



Let's Build a Sustainable Community Together



I'm reading a book entitled "Can a City Be Sustainable?" The main question it explores is the issue of urbanization and whether or not overly large cities can build the kind of economic, social, and environmental systems that would allow them to achieve any true measure of sustainability. Unmanageable growth isn't Quesnel's issue, but the question of whether we can achieve "sustainability" in both the broad and narrow sense is definitely pertinent.

As a natural resource dependent community, susceptible to the normal boom and bust cycles of this kind of economic activity and now threatened by an imminent reduction in our main resource for at least the near term, our top of mind sustainability question is how do we thrive instead of just merely survive during this transition period?

There are many positive examples of communities that managed their way through such a transition and became thriving, interesting places to live because their political leaders embraced their community's challenges head on and tapped into the creative energy of the people who lived there.

Interestingly, one of the best ways to minimize the negative impacts that can result from the decline in a community's foundational economy is to proactively build sustainable social, environmental, and economic systems that will retain the resident population and attract new investment and residents. This is especially true today, as people young and old find it more and more unaffordable to live in the main urbanized centers of our province, and more and more people conduct their business online, don't live where they work, or can move their businesses to less expensive locations and simply ship their products directly to their customers.

The key for us to understand is that people who are and will be looking for more affordable places to work, live, and invest in will be looking for interesting and sustainable places to relocate to. Places that have good housing and transportation systems, leading edge waste management and water conservation systems, great amenities and green spaces, local food options, quality health care and education opportunities, well maintained core infrastructure, and a wide range of arts and entertainment options.

This is Quesnel's real challenge: can we build a truly sustainable community that will retain the population we have while attracting new residents and investment?

We need your help to envision such a community. Over the coming months you will have many opportunities to participate in public consultations about the future of our fair City, please make the time to engage in these consultations and help us to envision and then create a sustainable community.

Visit our website to see all of the engagement opportunities and to learn more!

www.quesnel.ca/OCP2030.html

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