TO: Regional District of Central Okanagan Board
FROM: Jim Edgson, Electoral Area Director, Central Okanagan West
DATE: October 21, 2013
SUBJECT: Central Okanagan West Electoral Area Grant in Aid for Westside Road Improvement Committee

RECOMMENDATION:
THAT the Regional Board approve a Central Okanagan West Electoral Area Grant in Aid up to $5000 to the Westside Road Improvement Committee for the placement of Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure approved Road Signs in 7 locations along Westside Road within Central Okanagan West from Traders Cove in the south to the northern boundary of Central Okanagan West for the main purpose of enhancing the response times of Emergency Responders through the 911 system.

Background Summary:
The Westside Road Improvement Committee (WRIC) was formed in December 2004 with the encouragement and support of the then MLA Rick Thorpe shortly after a portion of the Westside Road slid into the Lake and was repaired. From the beginning it was decided that WRIC would be a group of Westside Road residents who work by consensus. It would be a team where each member’s thoughts, information and input were valued without the need for a formal hierarchy. WRIC’s goal was to effectively communicate and work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) to encourage them to improve the Westside Road, working with them to this end with the Westside Road Communities. WRIC has been very effective in doing so, and continued to have the support and encouragement of MLA Stewart, and continue to have the support and encouragement of MLA Clark.

Since the inception of WRIC, Westside Road communities and WRIC have been looking for ways to improve the signage along the Westside Road to help mitigate the occasional confusion as to where an emergency incident occurred when this incident was phoned in to the 911 system (attached ref: letters from Wilson Landing Community Society, Wilson’s Landing Fire Department and North Westside Firefighters Society). The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure will put up some signage to point out roads, but will not put up location signs unless there is a post office, a school, a Provincial Park or the like. MOTI does approve signage like Regional District Parks and other signage through an application process. This has left the Westside Road with, at best, sporadic MOTI approved signage to aid the travelling public on this increasingly travelled road.

Working with the MOTI towards a solution to this concern led to consideration being given to signs pointing out where each subdivision was along the Central Okanagan West (COW) part of the Westside Road. This was discouraged by the MOTI because these were not incorporated entities.
The MOTI provided WRIC with pages from their "Policy Manual for Supplemental Signs" Historic and Theme Route Signs (pages 37 and 38, attached). On these pages it was noted that "Historic routes must first be sanctioned by the Heritage Conservation Branch" while "Theme routes should have the support of Tourism BC and/or regional tourism groups".

WRIC and the MOTI determined that a Theme Sign for the Westside Road tied to signs with known positions (through GPS location) would be the best way to go, and would be within the purview of not only WRIC's mandate, but the needs of residents of Central Okanagan West along Westside Road. A common theme was sought. Each community considered coincidentally had at least a paddlewheel dock or landing in the past. From this consideration, a Killiney Beach resident (Rebecca Hume) was asked to draw up a steamboat graphic.

The placement of the proposed signs would be along Westside Road where there was a community with some local history. This would result in improved sign coverage along the Road (see attached Westside Road Improvements map with proposed sign placements). A sign was developed which would have the Theme on the top with the community listed on the bottom (attached Wilson's Landing example).

From page 38 of the attached MOTI Policy Manual: "It is important to note that (the) motorists have only 10-15 seconds to view a sign...". A Canadian Geographic poll notes that 83% of the people polled do a road trip do so for the adventure of seeing new places (Canadian Geographic, October 2013, pg. 68; attached). It is the hope of the Westside Road Improvement Committee these Westside Road theme signs would draw the attention of the travelers of the Road long enough to register in people's minds to note where they are. It is also hoped that by working with a local tourism entity (Kelowna Tourism) that a tourism map with brief local stories will cause people to pay attention to these signs and the communities they are placed near.

The proposed sign was presented to the MOTI, who encouraged WRIC to proceed with the application process once WRIC has the approval of the RDCO through the Grant in Aid Process. WRIC then approached Kelowna Tourism (Nancy Cameron). Nancy liked the idea that a local historical note could be attached to a map within a tourism brochure which showed the sign placements along Westside Road. She encouraged WRIC to proceed first through the RDCO and then (if approved) come back and bring our proposal to the Tourism Board.

The MOTI encouraged the WRIC to let their maintenance crews place the signs, once approved, and with MOTI approved materials and placement techniques. WRIC solicited quotes from a Kelowna sign maker for reflective metal signs, and from the MOTI for the sign placement. The total cost is expected to be less than $5000.

The amount of Grant in Aid the Westside Road Improvement Committee is asking for is up to $5000 to cover any contingencies. The request will result in the signs being manufactured in 2013, and the signs placed in the spring of 2014. $1500 will be needed in 2013. GPS points will be established after the signs are placed in the spring, with the information being provided to the Emergency Services of the Regional District of Central Okanagan to be used in the 911 system.

Conclusion:

Through consultation with the MOTI, Kelowna Tourism, and the citizens and responders affected along Westside Road, there has been demonstrated a need to enhance the emergency response system through improved MOTI approved signage. The signage proposed is designed to do this.

Submitted by:

Jim Edgson, Electoral Area Director, Central Okanagan West
For the adventure of seeing new places, 83% of people choose road trips. Why do you road-trip?
Historic & Theme Route Signs (Rev. 12/01)

**POLICY**

The Ministry will permit signs for Historic Routes or Theme Routes on non-freeway highway rights-of-way, subject to the conditions detailed below.

**BACKGROUND**

The policy addresses requests from communities or sponsoring groups wishing to erect signs to identify recognized historic or theme routes.

**PROCEDURES**

Community or other sponsoring groups wishing to promote sanctioned historic routes may apply to the District Highways Manager for permits to erect signs.

Historic routes must first be sanctioned by the Heritage Conservation Branch.

Theme routes should have the support of Tourism B.C. and/or regional tourism groups.

**Specifications**

All historic route signs should be 45 cm wide by 60 cm deep. They should show the words HISTORIC/ROUTE at the bottom in two lines of 10 cm text with the specific routes identified above by additional text, approved logos or combinations of both.

Theme route sign should be square or rectangular, preferably maximum 90x 90cm. The graphics or style will be provided by the sponsor.

These signs are considered trailblazers and are non-directional.

**Supply**

Communities or sponsoring groups are responsible for the supply, installation and maintenance of all historic or theme route signs on both Ministry and non-Ministry roads. Sign locations on Ministry roads must be pre-approved by the District Highways Manager.
Historic & Theme Routes, Cont'd.

Promotion of Routes

It is the responsibility of sponsoring communities or other groups to promote the use of the routes through the distribution of maps, brochures and other advertising.

Graphics for Theme routes should be public domain so that map makers may use the symbols when updating highways maps and local businesses can use them for area recognition.

Graphics Design

Graphics or logos for highway design should be given careful consideration as often a logo on paper may not be suitable for use on a highway signs.

It is important to note that motorist have only 10-15 seconds to view a sign therefore the design should be simple, bold and limited in colours.

Logos should not replicate standard highway sign & standard highway sign colours should be avoided.

Cross Reference

See also the similar policy on "Scenic Route and Circle Tour Signs" in this manual.
Regional District of Central Okanagan  
1450 KLO Road,  
Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4

Attention: Jim Edgson, Director Central Okanagan West

The Wilson Landing Community Society (WLCS) wholeheartedly supports the installation of theme signs to recognize communities located along Westside Rd N. We have been working in conjunction with Westside Road Improvement Committee (WRIC) for several years towards this end.

Theme signs will not only identify local communities but provide the travellers of Westside Road N with a sense of our history and community of which we are so very proud. WLCS represents residents from Traders Cove in the south to Shelter Cove in the north. We appreciate the concept of Theme Signage focusing on the various historical Landings and Trading Posts on the Westside of Okanagan Lake.

Perhaps more importantly, it is our belief that installation of these signs will greatly improve the emergency response along Westside Road N. Wilson’s Landing Fire Department (WLFD) has also been working with WRIC for a number of years to have community signage along Westside Rd N. Often their call-outs do not give sufficient information to aid them in locating an accident or fire. This is due to the fact that the person(s) reporting an incident has no point of reference to help them establish their location. There are times when there is not enough information provided in a page, to tell the fire fighters whether they should head north or south from the hall.

It is our sincere hope that Theme signs will be installed as soon as possible along Westside Rd N. in order to provide our community with an identity to travellers. We would like people to know where Wilson’s Landing is located. We would like people to know where Trader’s Cove is. We would like them to know that we are indeed communities with a name. It is our hope that travellers will remember these names on the signs should they have the need.
to report an incident to 911. It is also our hope that the dispatchers will be made aware of these community names and will know their location in respect to the fire station.

WLCS and WLFD has always been community minded. Whether it be roadside litter pick up, our annual Christmas food bank Santa run, community meetings or Christmas parties we have always been able to count on our members. Signs put up in our community will be honoured and cared for by the members of the community at large.

The sooner signs are installed the better it will be for the safety of Westside Road N citizens and users.

Sincerely

Karen Bennison
President
Wilson's Landing Community Society

Cc Hugh McKenna
Director Jim Edgson
Regional District of Central Okanagan
1450 KLO Road,
Kelowna, BC V1W 3Z4

October 7, 2013

Dear Jim,

Wilson’s Landing Fire Department has been working with the Westside Road Improvement Committee for a number of years to obtain improved signage along Westside Rd N. It is our belief that installation of signs identifying our various small communities will greatly improve the emergency response times along Westside Road N.

As you are aware, Wilson’s Landing Fire Department has, over the years experienced Dispatched pages to locations along Westside Road that have not been very accurate in determining exact locations. Occasionally, because of the lack of information provided to Dispatch, we literally did not know whether to turn left or right coming from our Hall. Improved reflective signage along Westside Road, indicating our various community areas would go a long ways in providing specific locals or points of reference along our linear protection area.

Yours truly,

Rob Baker
Fire Chief, WLFD

Cc Hugh McKenna
To whom it may concern;

I am writing this letter on behalf of the North Westside Firefighters Society. The fire fighters would like to show their support to the Westside Road Improvement Committee and their Westside Road side proposal. We have viewed a sample of the historic landmark signs. It can often be difficult for drivers unfamiliar to the area to determine just where they are. The colouring and unique design may aid a motorist in relaying their location to a 911 dispatcher. This information could then be passed on to first responders and greatly increase response times.

The North Westside Firefighters Society is in full support of the Westside Road Improvement Committee and its historic landmark signs project.

Thank you,

Jason Satterthwaite
President
NWFFS