

Press Release June, 2010

At the 2010 Annual General Meeting of the BC Chamber of Commerce a policy was unanimously passed asking the Provincial Government to develop “A Long Term Strategic Approach to Transportation in the Southern Interior of B.C.”

The Okanagan Wide Transportation Committee was instrumental in writing the policy and ensuring it got to the floor of the BC Chamber of Commerce AGM Policy session. The Okanagan Transportation Committee consists of Chambers from Sicamous to Osoyoos representing a membership roster of more than 4000 businesses. This Committee has been meeting regularly for several years now as they strongly believe in the need for the Ministry of Transportation to develop an integrated, multi-modal transportation vision for the Southern Interior region.

“As our Region grows, successful navigation of the challenges this growth will present to the transportation network and infrastructure will become increasingly important to our economic prosperity”, says Chair, Norm LeCavalier. “This issue is not going to disappear and we need to start working on this immediately.”

Westbank & District Chamber of Commerce President Philippe Daigle commented “Working together with all the valley wide chambers, gives the credibility required to move transportation issues and concerns forward and onto the radar of Ministry of Transportation”

The Chambers believe that there are many opportunities for innovative projects and initiatives that should be looked at, such as public transit and other initiatives directly and indirectly related to transportation issues, which are critical to the future economic success of the province.

The need for transportation infrastructure that encourages and supports economic growth is a fundamental element of a prosperous economy. However, the infrastructure that exists in many parts of the province does not support economic growth and in many areas results in a deterrent to the prosperity of the surrounding communities.

As with any region in a province as vast and geographically distinct as BC, the viability of the local and regional economy is directly linked with the transportation network which serves it. This network includes provincial highways, local roads, transit service, cycling and pedestrian corridors.

The Okanagan Chambers, with the support of the BC Chamber of Commerce, are recommending to the Provincial Government that it is time to take immediate action to work with municipalities and regional districts to develop a vision for the Okanagan Valley Transportation Corridor

The BC Chamber of Commerce is the largest and broadest based business organization representing over 30,000 businesses of all classes of business owners.

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