



November 6, 2019

Dear Warden Ronnie LeBlanc, Warden Anthony Leland, Warden Jimmy MacAlpine, Warden Danny Muise, Warden Eddie Nickerson, Victoria Brooks, Stephane Cyr, Linda Fraser, Chris Frotten, and Alain Muise:

Thank you for reaching out to us with your collective concerns regarding the project approach for the Internet for Nova Scotia Initiative, and for speaking with us on Friday November 1, 2019.

We appreciate that you have spent considerable time and effort convening partners in your region and building a strategy together in an effort to ensure that your residents and businesses are able to enjoy the best possible high-speed Internet solution and all of the benefits and opportunities that this affords. We applaud your effort and understand your desire to influence the process to ensure the solution meets your objectives. We want to assure you that we heard and understand your concerns.

I think we agree that we have a common objective to deliver reliable, high quality, high speed Internet to the western region of Nova Scotia. Develop Nova Scotia is committed to reaching greater than 95% of provincial homes and businesses through this project and we are working diligently to ensure we achieve that goal in a fair, transparent and accountable manner and to ensure that the solution we deliver can meet expectations now and in the future.

Our approach was informed through extensive stakeholder consultation, which included excellent and constructive discussions with stakeholders in your region.

To ensure good value for substantial public investment, and to provide space for ingenuity in developing the best possible solutions, we launched a formal competitive procurement process. Through an early first round RFP, we invited proponents to respond with solutions that included early connections. Our process was intentionally designed with the flexibility to allow for a variety of technical solutions to meet different needs in different regions. It was also designed to capture the value added by regional bids and by funding partnerships. While the first round RFP required connections to be made in the short term, it also invited projects that extended over the longer term provided that short-term connections could also be made.

We received excellent response including large and small ISPs with strong proposals across Nova Scotia and are now, as discussed, in contract negotiations with preferred proponents. As I believe you understood, to preserve the integrity of the procurement process, we are unable to share details of these negotiations until they are complete, and we are unable to provide opportunity for your group

November 6, 2019

Page 2

to influence the outcome of the negotiations. Our process deliberately incorporated partnership inherent in the evaluation criteria. So, your support for a particular project can be registered as a component of a proposal and, in that way, influence the relative scoring through the formal RFP process. We appreciate your understanding of the importance of maintaining process integrity in this very complex project.

As we negotiate RFP 1 contracts, we recognize the lack of available information may cause uncertainty, but we respectfully ask for your patience knowing that we share a common objective to get the highest quality of service to as many areas as possible. We furthermore believe that this objective can be achieved in a variety of different ways. We have assembled a team and support with deep expertise, and we are working hard to ensure we do the job right on behalf of all Nova Scotians.

Please do not hesitate to reach out in the meantime should you have any further comments, questions or concerns to share. We look forward to sharing further details very soon, and to working with your group to maximize the benefit of this important infrastructure project for Western Nova Scotia (Municipalities of Digby, Argyle, Barrington, Clare and Yarmouth).

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer Angel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Jennifer Angel
President & CEO

cc: Dale Godsoe, Chair of the Board, Develop Nova Scotia