

Long-term vision for transportation in and around the North Gateway

(Penticton, BC – May 3, 2023) – A number of changes are envisioned for roads and intersections in and around the North Gateway as the area builds out over the next 10 to 20 plus years. Council received an update on the proposed transportation network and the plan as a whole at their meeting on May 2, 2023.

“The City has been working with the province and other interested parties on options to improve traffic and road safety on the highway and surrounding roads since the vision for the area was first introduced last year,” said Anthony Haddad, General Manager of Community Services. “We now have a plan that will address some of the current traffic issues and the future transportation needs as the major housing, commercial and civic developments proposed for the area advance over the next few decades.”

Two of the changes will proceed in the short-term. Alberni Street between Vernon Avenue and Westminster Avenue has been closed permanently to improve pedestrian connections between the new hotel and the South Okanagan Events Centre. The left-hand turn lane onto Riverside Drive off of Highway 97 South will close in the coming months, redirecting new residential traffic to Westminster Avenue. This project will include an extended turn lane on Highway 97 to accommodate more vehicles turning left on Westminster Avenue.

Other projects that will be considered in the long-term include signaling an intersection at Alberni Street and Highway 97, narrowing Westminster Avenue where it travels through the North Gateway, and improvements to the intersection at Highway 97, Eckhardt Ave and Veas Drive. More details on these and other proposed changes can be found at www.penticton.ca/north-gateway. These projects will require detailed design before proceeding. Funding will come from a combination of development cost charges, provincial sources, and grants.

Also at this meeting, Council heard a report on the Housing Accelerator Fund from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This fund will offset costs for transportation and other infrastructure that may deter development of new housing in a community. Council endorsed staff preparing the required action plan and application to pursue this significant funding stream.

“One of Penticton’s most pressing challenges is housing,” said Penticton Mayor Julius Bloomfield. “With our work to advance planning in the North Gateway, Penticton is well positioned to move quickly as opportunities for development of housing arise and to take advantage of the funds that are starting to come available from other levels of government.”

With the completion of the plan for the North Gateway's transportation network, attention will now turn to making the amendments to the Official Community Plan, developing a housing strategy for Penticton's workforce, pursuing hotel and tourism partnership opportunities, and advancing welcome signage and capital plans. The complete report can be read at penticton.ca/north-gateway. Follow this website for updates as this work progresses.

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