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May 17, 2023

Mayor and Council
City of Prince George

On behalf of our Society, I wish to update the City regarding the current status of the relocation plan for our Growing Knowledge Community Compost Garden.

As we detailed in our letter of August 24, 2022, to the City Manager, REAPS found itself in a situation which threatened the continuation of our programs. Forced to vacate the space with very little notice at Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park which we had occupied for more than 25 years, we had to continue delivering our educational and outreach events, while finding the time to devote to planning and obtaining funding for a replacement facility.

We can't stress enough the peril that this presented to our viability. Our facility represented a major investment of volunteer time and donated funds and materials and contained mature plantings. Replacing what had been built up over a quarter-century, on short notice, is not something that can be done easily by a small, volunteer-led society with only one full-time employee.

We were fortunate to obtain temporary locations from Industrial Forestry Services Ltd and Exploration Place, while developing the plans for our long-term replacement facility in partnership with the botanical garden expansion project of the David Douglas Botanical Garden Society at UNBC.

With this uncertainty hanging over us, it was a tremendous vote of confidence to receive a 5-year renewal of our core operating funding from the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George last month.

The Regional District has come through and shown that it values our role in the community. The City has been a valuable partner for almost 3 decades and can demonstrate this in a tangible way by contributing to the replacement of our infrastructure.

We therefore repeat our request of last August that the City provide in-kind and/or monetary assistance in the total value of \$100,000 to the initial works needed to make our project a reality. The specific services needed at this stage consist of final grading and top-dressing of the site and connection of the relocated garden office building to utilities (electrical and water) and installation of four water standpipes

We're confident that we can make a success of this project if the City of Prince George joins with the Regional District in showing that it values the continued contributions that REAPS makes to environmental stewardship in our community.

Regards,

Paul Sanborn
President