid Replacement. Fee waiver was denied on March 10, 2021.

3. Received by CITZ information Access Office on March 18, 2021, a revised FOI request with a clarification of the scope.

   Request Details:
   a) Copy of final agreements or contracts, that are part of the BC Bid Replacement project, entered since January 1, 2018 with CGI Information Systems and Management Consultants Inc., its subcontractors or associated companies, including but not limited to Ivalua Inc.; and
   b) Copy of final or summary evaluation for proposals or bids received as part of the B.C. Bid Replacement procurement, such as scores, evaluation notes and reasons for award or non-award; and
   c) Copy of any change orders made to the final contract(s) for the B.C. Bid Replacement, including schedule and financial changes; and
   d) Copy of any final reports resulting from any externally reviewed audit, investigation, or other such assessment, regarding the progress of the B.C. Bid Replacement project.

   Shifted interpretation: Scope limited to only the CGI contract for BC Bid Replacement.

   Revised Fee Estimate Response submitted by BC Bid project office on March 25, 2021 and received by CITZ IAO on April 7, 2021. Response to requestor is awaiting executive direction following briefings on this subject.

   Fee Estimate Response:
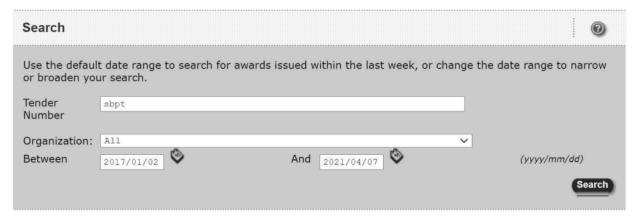   - For locating/retrieving material, 15 hours (including 3 free hours)
   - Cost estimate for 12 hours, $360

Appendix B - Contract Award Disclosure on BC Bid

Contract Award Activities:
- Following initial evaluation, negotiations originally initiated with top-ranked vendor s.13
  s.13

- The second-place vendor was CGI. Negotiations progressed over approximately 3 months and the current contract for $8.9M was awarded December 14, 2018.
- To April 2021, expenditures are approximately $7.8M. Budget remains within 1% of original $8.9M, adding only $73,000 for unforeseen technical requirements. Current contract expires December 31, 2021.

Diagram 1: Contract disclosure posted on BC Bid

Search

Use the default date range to search for awards issued within the last week, or change the date range to narrow or broaden your search.

Tender Number	sbpt	
Organization:	All	
Between	2017/01/02	And 2021/04/07 (yyyy/mm/dd)

Search

Award Total does not include value of any contemplated extension options. Award values shown may be non-committed estimates and the actual value of work may be different than estimated.

Solicitation No	Status	Description
SBPT-05	Awarded	Sourcing and Procurement Spend Analytics Application and Service

Issuing Organization	Location	Contact Email
Ministry of Citizens' Services	Victoria	procurement@gov.bc.ca

Procurement Method	Closing Date	Award Date
Negotiated Request for Proposal	2018/02/08	2018/12/14

Successful Supplier(s)	Supplier Address	Award Total
CGI Information Systems and Management Consultants Inc	737 Yates Street, Victoria Victoria, BC	$8947610.00

INFORMATION NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

Date: April 12, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114886

ISSUE: Accessibility Overview

BACKGROUND:

- There are more than 926,000 British Columbians over the age of 15 with some form of disability. This represents nearly 25 percent of the population. As the population ages, the number of people with disabilities and the severity of their disabilities are expected to increase.

- The federal government's *Accessible Canada Act (ACA)* received royal assent in June 2019. ACA applies to the federal public sector, federal Crown Corporations, and all federally regulated organizations. Major goals of the Act include:
  - Improving recruitment, retention, and promotion of persons with disabilities;
  - Enhancing the accessibility of the built environment;
  - Making information and communications technology usable by all;
  - Equipping public servants to design and deliver accessible programs and services; and
  - Building an accessibility-confident public service.

- The B.C. Government is committed to better support people with disabilities to live with dignity and to meaningfully participate in their communities. Accessibility legislation is currently under development led by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SDPR), which is intended to strengthen the regulatory expectations to identify, remove and prevent barriers related to accessibility for British Columbians and staff with disabilities.

- The Ministry of Citizens' Services' (CITZ) duty to accommodate persons with disabilities is enshrined in the *BC Human Rights Code*, The *Public Service Act*, and many corporate plans and strategies including *Where Ideas Work* (the Corporate Plan, 2020), the *Where We All Belong: Diversity and Inclusion Strategy* (2020), and *Building a Better B.C. for People with Disabilities* (2017), formerly *Accessibility 2024* (2014).

- The proposed legislation on accessibility in B.C. is likely to have major cost and implementation implications for CITZ. However, the full scope of this would only be known once more information on what is being proposed becomes clear.

DISCUSSION:

- SDPR undertook public consultation on the development of accessibility legislation in fall 2019. Based on the results of the consultations, it appears that the public input to the proposed legislation is similar in scope to the federal legislation, requiring improvements to online and front counter services as well as to the built environment.

- Activities currently underway in CITZ to address accessibility or where there is a direct/indirect linkage to accessibility include:

  o **REAL PROPERTY DIVISION (RPD):**
    - RPD advances accessibility through the application of a Social Stewardship Policy and Barrier Free Program.
    - The Social Stewardship Policy articulates how social stewardship imperatives that impact the delivery of real estate services are addressed. The policy enables structure and oversight to ensure these responsibilities are addressed appropriately and in balance with environmental and financial responsibilities.
    - The Barrier Free Program articulates CITZ' approach to ensuring greater, more meaningful accessibility to government buildings for everyone in B.C. It also articulates CITZ' plan to improve the accessibility of buildings beyond the BC Building Code through building improvements, development of standards and verification of performance, and culture change and awareness to support the goals of the program.
    - RPD is assembling portfolio-level strategic plans to improve the accessibility of owned and leased space based on the results of assessments of owned and leased facilities conducted by the Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) using RHF's Accessibility Certification Program.
    - RPD is also working to create more "universal" washrooms to remove barriers to washroom access related to gender and/or disability.
    - In early 2019, RPD Technical Standards for office spaces were updated to align with RHF and gender equity requirements.

  o **SERVICE BC (SBC):**
    - SBC has identified the importance of having an in-person service delivery presence as opposed to a complete shift to digital service channels because of perceived barriers in the use of technology.
    - There is a service practice and policy group within Service BC to ensure that public-facing staff are well-equipped to serve people and businesses with a variety of needs. New requirements of the proposed legislation, including enhanced general awareness, would have to be incorporated into ongoing training and knowledge management material to ensure staff are current with new standards.
    - CITZ continues to ensure that online services are provided with an accessibility lens such as the use of plain language, multiple service channel offerings to meet client needs, and the application of evidence-based service design principles.
    - This work has been informed by cross-jurisdictional research, and consultation on legislation and standards with the Accessibility Secretariat and Employee Accessibility Advisory Council has been completed.
      - Develop accessibility Standards: positioning to align with legislation currently being drafted.
      - Client Segmentation, Analysis and Outreach: developing understanding of the people we serve.
      - Training for employees.

.../3

- o **GOVERNMENT DIGITAL EXPERIENCE (GDX):**
  - – To support accessible information for employees and the public, GDX has developed the Accessibility and Inclusion Toolkit (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/home/accessible-government/toolkit) that provides resources for the public service about how to make information and communication more accessible.
  - – GDX has also created a catalogue of common user interface components that software developers can use to build web applications more quickly. These components all include instructions on how to meet accessibility standards.
  - – The division has an accessibility expert on staff that supports program areas in making their web presences more accessible.
  - – GDX is considering creating a cost-recoverable service to support ministries in driving online accessibility.
  - – There is a global standard for web accessibility set by the World Wide Web Consortium, called the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. These guidelines are used as a benchmark against which B.C. is judged in this area. GDX has set standards for government with regards to government's overall web presence.

  s.13; s.17

- o **CONNECTIVITY DIVISION:**
  - – Connectivity helps reduce isolation for people with disabilities, especially when they live in rural or remote areas. Internet in rural and remote communities not only allows for services such as telehealth, but also allows for online education and increased labour market participation by people with disabilities.
  - – The Province provides funding through the Connecting British Columbia program to support rural, remote and Indigenous communities in pursuing economic development and diversification projects, including improvements to digital connectivity.
  - – Based on the scope of the legislation, the Province could be held accountable for ensuring a minimum standard for internet speed and greater connectivity for all British Columbians, especially in the rural and remote locations.

NEXT STEPS:

- Accessibility legislation will likely have significant implications for CITZ. Effective response to the anticipated requirements of the proposed accessibility legislation would include:
  - o **Standard setting and audit** to enable the staff to understand current state and the new standards expected, and implementation plans/resources for the same.
  - o **Training and capacity building** to establish internal specialists in accessibility.
  - o **Implementation** of upgrades to existing facilities, services, and web applications to meet a higher standard of accessibility.

- **Costs, timelines, and level of effort** would need to be estimated, which will depend on the scope of the legislation:
  - o s.13

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○ s.13

- s.13
  s.13 Implementation would likely need to be staged over time to focus on key ministries, services and facilities most required by people with disabilities, such as ministries in the social and justice sectors.

- If the accessibility legislation does not provide a longer time horizon for implementation of accessible measures, s.13

- Additional funding would be required to implement the proposed changes s.13 s.13

Attachment: N/A
Contact: Sunny Dhaliwal, Assistant Deputy Minister, Real Property Division (250 380-8311)

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s.12 ; s.13

BRITISH COLUMBIA | Ministry of Citizens' Services

INFORMATION NOTE
Advice to Deputy Minister

DATE: April 12, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114917

ISSUE: Chief Records Officer (CRO) Directive on Archiving Government Information

BACKGROUND:

Section 13 (1) of the *Information Management Act* (IMA) states that "Government information in non-digital form must be digitized before it is archived".

Section 12 (1) of the IMA states that the "digital archives is established," s.12; s.13
s.12; s.13

Presently information that is scheduled for "full" or "selective" retention that is in physical form is transferred to the Royal BC Museum and Archives (RBCM). Until a digital archive is established, there is no corresponding custodian for archival records in digital form.

Under Section 6 of the IMA, the CRO may issue directives and guidelines to a government body in relation to a matter under the IMA, including the digitizing and archiving of government information, the effective management of information by the government body, and the creation of government records.

The CRO issued directives in May 2016 (CRO 01-2016), December 2017 (CRO 01-2017) and October 2019 (CRO 02-2019) regarding the archiving of government information. These directives:

- require government bodies to continue to hold any digital information that is scheduled to be archived until such time as the digital archives, established under section 12 of the IMA, are operational; and

- provide a time-limited exemption from the requirement to digitize information before it is archived and permits the transfer of this non-digital information to RBCM. The more recent directive provides this exemption through September 30, 2021.

DISCUSSION:

Government Records Service (GRS) has received inquiries from several ministries regarding what will be required after September 30, 2021.

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s.12   The 2019 directive
indicated that CIRMO expected a Digital Archive would be operational by September 30, 2021.

Government's Chief Records Officer (Kerry Pridmore) has approved a new directive, which was prepared in consultation with the Strategic Policy and Legislation Branch and Legal Services. This latest directive extends the exemption from the requirement to digitize information indefinitely and remove reference to the timing of implementation of Digital Archives (see Appendix A).

s.14

NEXT STEPS:

- The Corporate Information and Records Management Office (CIRMO) will publish the new directive on the CIRMO website, replacing CRO 02-2019.
- The Chief Records Officer will communicate to stakeholders, in consultation with Deputy Minster's Office staff.
- Government Records Service will update any affected guides (such as the IMA Practitioner's Guide).

Attachment(s):
Appendix A: Directive CRO 02-2021
Appendix B: Full text of legal review of Appendix A

Contact: Susan Laidlaw, 778-678-2097

CHIEF RECORDS OFFICER DIRECTIVE
ON ARCHIVING GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

DIRECTIVE:	CRO 01-2021
SUBJECT:	**Archiving of Government Information**
AUTHORITY:	This directive is issued under section 6 of the *Information Management Act*.
APPLICATION:	This directive applies to all government bodies.
EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 1, 2021

1

Chief Records Officer

Directive to Government Bodies Issued under Section 6
of the *Information Management Act*

Under section 6 (1) of the *Information Management Act*, S.B.C. 2015, c. 27 ("the Act"), I, Kerry Pridmore, Chief Records Officer, issue the following directive respecting the digitizing and archiving of government information. This directive amends and replaces the directive issued on October 1, 2019.

Preamble

The Corporate Information and Records Management Office is committed to establishing a digital archive. Work is underway to meet this commitment, and to implement a solution that meets client needs.

For Government Information in Digital Form:

(1) Government information in digital form that is scheduled to be archived under an information schedule must be held by government bodies until further direction is issued by the Chief Records Officer on the timing of its transfer to the digital archives.

For Government Information in Non-Digital Form:

(2) Government information in non-digital form that is scheduled and will be eligible for archiving is exempted from the requirement in s. 13 (1) of the Act for the information to be digitized before it is archived until further direction is issued by the Chief Records Officer on the timing of its transfer to the digital archives.

(3) Government information that is exempted in (2), above, is approved for transfer to the museum archives of government, upon notification by the Corporate Information and Record Management Office that the information is eligible for archiving.

This Directive is effective as of October 1, 2021. It remains in effect until rescinded or superseded.

April 9, 2021	*[signature]*
Date	Chief Records Officer

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s.14

![British Columbia | Ministry of Citizens' Services]

DECISION NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

Date: May 7, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114923

ISSUE: Extension of Ministerial Order Respecting Disclosures During COVID-19 Emergency

BACKGROUND:

On March 26, 2020, then Minister of Citizens' Services Anne Kang issued a Ministerial Order (MO) under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) authorizing disclosures outside of Canada under specific circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MO removed barriers that otherwise prevented health sector employees from using tools and applications for providing care during the pandemic, and supported other public servants working physically distanced. On June 5, 2020, the MO was extended to December 31, 2020 and on December 31, 2020, it was extended again until May 31, 2021. Impacted stakeholders require a decision on whether the MO will be extended again.

DISCUSSION:

At the outset of the pandemic and implementation of physical distancing measures, there was significant concern raised by various public bodies that FOIPPA would restrict their ability to use tools necessary to work during the pandemic. The Ministry acted quickly to develop a MO that would enable use of the necessary tools.

Reception of the MO has been mostly positive, though some concerns of a "slippery slope" were expressed by media. This concern is likely to be amplified given the number of extensions. However, many public bodies making use of the MO have been able to deliver critical services under stressful circumstances, while some public bodies have been able to deliver services without reliance on the MO.

There are two main reasons the authorities granted by the MO remain essential. The health sector's need has been focused on patient records and tools which facilitate patient care, related to both COVID-19 patients and others trying to avoid going to hospitals or clinics. The rest of the public sector's need has predominantly centred around video-conferencing tools in lieu of in-person interactions. For example, this has been deployed by schools offering online teaching, Ministers conducting virtual townhalls, and in the social sector for virtual visitations. As vaccinations increase, and restrictions (will) begin to lift, there is an ongoing need for these authorities in certain use cases. s.13

s.13

s.12

The MO extension must be signed far enough in advance of the May 31, 2021 expiry date to allow time for processing by the Order-in-Council Administration Office.

OPTIONS:

Option 1 (Recommended): Extend the MO until December 31, 2021.
Implications:

- Would provide for the continued use of tools to coordinate care in the health sector and retain physical distancing measures across the public sector during pandemic conditions.

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Option 2: Do not extend the MO.
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RECOMMENDATION: Option 1

(please circle)

~~APPROVED~~   NOT APPROVED   OPTION_____1_____

_____   May 10, 2021
_____
Lisa Beare   **Date**
Minister

Attachment: Appendix A: Use Cases for Ministerial Order
Contact: Kerry Pridmore, ADM, 778-698-1591

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DECISION NOTE
Advice to Deputy Minister

MEETING DATE: April 14, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114920

ATTENDEES: Shauna Brouwer, Deputy Minister; Susan Stanford, Assistant Deputy Minister Connectivity Division; Howard Randell, Executive Director, Network BC

ISSUE: Connecting British Columbia program

BACKGROUND:

The Connecting British Columbia program, administered by Northern Development Initiative Trust (Northern Development), continues to approve applications until funding is fully allocated.

- Phase 4 $90M Connecting British Columbia: StrongerBC Economic Recovery Intake (ERI)
- Phase 3 $50M Connecting British Columbia: a special intake to leverage program funding from the federal Universal Broadband Program (UBF Core Intake)
- As of April 9, 2021, there is approximately $4.1M (plus $2.25M from the federal government department of Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) for Highway 16) combined funding remaining to be allocated to connectivity projects from phases 3 and 4.

Each intake has a set of program criteria unique to that intake.
- Phase 4, or the ERI intake allows funding for cellular expansion projects along highways ($15M), as well as, for broadband projects in communities ($75M).
- Phase 3 allows funding for broadband last-mile and transport projects and a small amount of funding has been allocated to projects that support regional planning.
- Per direction from the Office of the Comptroller General in the Ministry of Finance, Northern Development approves projects for funding as government cannot show any control of the funds.

Project completion requirements:
- Projects funded under Phase 4 ERI must be completed by October 31, 2021.
    - Secretary to Treasury Board approved extending the project completion date to October 31, 2022 for projects that leverage the federal UBF and the recent Highway 16 cellular expansion project.
- Under Phase 3, projects are to be completed by March 31, 2023 (amended from the original date of March 31, 2022).
- The federal UBF funds projects to March 31, 2027.

DISCUSSION:

Available Phase 3 and 4 fund status as of April 9, 2021: $6.713M (or 4.8% of Phase 3/4 funding)
As of April 9, 2021, Phase 3 is substantially allocated with $363K remaining and Phase 4 ERI is also substantially allocated with $4.1M remaining (plus an additional amount of $2.25M from ISED for Highway 16). Most applications are approved based on further technical due diligence or required remediation. Approved funding amounts are expected to fluctuate on a project-to-project basis as due diligence is completed and if other factors surface (such as fire or other disaster, expansion to adjacent eligible community or homes, UBF funding decision(s), etc.).

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Project timelines impact our ability to leverage UBF funding
Phase 3 funding was allocated in fiscal 2018/19 with projects having three to four years to complete. It was originally intended as matching funds for the CRTC application intake, however BC-based service providers did not participate in the CRTC funding program as anticipated, resulting in $35M of unallocated funds for program matching, and no federal program to leverage until the UBF intake s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16

Reallocation of Funds from Community to Highway projects
Phase 4 ERI received Treasury Board approval to allocate $75M to community connectivity and $15M to highway connectivity projects. The $15M highway connectivity portion is fully allocated.

Recently received applications include proposals for cellular and/or WiFi at ferry terminals (rest areas).
s.13

The goal to benefit at least 200 communities through the $75M portion of the Phase 4 ERI funding will be met based on currently approved projects.

<center>s.13</center>

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Extend the completion deadline for new applications for Phase 3 funding from March 31, 2023 to March 31, 2025; and

2. As long as community targets are met, reprofile funding within Phase 4 ERI from the $75M allocation for community projects to the highway projects allocation to enable more rest areas to be connected.

(please circle)
APPROVED   NOT APPROVED

_____   April 15, 2021
                                                   _____
Shauna Brouwer   **Date**
Deputy Minister

Contact: Howard Randell, Executive Director, 250 415-6867

MEETING NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

MEETING DATE: April 27, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114994

ATTENDEES: **Roly Russell,** MLA for Boundary-Similkameen and Parliamentary Secretary for Rural Development, FLNR**; Jennifer Rice,** MLA North Coast and Parliamentary Secretary for Emergency Preparedness, PSSG; **Michele Babchuk,** MLA North Island; **CJ Ritchie**, Associate Deputy Minister and GCIO, CITZ; **Susan Stanford,** Assistant Deputy Minister, Connectivity Division, CITZ

ISSUE: Connected Coast Network Project Update

BACKGROUND:

The Connected Coast Network project scope involves the installation of a 3,400 km undersea cable and 159 landing sites in proximity to communities. The project is led by CityWest and Strathcona Regional District (SRD). Funding has been secured for the project.

s.13; s.16

The recently announced Rogers Highway 14 Cellular Build project is not a broadband build, and may benefit from landing sites at Port Renfrew and Jordan River delivered by the Connected Coast project. The Rogers cellular project is currently supported solely by a microwave link.

DISCUSSION:

The Connected Coast Network project is currently in permitting, consultations and final network design with the plan to begin construction in late summer 2021.

The funders agreed to extend the project timeline for completion from March 31, 2021 to March 31, 2023.

s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16

Last-mile projects to benefit from the Connected Coast Network project
- As a separate undertaking from the Connected Coast Network project, CityWest and other internet service providers have submitted funding applications to the Connecting British Columbia program for last-mile solutions associated with Connected Coast landing sites.
- Fourteen last mile projects have been approved with a total value of nearly $25 million. An additional 11 projects with a project value of $12.9 million have been conditionally approved, subject to joint funding by the federal Universal Broadband fund or the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission.

Anchor Tenants along the Connected Coast Network route
s.13; s.16

Role of Coastal First Nations
- Coastal First Nations is a unique alliance of nine nations situated along the north and central coast and on Haida Gwaii. Each nation has its distinct culture, governance, and territory.
- The Ministry of Citizens' Services Connected Communities program has been working with Coastal First Nations to support community digital readiness and capacity through connectivity planning. The planning work is focused on communities and their last-mile priorities and solutions in preparation for the new Connected Coast Network.

NEXT STEPS:
The Connected Coast Network project is currently working with Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development's (FLNR) FrontCounterBC Nanaimo office for provincial permitting requirements and with the federal government for federal permitting requirements.

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SUGGESTED RESPONSE / KEY MESSAGES:

The successful completion of the Connected Coast project is a priority for the Province. Staff have and will continue to support the project.

The Province has established a permitting navigation team to assist with the provincial permitting requirements should the proponents wish permitting support.

Attachment: ATT-1 Last-Mile project benefitting from Connected Coast Network
Contact: Howard Randell, Executive Director, Network BC Mobile: 250 415-6867

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.12

INFORMATION NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

Date: April 29, 2021   **REF: 115073**

ISSUE: Connectivity Overview Briefing for May 5 & 6 Local Government Calls with Minister Osborne

BACKGROUND:
- It is anticipated that questions and issues raised during the May 5 and 6 local government calls could range from specific municipal concerns to insights and recommendations emerging from regional district planning exercises. A sense of urgency may underly comments due to pandemic stresses, and awareness of recent actions by governments in other jurisdictions.
- MUNI requested "Guiding Questions" in advance to help shape the conversation (approved by DMO)

CONNECTIVITY GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SESSIONS:
1. *"If your community had full broadband internet connectivity speeds of 50 Mbps + or similar to a major centre such as Vancouver, how would you leverage that investment to achieve your priorities and objectives i.e. investment attraction, job creation?"*
2. *"If your community currently does not have broadband internet connectivity speeds of 50 Mbps +, what barriers need to be addressed to achieve this goal?"*

DISCUSSION:
The information below is a summary of the key concerns expressed by regional districts and communities across the province, primarily in areas that do not have sufficient connectivity and are actively working towards achieving this goal.

Provincial Connectivity Funding
Province has committed only $40M over the next 3-years which may be able to fund broadband and cellular infrastructure projects. Discussion may include:
- The amount committed is less than the priority as suggested in the Throne Speech
- Compared to British Columbia, other provincial governments have recently committed substantial dollars and poised to leverage significant investments from the federal Universal Broadband Fund (Quebec); making strategic policy changes to reduce deployment time and cost barriers (Ontario), and negotiating contracts on behalf of rural areas (Nova Scotia):
  - Federal Government - $1B in Budget 2021 (in addition to $1.5B previously committed)
  - Quebec - $826M (with $413M allocated from the Universal Broadband Fund)
  - Ontario – Government is introducing the *Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, 2021* which, if passed, would help connect more communities to reliable, high-speed internet sooner. This legislation proposes to reduce costs to broadband providers associated with attaching broadband wirelines to hydro utility poles and would provide timely access to poles and to municipal rights of way to install broadband on municipal land. As part of the 2020 Budget, the Ontario government announced a historic investment of almost $1 billion to improve broadband and cellular services, which is an additional $680 million on top of its previous commitment.

The Province's role in in partnering and market intervention:

- **Province-led service delivery models** in areas where a private-sector business case is unlikely to materialize (i.e. Provincially owned and operated open-access infrastructure, provincially negotiated and funded service contracts.)

- **New operational funding mechanisms** to support ongoing regional connectivity coordination, infrastructure investment and to supplement where user-pay will not create viable business case.

Connectivity Planning:

Municipalities and some regional districts may assert that connectivity planning is a responsibility being downloaded onto local governments without sufficient resources, and in the absence of a BC connectivity strategy. Discussion may include:

- **Development of a BC connectivity strategy**, regionally focused, developed through a participatory policy development process to recognize unique regional differences.

- **More funding for development of local and regional connectivity plans** in addition to that available via the Connecting British Columbia Program. Alternatively, there have been suggestions for the Government to undertake a province-led regional infrastructure gap analysis to support local connectivity planning.

s.13

Accuracy of National Connectivity speed data:

- **The National Broadband Internet Service Availability Map Data**, which determines Universal Broadband Fund eligibility and which BC communities are eligible for federal funding (current service is less than 50/10Mbps). Some communities are reporting maximum available speeds that are different than what is published on the National Broadband map.

- **Internet Speed Study Update:** The Ministry of Citizens' Services, UBCM, and Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) are responding collaboratively to concerns regarding federal mapping data with an independent study of differences between the broadband Internet speeds experienced in some BC communities, and the 50/10 Mbps speed identified by the federal government.

  - The study will produce information on maximum available Internet speeds in rural and remote communities, informing dialogue between NDIT, Indigenous and local governments, Internet service providers, the Province, and the federal government.

- o Data gathering and analysis will occur over the spring and summer months, with a report expected in the fall.

Key Regional Concerns

NORTH:
- **Redundancy:**
  - o Over the Easter Weekend, services in Northeast BC were interrupted, disabling electronic business transactions for a day, resulting in lost revenue for local businesses already stressed by the pandemic.
  - o Lack of regional redundancy is identified as a concern in the Peace River Regional District's draft connectivity study, which is expected to be presented to the Board in late April.
  - o Rogers recent national outage on April 19th supported these concerns.
- **Provincial Policy:**
  - s.13

- **Northern Rockies and Peace River Regional Municipalities:**
  - s.13

VANCOUVER ISLAND:
- Multiple Connected Coast landing sites have been proposed, some local governments with proposed landing sites have provided letters of support (Mount Waddington)
- Some communities along the Connected Coast route do not have landing sites and are calling to be added to the project with last mile connectivity (Denman and Hornby)

SOUTHEAST:
- At a recent SE Regional Connectivity Committee meeting (Columbia Basin region) there was interest around how better understanding how Quebec successfully secured $413 M in Universal Broadband funding to connect 150,000 households in the province.

SOUTHWEST/CENTRAL INTERIOR:
- Towns in transition (Clearwater) require improved connectivity for economic transition and cannot access more due to funding ineligibility due to federal data mapping status.

Contact: Susan Stanford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Connectivity   Phone: 250-580-7459

MEETING NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

MEETING DATE: 11:30am – 12:00pm, April 13, 2021   **CLIFF:** 114880

ATTENDEES:

Minister Lisa Beare
Shauna Brouwer, Deputy Minister
CJ Ritchie, GCIO & Assoc. DM
Alex MacLennan, ADM & CTO
Gary Perkins, CISO & ED

George Kurtz, CrowdStrike CEO
Justin Malczewski, CrowdStrike
Regional Sales Manager
Serge Bertini, CrowdStrike VP of Sales,
Canada
Jim Seidel, CrowdStrike VP of Sales,
Americas

ISSUE: Meeting with cybersecurity vendor CrowdStrike to discuss cybersecurity landscape

BACKGROUND:

- Cybersecurity has never been as imperative and cybersecurity attacks are more frequent and sophisticated than ever.
- Public and private sector organizations alike must prepare to prevent, detect, and respond to cyber attacks.
- Public and private sector organizations are more connected than ever and poor security hygiene in one organization puts others at risk.
- Impacts from cyber attacks include financial, regulatory, legal as well as loss of ability to provide services.
- The protection of government data and networks is a top priority for this government, especially where it concerns British Columbians' personal information.
- Governments must take steps to protect themselves from online attacks no matter the source or the strategy.
- Cyber criminals are becoming increasingly sophisticated and that requires us to be ever vigilant and up to date with technology.
- In British Columbia, we have the Office of the Chief Information Officer, which provides government with strategic leadership in IT security.

DISCUSSION:

- CrowdStrike is a cybersecurity vendor specializing in solutions to protect endpoints such as laptops and servers as well as securing cloud workloads.
- CrowdStrike prides itself on its ease of installation and reports to catch cyber-attacks other solutions do not.
- CrowdStrike successfully signed an agreement to provide endpoint security to Health Authorities across the province for the next 3 years.
- Government continues to invest in cybersecurity solutions to mitigate increasing cybersecurity risks and depends on key vendors to be successful.

- In March 2021, in response to the critical vulnerabilities posed by a virtual remote workforce, Government purchased an upgrade to endpoint security as an emergency measure until such time as a long-term solution can be procured.

NEXT STEPS:

- Meet with CrowdStrike on April 13 as planned.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE / KEY MESSAGES:

- The protection of government data and networks is a top priority for this government, especially where it concerns British Columbians' personal information.
- I appreciate that CrowdStrike is an active part of the vendor community and is supporting organizations in implementing strong cybersecurity practices.
- I know CrowdStrike has been working with Health Authorities across the province to improve endpoint security.
- The province will continue to evaluate and evolve its cybersecurity posture.
- Endpoint security solutions are an important part of government's security posture and we expect that government will need to procure cybersecurity solutions and services in the future.
- Thank you for your commitment to developing and maintaining the community of security professionals in B.C. through your involvement in professional organizations like Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA) and events like the Vancouver International Privacy and Security Summit (previously BC Aware).

Appendices: Biography – George Kurtz
                Biography – Justin Malczewski
                Biography - Serge Bertini

Contact: Gary Perkins, Executive Director/Chief Information Security Officer, 250-387-7590

Biography – George Kurtz
CEO, CrowdStrike

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George Kurtz is the CEO and co-founder of CrowdStrike, a leading provider of next-generation endpoint protection, threat intelligence, and services. George is an internationally recognized security expert, author, entrepreneur, and speaker. He has more than 28 years of experience in the security space, including extensive experience driving revenue growth and scaling organizations across the globe. His entrepreneurial background and ability to commercialize nascent technologies have enabled him to drive innovation to market throughout his career. His prior roles at McAfee, a $2.5 billion security company, include Worldwide Chief Technology Officer and GM as well as EVP of Enterprise.

Prior to joining McAfee, George started Foundstone in October 1999 as the founder and CEO responsible for recruiting the other founding team members. Foundstone, a worldwide security products and services company, had one of the leading incident response practices in the industry, and was acquired by McAfee in October of 2004. Kurtz has been quoted or featured in many major publications, media outlets, and television programs including CNN, Fox News, ABC World News, Bloomberg, CNBC, New York Times, USA Today, Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Associated Press, Network World, and may others. He also authored the best-selling security book of all time, Hacking Exposed: Network Security Secrets & Solutions.

Biography – Justin Malczewski
CrowdStrike Regional Sales Manager

Having held a variety of senior sales and business development roles with a variety of security vendors, technology start-ups and Canada's leading telecommunications providers including TELUS and Bell, Justin is a 30+ year veteran of the technology industry in Western Canada. For the past 13+ years, the threats cyber-criminals, hacktivists and rogue nations pose to society, have led him to focus his career in the area of IT Security.

Justin currently holds the position of Regional Sales Manager for CrowdStrike, the world's leading provider of incident response, threat intelligence, endpoint protection, detection, & response solutions. Prior to CrowdStrike, Justin held senior cybersecurity sales roles with Cisco Systems, Fortinet and Forcepoint (formerly Websense).

Justin is an active member of the Western Canada IT security community and is keenly interested in working within and outside of the security and privacy communities to foster a collaborative environment among like-minded professionals. To that end, he currently holds the position of Chairperson, Past President's Advisory Council for ISACA Vancouver (a professional organization with 650+ members representing the IT Security/Audit/Risk/Governance professions) where he believes strongly that the team ISACA Vancouver has assembled is in the best position to direct cybersecurity resources and training where they are needed most.

Biography – Serge Bertini
CrowdStrike Vice President of Sales, Canada

Serge Bertini has an extensive security background, bringing over 25 years of Information Technology Management and sales experience to the teams he has led. In his current role at CrowdStrike, he is tasked with changing the security posture of Canadian organizations and growing the operations for the company in Canada.

Prior to joining CrowdStrike, he managed the Software Security Sales for HPE, under his leadership revenues tripled over the course of 2.5 years. He has a long history of success due in part to his approaches in fostering teamwork, innovation, and a focus on customer success. Serge has also held various leadership roles at organizations such as Intel Security/McAfee, where he was charged with expanding the sales team. He has also managed teams at various Canadian and US IT Security start-ups.

Serge has a degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Teaneck NJ.

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Withheld pursuant to/removed as

s.13 ; s.14 ; s.17

MEETING NOTE
Advice to Minister Beare

MEETING DATE: April 22, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 114775

ATTENDEES: Joyce Murray, the Government of Canada's Minister of Digital Government and Member of Parliament for the federal riding of Vancouver Quadra

ISSUE: Lessons and opportunities for collaboration on digital government between the Government of B.C. and the Government of Canada

BACKGROUND:

The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss shared priorities relating to digital change between the Province and the Government of Canada. Minister Murray is expected to express interest in the Province's approach to digital government and in strengthening collaboration.

Canada's Minister of Digital Government
The role of Minister of Digital Government within the Government of Canada was established in 2019. In her role, the Minister oversees several federal entities. Her portfolio includes:

- **The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)** – This division of the federal Treasury Board Secretariat sets policy and strategy for digital and data-driven government.
- **Shared Services Canada (SSC)** – SSC is the federal provider of shared tech services.
- **The Canadian Digital Service (CDS)** – CDS helps federal departments deliver user-centric government services, serving largely as internal consultants.
- **The Digital Academy at the Canada School of Public Service** – The academy helps federal public servants gain the knowledge, skills and mindsets needed in the digital age.

Minister Murray has been a vocal supporter of digital change in the public sector. Of note, she successfully advocated for high profile commitments in the 2020 Speech from the Throne, including to "make generational investments in updating outdated IT systems to modernize the way that Government serves Canadians". She has, however, been critical of some of B.C.'s efforts, including through a January 2021 opinion piece in the Georgia Straight newspaper lamenting B.C.'s reticence in using the federal COVID-19 Alert Application.

Recent progress on digital government in the Government of Canada
The Government of Canada is a leading digital government globally. In November 2019, Canada assumed the role of Chair of Digital Nations, an informal group of leading digital governments. Recent federal accomplishments in digital government include:

- **COVID response** – In response to the pandemic, CDS, OCIO and SSC supported an unprecedented shift to remote work and quickly rolled out essential services and benefits. They built digital tools to help Canadians navigate new benefits and COVID Alert, the national exposure notification application.

- **Policy** – Canada has significantly updated its digital policy instruments. In 2019, it released its mandatory *Policy on Service and Digital* and established conditions for user-centred service design and delivery. The Policy took effect on April 1, 2020.
- **Progress in priority areas** – Canada has made progress in recent years on topics such as artificial intelligence, digital identity, IT procurement reform, legacy modernization, open government, data, and greening government IT. It strengthened governance for digital government, including by formalizing the role of the Government Chief Information Officer as a Deputy Minister and having the Minister of Digital Government sit at Treasury Board.

Going forward a key area of focus is modernizing major IT projects. The Government of Canada is also focused on supporting departments and meeting operational needs to build whole of government components. A summary of Minister Murray's priorities for the future of digital government is available at Annex B.

DISCUSSION:

The Government of B.C. is viewed across Canada as a leader in digital government, particularly with regards to digital identity. Topics for potential discussion with the federal Minister include:

- COVID-19 response
- Digital strategy
- Digital policy
- Digital skills
- Cloud

- Open data
- Race-based data
- Registries
- Privacy & FOIPPA updates
- Identity

Detail on these topics, and their relevance to federal priorities, is provided in Annex C. Overall the relationship between the Government of B.C. and the Government of Canada on digital government is positive, but nascent. Areas of strong collaboration include digital identity, registries and access to cloud services. There continue to be opportunities to deepen collaboration, including through closer coordination around procurement for technology services, further progress on digital identity, and efforts to share technology components.

NEXT STEPS:

s.13; s.16

KEY MESSAGES:

- Thank you for your interest in sharing lessons on digital government. I know that you are familiar with some of our work here in B.C. I understand that when you were a provincial Minister you may have even been part of shaping current privacy legislation!
- **Progress** – I'm keen to hear about your experiences in the federal government. I saw the 2020 Throne Speech commitment around making generational investments in modernizing IT systems. How is that going?
- **Levers** – We've often taken different approaches to driving digital change here in the Province. Our Exchange Lab and our Digital Investment Board have both been instrumental in driving change. What measures have you been using to drive change?

- **Path forward** – I was interested to see your Four Pillars of Digital Transformation. Congratulations on an ambitious strategy. I'm curious whether you anticipate much scope for collaboration with the provinces?

If prompted:

s.13; s.16

Attachments: Annex A: Biography for Minister Joyce Murray
Annex B: Federal priorities for digital government
Annex C: Detail on potential areas of shared interest

Contact: Jaimie Boyd, 250-888-3354

ANNEX A: Biography for Minister Joyce Murray

The Honourable Joyce Murray was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Vancouver Quadra in 2008.

Minister Murray is a dedicated community leader with a deep commitment to environmental sustainability and democratic engagement. Her federal political career follows a 25-year career building an international reforestation company and four years serving in the Cabinet of the Government of British Columbia.

In her earlier role as Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Treasury Board, Minister Murray championed and helped lead the development of the Centre for Greening Government. Making federal government operations more environmentally friendly and efficient was a natural project for Minister Murray, whose entrepreneurial spirit was reinforced through her reforestation company. The company has planted almost 1.5 billion trees, including more than 500,000 that she planted herself.

Minister Murray is a thought leader, driving progressive new policies in government. Whether advocating for strong, smart environmental measures such as a tanker ban on British Columbia's north coast or for the legalization and strict regulation of cannabis, her ability to envision and deliver on bold new ideas comes from her depth of experience in politics and business. Her interest in environmental sustainability was evident in her master's thesis on global warming, which contributed to her receiving the Simon Fraser University Dean's Convocation Medal for top MBA graduate of 1992.

As a child, Minister Murray immigrated to Canada from South Africa with her family and settled in Vancouver. She has three adult children and five grandchildren, and lives in Vancouver Quadra with her husband, Dirk.

ANNEX B: Federal priorities for digital government

Shared by the Government of Canada on March 11, 2021

The Four Pillars of Digital Government Transformation
(to bring Canada from 28th in OECD to 1st in G-7 by 2025)

Copyright

ANNEX C: Detail on potential areas of shared interest

This annex provides a non-exhaustive list of digital government topics that may be of interest:

- **COVID-19 Response** – COVID-19 made digital service delivery more urgent and relevant than ever. In B.C., prior groundwork around delivery-driven approaches and communities were instrumental in our pandemic response, allowing us to conduct design research, develop and expand digital services within days. The pandemic revealed opportunities for intergovernmental collaboration, including around sharing open source code, e.g., code to enable safe screening of returning travelers that was first developed in BC, then shared freely with Canada. Other opportunities include collaboration on digital identity via the Pan-Canadian Trust Framework, including an in-flight effort to ensure readiness to enable digital proof of vaccine registration, should such functionality be called for by decision-makers.
- **Digital strategy** – The Government of B.C. launched a digital framework in 2019 and has made good progress in strengthening the foundations for digital service delivery. The Government of Canada has similarly made progress in advancing its Digital Operations Strategic Plan. Minister Murray may be open to sharing lessons learned.
- **Digital policy** – A priority action in B.C.'s Digital Framework is to create a Digital Policy Framework, starting by modernizing government's Core Policy on information management and information technology. In 2019, the OCIO co-developed Digital Principles with a wide variety of stakeholders to guide the work of public servants. These principles also guide our Digital Policy Framework.
- **Digital Skills & Capacity-Building** – It is widely recognized that a key gap in enabling the effective digital-era design and delivery of public services, as well as optimizing internal government operations, is a shortfall in public service talent. To address this gap, B.C.'s Exchange Lab has piloted digital training and talent recruitment and retention efforts. It has also partnered with the Canada's School of Public Service to provide training. B.C. is now establishing a Digital Academy, modelled after the same agency in the Federal Government. Opportunities exist to expand collaborative opportunities across our governments, including in respect of training and talent mobility.
- **Cloud** – Cloud services are a core component of modern government service. B.C. has been working to remove barriers to adopting cloud services for several years. Over the last year, CITZ has worked with Shared Services Canada to use the federal Cloud Brokerage service to accelerate our cloud journey. Partnering with the federal government helped us accelerate a process that typically takes 18 months down to six months. We look forward to continuing to leverage the Cloud Brokerage as adoption of cloud matures. B.C.'s experience with the federal Cloud Brokerage service is a wonderful example of the value of collaborative procurement for technology solutions.
- **Open data** – The CITZ mandate letter includes a commitment to "support innovation, including in the B.C. tech sector, through open data initiatives." B.C. was the first province in Canada with an open data program and has more than open 3000 datasets. We intend to focus on engaging the technology sector to prioritize datasets for release that will enable further innovation. The Province collaborates with Federal-Provincial-Territorial partners through the Canadian Open Government Working Group.

- **Race-based data** – B.C. is working to understand the experience of Indigenous and racialized people through data and to address systemic racism. The work of Statistics Canada on ethnocultural data and initiatives like the Government of Canada's Quality of Life Framework are directly relevant.
- **Registries** – BC Registries is working with Innovation Science and Economic Development, the Province of Alberta and a consortium of Canadian banks on the Business Banking Digital Credentials Pilot. This project aims to demonstrate the use of digital credentials to provide required proof to obtain business banking products and services online. The CITZ Digital Trust Services team has successfully issued the Verified Person, Verified Organization & Verified Relationship credentials to a digital wallet.
- **Privacy & FOIPPA updates** – Privacy, Compliance and Training Branch explores ways to work across the B.C. government to enable digital tools in the context of BC's robust privacy legislation. This includes ongoing work to innovate and modernize the privacy impact assessment process in a digital context. Our work also benefits from ongoing engagement with our counterparts in other jurisdictions, including the federal government, on privacy and access topics. The Government of Canada recently updated its privacy legislation and may have lessons to share.
- **Identity** – The Provincial Identity Information Management (IDIM) Program within CITZ is responsible for identity management services. The BC Services Card is a trusted government issued identity credential enabling safe, secure, privacy-enhancing access to multiple government services in-person, online or through the BC Services Card mobile app. The mobile BC Services Card is a major contributor to the transformation of digital services. It is recognized as the only digital identity credential in Canada to achieve a level 3 trust assurance issued by the federal government. There may be further opportunities to deepen pan-Canadian collaboration around digital identity.

Briefing Note

What:

Verifiable proofs of vaccination

Who:

- The Honourable Lisa Beare, Minister of Citizens' Services
- Shauna Brouwer, Deputy Minister of Citizens' Services
- Premier's Office (TBD)

Executive Summary:

The Province is well positioned to implement proofs of COVID-19 health status, such as vaccination status or negative test results.

Background:

Countries around the world widely view COVID-19 vaccination as a key element in preventing disease spread and reopening the global economy. Accordingly, several jurisdictions have either implemented or announced the use of proofs of COVID-19 health status, to support a return to day-to-day activities. Examples include:

- The EU is implementing a 'Digital Green Certificate' to serve as proof of vaccination, testing or recent recovery to facilitate travel between member states.
- The UK is piloting COVID-19 health status certificates for inbound and outbound international travel and certain domestic use cases, such as sports and music events.
- The US is developing standards for COVID-19 health credentials and the State of New York State has implemented a proof of COVID-19 health status for domestic use cases like sports and music events.

Today, British Columbians are provided with a paper receipt when they get vaccinated. These paper receipts are easy to falsify and difficult for authorities like border agencies to verify. To avoid these issues, many jurisdictions are implementing *verifiable* proofs of COVID-19 health status to minimize fraud.

BRIEFING NOTE
Proof of COVID-19 Health Status Technical Readiness Briefing
April 30, 2021

Canada and British Columbia have not yet established public health policy direction in this area.
s.13; s.16

s.13; s.16   Despite continued discussions regarding the health policy challenges, British Columbians may require government-issued proofs of COVID-19 health status to support use cases like inter-provincial and international travel.

The Ministry of Citizens' Services has been leading international and Pan-Canadian efforts to build technical platforms that can issues these types of verifiable proofs and credentials since 2016.

s.13; s.16

If implemented, British Columbians will be able to use their BC Services Card to log into the Health Gateway[1] and either print or save a proof of COVID-19 health status to their smartphones.

Recommendations:

Ministries of Health and Citizens' Services continue building the technical readiness to implement proofs of COVID-19 Health Status in case Government determines these will be required.

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[1] The Health Gateway is a Ministry of Health initiative which provides British Columbians with secure online access to health data like prescriptions, immunization records, health visits and COVID-19 test results.

INFORMATION NOTE
Advice to Deputy Minister

DATE: April 30, 2021   **CLIFF#:** 115065

ISSUE: Implications of Federal Budget 2021

BACKGROUND:

Federal Budget 2021, introduced on April 19, includes significant new funding for information technology and data management. Since the arrival of the current government, and following the failure of the Phoenix payroll system, the Government of Canada has committed significant resources to both improving the delivery of their technology products as well as upskilling their workforce in digital competencies and reskilling their IT workforce in modern methods.

The note below highlights the substantive measures that were identified in Budget 2021. It is important to acknowledge that with many of these initiatives is a concurrent policy and program approach that the OCIO is reviewing for further determination of alignment to Government of B.C. initiatives, including: a) mandate commitments on data security, disaggregated race data, open data and evidence-based decision making and b) budget letter requirements for reviews of the operating model for IT and the funding model for shared services.

DISCUSSION:

IM/IT Operating Model
- The Government of Canada currently spends over $6 billion each year on information technology. Building Back Better, the Federal Government's economic recovery initiative, includes a rapid expansion of this fiscal outlay – it commits to generational investments in IT under 'smart central direction and leadership'. This is a commitment on a strong centre role and an enterprise-wide, instead of ministry-by-ministry, approach.
- Federal Budget 2021 makes permanent the Canadian Digital Service (CDS) through a four year, $88M investment. CDS performs a similar function to BC's Exchange Lab, supporting the development of common components and consulting with ministries on digital products.
- The budget allocates $43.9M over three years to the Canada Revenue Agency for a "tell-us-once" platform for businesses submitting real-time payroll, employment, and demographic data.
- Finally, the budget allocates significant funding to modernizing back office IT.
  - $300M is allocated to Repair and Replace activities, funding to repair and modernize the IT infrastructure whose failure could cause service interruptions and put government operations and services to Canadians at risk.
  - $456M is allocated to improving and defending cyber networks through investments in network modernization, secure cloud enablement and tools. As well, these funds will support an IT investment fund for emerging solutions that reduce risk while accelerating modernization.
  - $215M is allocated to supporting efficient, stable, digital applications to reduce service interruptions, loss of data, and security risks for government operations and digital services.
  - $34M from 2021-22 to 2025-26 for the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to ensure that the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has the necessary resources to provide strategic direction and leadership in the areas of information management, information technology, security, privacy, and access to information across the Government of Canada.

Data Efforts

- While the Government of Canada released an all-of-government data strategy in 2019, the most recent budget advances that strategy further by providing funding for the creation of a Data Commissioner to inform government and business approaches to data-driven issues. The budget allocated $17.6M for this role over the next five years and an annual $3.4M ongoing.
- In addition, the federal budget provides significant funding to expanding the statistical function and ensuring data is driving decision-making in government – it allocates $250M over five years to data collection, storage and use in support of evidence based decisions; as well, it allocates $172M towards a Disaggregated Data Action Plan with a focus on collections and use of more representative data and statistics.
- Also, with a view to creating greater standardization of data between the public and private sector, the recent budget allocated $8.4M over five years to the Standards Council of Canada.
- Finally, Budget 2021 funds the continued development and implementation of a First Nations Data Governance Strategy, as well as efforts to improve Inuit and Métis baseline data capacities and data strategies. This includes funding of $73M over the next three years.

NEXT STEPS:

The allocations included in the Government of Canada's 2021 Budget are generational in nature and represent an opportunity to significantly shift the way technology is used by government. It will be important that the Province of B.C. ensure that the work undertaken by the Government of Canada continues to meet the needs of British Columbians s.12; s.13
s.12; s.13

Attachment(s):   Nil
Contact: Var Shankar, 250 216 0891