



Positive Partnerships and Profile for Quesnel



This year's Union of BC Municipalities Convention in Victoria was very productive for the City. We also raised the profile of Quesnel and region among convention delegates (and the lower mainland press) for the positive, progressive initiatives we've undertaken.

During Monday morning's forest policy discussion (the most attended policy discussion of the convention), we were able to raise concerns about the current limited opportunities for engaging local government in the management of our forests and in the transition planning for our communities while proposing alternatives to address these concerns. We also made suggestions for ways to improve the Rural Dividend Fund (a \$75 million fund) so our community priorities are funded more readily through a streamlined application process.

Tuesday morning, I had the opportunity to highlight all of the strategic initiatives the City has underway when I spoke on a panel at the Mid-Sized Communities Forum. I outlined how Council is addressing the City's infrastructure deficit, the intent and benefits of our three year tax framework, our rebranding efforts, our new affordable and accessible housing incentives, our Living Wage Employer designation, and the success of our partnership with the CRD and Northern Health in recruiting new doctors and medical professionals as well as the establishment of a new primary care clinic. The presentation was well received and I continue to get follow-up calls and emails from many community leaders about different initiatives we have underway. One of the other panelists, a UBC professor, gave a presentation that incidentally reinforced the need for us to do all the work we are investing in our rebranding exercise in order to attract and retain new residents and investors.

On Thursday morning, the collaboration that led to the opening of our new Primary Care Clinic was recognized when the CRD won a Community Excellence Award for this achievement (the Cariboo Chilcotin Hospital District provided significant funding for this clinic and funds the Health Care Recruiter position at the City). Northern Health, the physician community, and the City were all recognized as key players in this successful collaboration.

During the week we had very productive meetings with a number of Ministers and with CN. It was great to go into each meeting with an intent to simply improve upon the constructive working relationships we already have with the various Ministry staff in our region, we made sure the Ministers all knew how helpful their local and regional staff continue to be as we manage our way through this transition period.

Council will now follow up with each Minister on the key action items coming out of our meetings with them, as continued productive partnerships with the Province will be critical to the success of Council's strategic plan and transition initiatives. We will also be working with CN Rail on opportunities to see improvements to the aesthetics of the rail yard and railway through Quesnel. This is a key part of our ongoing beautification efforts in the City.

With this year's successful UBCM Convention behind us, Council will now turn its attention to our 2017 Strategic Plan and Budget. This is an exhaustive process that requires many additional hours of Committee work by Council members with the support of senior staff. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to engage with us in this process, so please keep an eye on the City's Facebook page for updates.

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