



## City Council News **November 14, 2018**

### **From transition to transformation**

Over the next few weeks, the new City Council will participate in a number of orientation sessions and meetings aimed at bringing all Councillors up to speed as quickly as possible, because we have a lot of major initiatives on the go and many more pending that require their immediate attention.

The focus of the last Council was on preparing our community for the economic transition period we've entered as a result of the unprecedented Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic, which has now been compounded by back to back unprecedented wildfire seasons. That Council laid a solid foundation for this transition with its restructuring of the City's fiscal framework, re-branding initiative, First Nations reconciliation initiative, and major investments in both core infrastructure and new amenities.

The new Council must now shift the focus from transition planning to transformation, building on the strong foundation laid by the previous Council by accelerating the transformational opportunities it set in motion. Together with our many partners, we have the exciting opportunity to truly transform Quesnel into a fun, modern, destination community that takes full advantage of its natural strengths and surroundings to attract repeat visitors, residents, and job creating investment.

To that end, over the next four years Council has the opportunity to:

- build on the success of the Reid Street project and the investment in the Arena precinct by creating and acting on a vision for the development of the City's riverfronts;
- work with the Lhtako Dene Nation on the development of a new First Nations Cultural Centre at Ceal Tingley Park
- work with the provincial government to ensure the proposed interconnector is approved;
- work with the province and Northern Health to realize the proposed new ICU and Emergency Department addition to GR Baker Memorial Hospital and to continue to see improvements in all aspects of health care in our community;
- work with the School District to realize a new Junior School and further capital improvements in all of our schools;

- work with BC Housing, not for profit housing agencies, and private developers to create and implement a comprehensive housing strategy; and,
- work with the provincial government and our local forest sector to begin to see the reinvention of our traditional industry and to collaborate on the rehabilitation of the forest land base we've depended on for so long.

Of course, Council also has significant challenges to address over the next four years as well: the complete re-invention of our waste management system, continued capital investment challenges, succession planning issues, and community crime rates that must be addressed as quickly and effectively as possible.

I believe Council can creatively address these challenges while taking full advantage of the many opportunities to transform our community. We can do this most effectively by continuing to foster strong partnerships with other levels of government, government and not for profit agencies, and community groups, and by continuing to actively engage with citizens using all of the communications tools available to us.

This is a time of transition and transformation for our community and I believe the new Council is well equipped to lead Quesnel during this exciting and challenging time.

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