



Date: 05/02/2025

To: Chair and Directors, Cariboo Regional District Board

And To: Murray Daly, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Gerald Pinchbeck, Manager of Communications

Date of Meeting: Cariboo Regional District Board_Feb28_2025

File: 0360-20/2025/NCLGA

Short Summary:

2025 NCLGA Resolution – Quesnel North-South Interconnector Funding

Voting:

Corporate Vote - Unweighted

Memorandum:

The Board directed staff to prepare a resolution on this topic for NCLGA at its January 24, 2025 meeting. Background information was supplied by Director Sjostrom in an email dated January 24, 2025. Contact was also made with staff at the City of Quesnel to coordinate advocacy efforts and share information where possible. Information is also available about this project on [the Province of BC's website](#).

The Quesnel North-South Interconnector is a proposed long-term transportation improvement that would increase safety and significantly reduce congestion, allowing commercial vehicles to avoid the downtown core. This would also benefit traffic flows in the event of a large-scale evacuation by reducing the number of access points which would need to be controlled and minimizing impacts to local traffic. The project is stalled after preliminary design and cost estimates were completed in March 2020.

The Quesnel River Bridge is also height restricted, having a lower permitted height than the maximum allowed for B.C. highways. The alternate route for vehicles exceeding this height (B.C. Highways 5/16) adds 380 kilometers to a vehicle travelling from Vancouver to Northern B.C. This adds significant transportation costs if the height restriction cannot be met.

The City of Williams Lake and NCLGA have both supported the project with their own letters. A sample resolution was supplied by the City of Quesnel in 2023 as well, which the current draft resolution is based on.

Attachments:

2025 NCLGA Resolution – Quesnel North-South Interconnector Funding – Backgrounder

Financial Implications:

None

Policy Implications:

None

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- Infrastructure and Asset Management:** To establish a systematic, predictable approach to managing the regional district's assets and infrastructure that builds on current asset management data and condition assessments.
- Enhanced Communications and Engagement:** To build trust and credibility of the regional district by enhancing our communications and engagement with citizens, stakeholders, and volunteers.
- Effective and Responsive Land Use Planning and Development:** To ensure our land use planning and development is responsive to future growth and housing needs, anticipates risks and hazards associated with climate change and provides efficient and consistent processes for landowners and developers.
- Relationships with First Nations:** To foster a healthy and inclusive region by building and strengthening our relationships with First Nations and embracing the principles of reconciliation.

Highway routes, traffic, and accesses inform growth and development planning, and are integral to emergency operations planning efforts.

CAO Comments:

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Options:

1. Endorse recommendation;
2. Propose an alternate resolution;
3. Other action.

Recommendation:

That the following resolution be approved for submission to the 2025 NCLGA convention:

Quesnel North-South Interconnector Funding

WHEREAS Highway 97 is a very significant provincial highway that is critical to the continued economic prosperity of Northern and Central BC and all British Columbia;

AND WHEREAS Highway 97 is at a considerable and growing risk level for extended delays due to aged-out highway infrastructure in Quesnel, and unacceptable construction delays in the future based on the current plans by the Ministry of Transportation and Transit;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the NCLGA and UBCM lobby the Province of British Columbia to commit capital financing to complete the Quesnel North-South Interconnector project.