

May 21, 2021

Mayor Lyn Hall and Council

CC: Mr. Walter Babicz

Mr. Ian Wells

City Clerk

City of Prince George

1100 Patricia Blvd

Prince George, BC

****Delivered Electronically****

Good day, Mayor and Council:

On behalf of our member businesses in the community, we would like to thank the City for its quick and decisive action to eliminate patio licensing fees, and dramatically reduce the time required for approvals. This has created a new sense of vibrancy and community pride we hope to see continue on post-pandemic.

As you may be aware, the Caledonia Nordic Ski Club is both a member of our Chamber and an incredibly valuable member of our community. Stories were everywhere this past winter of how busy the club was as a result of the PHO orders. Members of our community engaged with this business, perhaps for the first time, and will now become lifetime users and, hopefully, members and supporters. Another unintended positive outcome from our current state. However, our letter today is not regarding the above positive, it is with respect to the financial request from Mr. Pettersen, Director of Competitions with Caledonia Nordic Ski Club.

Throughout the years, Council have noted, our current Council included, the economic benefit and upside to event hosting. Being an international competition, the event in question not only creates immediate economic upside and future bidding opportunities, but it also drives immediate supports to the most hardly hit sectors of our economy – tourism operators and the support industries; accommodation providers, restaurants and bars, tour operators, breweries and small local retail.

While we can always look to the economic upside of major event hosting in a normal year, we **must** note the incredible intangibles that would come with the city supporting this bid: Increasing community pride by being a part of something much larger than us.

What we mean by the above is the challenge every community will have bringing their communities back together to rally behind something. To bring residents and non-residents together to celebrate something in a safe and effective manner. To show not only residents but the rest of BC, Canada and the international sporting community that Prince George is ready to lead the economic recovery through live events.

Through the Government of BC Safe Restart Fund, monies are currently available to develop a staggered funding model, per Mr. Pettersen's notations. All of the funding is not required today, but over time. The City of Prince George showing early support for this initiative sends a strong signal to organizers that our community backs this initiative. In fact, it is our belief that the tax dollars received through the Safe Restart Fund should be provided to community organizations that are proving economic upside through their work – a true win/win for tax payers dollars.

We know Council wants to see positive economic activity in our community and we are certain an economic restart and recovery plan is well under way. It is our hope that our support, and that of the business community, will be more than enough for Council to answer this funding and support request with a unanimous vote.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Todd Corrigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Todd Corrigan

CEO

Prince George Chamber of Commerce