



Support Our Local Businesses



Last week Council received a report on the findings of our third annual “Business Walks,” a business engagement program Quesnel is a recognized leader in. Along with City Councillors and City staff, representatives of Community Futures, the Quesnel and District Chamber of Commerce, the Downtown Business Association, and the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Skills Training participated in direct these conversations with local businesses (including, for the first time, telephone interviews with home-based businesses). The main goal of this annual initiative is to determine how Quesnel’s small and medium sized business sector is doing, if this sector is aware of the various resources available to assist them, and how best we can communicate about upcoming events and other tools designed to support these ventures.

Eighty businesses participated in this year’s conversations, with thirty-five percent reporting that business was good or increasing and 51% stating it was fair to steady. Most of the business owners reported that they liked doing business in Quesnel because this is where they grew up or wanted to live, and because the people of Quesnel were good to deal with and supportive of their businesses. The vast majority of the businesses reported they were aware of the existing support programs for businesses and that they preferred to be communicated with via email or an e-newsletter.

These annual walks also collect information about how we can enhance the business climate in Quesnel and this information is integrated into the strategic planning processes of the City and participating business associations and agencies. For example, last year we heard that the way Quesnel is marketed is outdated and insufficient to support growth in this sector. This insight became the foundation for the City’s current re-branding efforts and enabled Council to access outside funding for this initiative from Northern Trust and the Cariboo-Chilcotin Beetle Action Coalition.

The health of Quesnel’s service, retail and commercial sector is critical to the overall health of our community. These businesses employ your neighbors and friends and are most often the critical starting point of employment for our young people. They also support a host of community events through direct sponsorship and donations. Quesnel cannot thrive if our local businesses are not thriving, so we all need to do our part to support our local entrepreneurs. Please, make every effort to shop local, and take the time to let our local business owners and managers know how much we appreciate their commitment to our community.

For a copy of the full Business Walks report visit: quesnel.ca/Reports2016.html.

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