DRAFT RELEASE Aug. 9, 2021

****

**CITYWEST CONTINUES SOUTHERN EXPANSION**

CityWest is on track for even more expansion into the future, thanks to Provincial funding, massive community support, and the dedicated work of the company’s 80 employees.

Last week, B.C.’s Ministry of Citizens’ Services announced $5.64 million in funding for improved Internet services on Denman and Hornby Islands, naming CityWest as the service provider who will use the funds to build and operate the network.

“Upgrading the networks on Hornby and Denman will boost the performance of Internet services and prepare the islands to be connected to the high-performance Connected Coast network,” said Lisa Beare, Minister of Citizens’ Services, in the government press release.

The announcement fits with CityWest’s mission to improve Internet connectivity in underserved rural and remote communities. Over the last few months, CityWest has also announced its intention to expand into Vanderhoof, Cortes Island, Bella Coola, Bamfield, Zeballos, Gold River, and Tahsis.

And now, the company is continuing its expansion in serving Denman and Hornby Islands.

“For many years Denman and Hornby Islanders have had some of the worst Internet in our region. Residents clearly asked for a solution, and I am happy that with this major Provincial grant opportunity we may be able to provide fibre optic internet to every home on the islands at an affordable cost,” said Daniel Arbour, a Director with the Comox Valley Regional District. “In the next weeks and months the CVRD will engage with residents towards a referendum this fall for the community’s 10 per cent share of the project funding.”

Arbour’s comments were echoed by others on the islands, who have long sought an improved Internet solution for residents and businesses.

“This is great news for everyone on the islands,” said Karen Ross, the Coordinator for the Hornby Denman Internet Committee. “We held extensive community consultations on the islands, and we received overwhelming support for this application. The principals of universality, affordability and future proofed technology are foundational to City West’s successful application. We encourage residents to sign up for a drop to their premises through the CityWest website, in order for design and engineering to commence as soon as possible.”

CityWest will be able to serve these new customers by connecting their communities to the Connect Coast network, an undersea cable project that will bring backbone bandwidth to 139 rural and remoted coastal communities along the BC coast, as well as around Vancouver Island. The Connected Coast project is co-managed by CityWest and the Strathcona Regional District.

“The announcement on Denman and Hornby Islands expands our service area greatly, and it shows how hungry people are for great Internet and amazing customer service,” said Stefan Woloszyn, CEO of CityWest. “The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how important these services are to people living in rural and remote communities, and we’re grateful for the government’s support to help us build these essential networks.”

All projects are currently in their beginning phases. Over the coming months, CityWest will be releasing more information on when construction will start.

*For more information, please contact Chris Armstrong, VP Sales & Marketing at CityWest: 250-624-1499 or 250-624-7006, or email* *chris.armstrong@cwct.ca**.*

*CityWest is proud to provide a superior customer experience to our customers across B.C., who subscribe to Internet, TV, and phone services. For more information on the company, please visit* *www.citywest.ca*