



January 31st, 2020

Dear RDEK Board of Directors,

As you know, RDEK began a new funding model for Valley Visitor Services (VVS) in 2016 to streamline the visitor services offered in the valley by providing \$100,000 to the Radium Chamber of Commerce. Those funds are then used to offset the cost of staffing information centres at the Invermere Crossroads (just off Hwy 93/95) and Radium Hot Springs, as well as two seasonal kiosks in Fairmont Hot Springs and Invermere (downtown).

This single entity VVS model has been strengthened in 2019 through strategic planning and stronger collaboration amongst key stakeholders. Furthermore, new Executive Director's have been hired in both Radium and Invermere which is bringing a fresh approach to the delivery of these services.

Many things are changing quickly in visitor centres throughout the Province as technology and rising staff costs are giving cause to revisit traditional models. We are therefore requesting that the \$100,000 amount remain stable for the this coming year (2020) to allow our new Executive Director's and the VVS Committee to continue to deliver on the service levels our region is known for, while exploring what exciting new opportunities for the future.

We anticipate a greater need for highly trained visitor services counsellors in 2020 as the Kootenay National Park celebrates its 100-year birthday, the Radium Hot Springs Pools continue their renovation work and the Kicking Horse Canyon project begins. In short, visitor centres in our region will be more important than ever during these times. Additionally, the increases to minimum wage continue to drive costs and compound the additional spending required for this program well beyond the \$100,000 support from the Regional District. So we are incredibly grateful for the critical support the RDEK has given this program to date.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience,

Yours,

Erin Palashniuk

President, Radium Chamber of Commerce

Radium Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce
7556 Main St. East / PO Box 225
Radium Hot Springs BC V0A 1M0
(250) 347-9331
RadiumHotSprings.com