



City Council News

February 14, 2018

It's time to step up if you want a bypass!

There are few times in our lives when every individual in our community gets the opportunity to make transformative change actually happen. We have that opportunity now with respect to achieving fundamental changes to the way Highway 97 flows through Quesnel. Yes, YOU have the opportunity (and responsibility) to help us get the long sought after alternate route through the City and critical safety improvements in the Racing and Hydraulic Road area at the top of Dragon Lake Hill.

For over two and a half years, the City of Quesnel and Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) have been working collaboratively to explore every available option to improve traffic flow and safety, including pedestrian safety, along the Highway 97 corridor within the municipal boundaries. The result of this extensive work is a number of near term, mid-term, and long term projects that MOTI has developed; some are already funded and will take place this year, some require us to show our support for in order to secure the funding needed for the next stage of the project development.

All of the projects that were explored and the ones that are being supported by both the City and MOTI were presented to the public at an open house on February 7 – in the middle of a record setting snow storm. While 60 people did brave that blizzard to attend the meeting, the City of Quesnel will be hosting another open house with MOTI assistance on February 19 from 3 pm to 7 pm at the Seniors' Center, 461 Carson Avenue. You can drop-in anytime during that four hour period to give your feedback on the proposed projects. The project details and feedback forms are also available online (see below for link).

This year improvements will be made to Front Street to improve both traffic and pedestrian safety. A signal light will also be installed at McLean Street and Carson Avenue to address long standing safety concerns with this intersection. Other improvement projects at the Visitor's Center main entrance and the pedestrian access to the Quesnel River Bridge may proceed this year or next, but further technical assessments are needed to determine if these projects will be undertaken.

The most important mid-term project MOTI needs your feedback on are the potential options to address the serious safety issues at the top of Dragon Hill (Racing Road and Hydraulic Road intersections). This project has already been submitted by MOTI for next stage funding, but our community needs to support their request to establish it as a near term priority with Victoria.

The truly transformative project for our community is the proposed North-South interconnector. For the first time, we have a proposed alternate route for Highway 97 through the City that is technically feasible, would remove 100% of the commercial truck traffic from downtown Quesnel (other than local deliveries), would see the replacement of both the Quesnel River Bridge and the Railway Bridge, and would see the City gain full control over Carson Avenue, Front Street, and Legion Drive. This project has the support of our downtown businesses and City Council.

If you want this interconnector to be built in the medium term (within ten years) then you MUST engage in this process. No excuses: please drop in to the Seniors' Center on Monday, February 19th anytime between 3 pm and 7 pm and fill in a feedback form. Let's make this long sought-after alternate route through our City a reality!

If you simply cannot make the February 19 event, you can provide feedback [online](#).

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Mayor and Council write Council News columns to provide residents information and updates regarding Council and City projects, initiatives, committees and business. This column is published in Quesnel Cariboo Observer on Wednesdays.