



Bryan Mercier
Regional Director
Bureau of Indian Affairs Northwest Regional Office
911 N.E. 11th Ave.
Portland, OR 97232

June 28, 2023

Re: Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of La Center and Cowlitz Indian Tribe

Dear Director Mercier:

In 2016, the City of La Center (the “City”) and the Cowlitz Indian Tribe (the “Tribe”) entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (the “IGA”) regarding road improvements, law enforcement services, and other matters related to the Tribe’s development of Ilani Casino on the Cowlitz Indian Reservation, near the City.

Under the terms of the IGA, the Tribe agreed not to seek trust or reservation status for any land the Tribe acquired east of Interstate 5 located within the City that was 1) south of Paradise Park and 2) north of NW 299th Street (the “IGA Area”). The Tribe has since acquired parcels within the IGA Area and now desires to submit two applications to have these parcels taken into trust status by the United States. The City acknowledges that while the terms of the IGA are not binding on the United States, and that the United States has discretionary authority to take land into trust or reservation status on behalf of the Tribe, the Tribe has refrained from seeking such status for parcels within the IGA Area until now.

The City writes to you today to notify you that the City and the Tribe are currently in negotiations to amend the IGA to remove the provision that would bar the Tribe from seeking trust or reservation status for the IGA Area on the condition that appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate the impacts of the transfer on the City. The City therefore has no objection to the Tribe submitting applications to have parcels within the IGA Area taken in into trust status by the United

States. The City and the Tribe expect that we will have agreed to the IGA amendment before the United States has decided whether to take the IGA Area into trust status. The City will advise you of its ultimate position on the Tribe's applications once the negotiations have been concluded.

Sincerely,

Thomas Strobehn
Mayor, City of La Center