

Planning the Future of Reid Street



Some days (most days) I'd like to have a crystal ball so I could see more clearly into the future. Not so I can win a lottery (although that would be nice!), but so we could have access to much better information to use to plan for the future of our community. For example, Council is currently reviewing and consulting with the public on the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) which tries to project what Quesnel will look like in 2030. This planning exercise asks what our housing needs will be in order to zone our land base appropriately, what our demographics might look like in order to plan our services and programs, and what we can expect to have as a tax base in order to maintain and invest in our community over the next few decades. These projections are not easy to make given the current uncertainty in our base economy.

In the more immediate term, we need that crystal ball to tell us what the future holds for modes of transportation so we can invest wisely in our road and trail systems; particularly with respect to the major investment we have planned for Reid Street and Barlow Avenue in 2018. The foundation of this investment is the replacement of the 60 year old water main and service lines along the 200, 300, and 400 blocks of Reid Street (our main retail space in the downtown core). Replacing the water main requires digging up the road which gives us the opportunity to refresh that whole area with a new look.

The question is: what do we want our downtown streetscape to look like as a community? This is a 30-50 year investment and an opportunity to take what is already known as a vibrant and lively downtown core and make it even more special.

Compounding this question are the unknowns about the future of transportation. We're already seeing more people walking and biking and an uptake in the use of transit. More people are using various forms of mobility devices. More alternate fuel and electric vehicles are hitting the roads. We appear poised for a continual transformation in modes of transportation and these current and potential changes must be reflected in our redesign of Reid Street.

The City has already begun consultations with the retailers and commercial property owners along the affected blocks, that consultation was focussed primarily on the timing and scope of the project itself. Next week, we will begin the more open dialogue on potential options and opportunities for the streetscaping of this area. This will be an opportunity for the whole community to share ideas about what we want our downtown core to look like for the next few decades. I hope you will join us in this community dialogue.

Public Meeting

Reid Street Redevelopment Project

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

3 p.m. OR 7 p.m.

Presentation with open house to follow

Seniors' Centre, 461 Carson Avenue

www.quesnel.ca/reidstproject.html

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