

2019 Talktober Q&A and Post-it Note Comments

CIVIC FACILITIES

Q. Is there an opportunity to provide input on the water cleaning system for the new pool?

A. This item is currently being reviewed and the City is open to input.

Q. Can the volume from CN Centre events such as the Cariboo Rocks the North be lowered to reduce noise pollution for adjacent residents?

A. The City will contact the CN Centre and see what follow up can be done with the promoter of the events.

Q. Is the City still pursuing a new Performing Arts Centre (PAC)?

A. The City is not building a new PAC, however any needs for an expanded performing arts program would be considered through a Downtown Arts Strategy that the City is pursuing.

Civic Facilities – Post-it Note Comments:

- Another library branch in College Heights
- Library hours need to be extended and please do not close library every Sunday in the summer. We pay high taxes and want greater access to Library.

BUSINESS & DEVELOPMENT

Q. Why does the City waive requirements for off-street works which are triggered by new developments, even when sidewalks and other improvements are needed?

A. The requirement for off-street works can be waived by Council and can be recommended by the City for specific locations such as industrial areas with a low pedestrian demand.

Q. What is the City's policy for providing alternative pedestrian routes that can accommodate people with disabilities during construction?

A. The City will review this particular issue further with Council's Advisory Committee on Accessibility and through our work with contractors on various projects.

Q. How can the City assist residents when insurance companies are unsure of how to cover their type of home-based business?

A. This suggestion can be directed to the Service Centre for follow-up by Business Licenses staff.

Q. What steps is the City taking to address problems associated with the use of short-term vacation rentals such as Air BnBs, which can generate a lot of noise and nuisance behaviour in residential areas?

A. This type of issue can be directed to the Service Centre for follow-up by Bylaw Services.

Q. When will the SPCA facility be built along 18th Avenue near Foothills Boulevard?

A. The new SPCA facility is anticipated to be constructed in 2020 or 2021.

Business & Development - Post-it Note Comments:

- Push wood and energy efficiency in new building construction
- 5G wireless health problems

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DOWNTOWN AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Q. What action is the City undertaking to deal with the social issues in downtown PG?

A. The City has spent \$1 million on resources such as bylaw enforcement and clean-up, both in the downtown and on homeless camps within our parks and green spaces. The RCMP have increased foot patrols and we have closed many locations such as the Lotus Hotel and downtown laundromat. The City is working proactively with social service agencies on solutions such as the integrated health services and housing project on 1st Avenue, as well as a potential washroom, storage, and shower facility in the downtown. The Mayor also has discussions every week with Mayors in other communities to discuss problems and solutions.

Q. Can we consider referring to 'homelessness' as 'drug use' to reflect the real problem with our downtown?

A. Many of the downtown social issues relate to both homelessness and drug use, unfortunately at a level unlike anything the City has seen before. The City will continue to address both of these issues through our partnerships as we move towards improving our downtown.

Q. Will the proposed integrated health and housing facility on 1st Avenue provide a safe zone for the use of illegal drugs?

A. This facility will not be a drop-in centre and instead will provide a place for people to transition while they access the health services they need to improve.

Q. How will the proposed health and housing facility on 1st Avenue provide viable options for people who are looking for low income housing in contrast to those who are truly homeless?

A. The City has learned from other communities that mixing people with different needs is working well and needs to be in one place. The 1st phase of the 1st Avenue project will include supported housing with 24/7 health care services while the 2nd phase will provide low income housing for indigenous populations.

Q. Can residents volunteer to help prevent crime in the downtown?

A. Residents can contact Community Policing to get involved as a crime prevention volunteer.

Q. Why are streets in the downtown being permanently closed to motor vehicles?

A. Two streets were recently closed in the downtown, including George Street east of City Hall for the new Park House residential project, and 6th Avenue between Dominion and Quebec Streets for a new hotel project. These street closures will provide space for pedestrians and improve the civic core.

Q. Is 7th Avenue northwest of City Hall one or two lanes?

A. This portion of road is now narrower but can accommodate two lanes of traffic due to the removal of the on-street parking.

Q. Will the City consider bike lockers in the downtown to reduce bike theft and support commuter cycling?

A. The City will look into options for bike locker storage.

Downtown & Social Issues - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public bathrooms and showers• Public washrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make illegal drug use a crime with real consequences
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public washrooms especially Downtown for homeless • Police need to be more responsive • Help us feel safer walking Downtown • Make Downtown PG walkable • Solutions to deal with drug problems • Address underlying causes of property crime • Safer Downtown • Safer Downtown/support homeless! • Safety & security outside of Downtown – close Lorne Park walkway • Anti-vandalism strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making public aware of what the City is doing to control the drugs and homelessness • Clean up the Hood • Naloxone kits distributed to public • Harm reduction services 24/7 • 24/7 safe injection site • Order Needle Exchange to actually exchange needles • Citizens taking drugs/homelessness in own hands • Strategies for youth (18-24) transitioning out of care • Be a more diverse City
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ENVIRONMENT

Q. Why is the City permitting developments that increase idling, such as the area near 15th and Central where a 2nd drive thru lane was developed at a fast food restaurant and a new turning lane that was added from Highway 97 to 15th Avenue?

A. The City's Clean Air Bylaw is 15 years in the making and addresses air quality issues through the bylaw, as well as through an ongoing involvement with the PG Air stakeholder group who provide recommendations for improvement. The Province does not have legislation and regulations in place to address idling. A number of communities have tried to address idling in drive thrus at fast food restaurants with limited success. Fortunately, improvements such as a 2nd drive thru and highway turning lane can help to move traffic faster which in turn reduces idling.

Q. How is the City addressing microbeads and microthreads (e.g. fleece, shampoos) from entering into the City's stormwater systems which ultimately lead to the ocean?

A. For decades, the City's wastewater (sanitary sewer) is collected and enters a treatment plant. Sanitary sewer does not enter the City's stormwater system. Tertiary treatment is the highest level of wastewater treatment and all of the influents, effluents, and biosolids are tested and reported upon regularly as required by the Provincial Ministry of Environment. The Province currently has limited regulations for microbeads and microthreads as this is a new and emerging issue.

Q. What progress has the City made on the proposed plastic bag ban and where do recycled plastic bags end up in PG?

A. The proposed plastic bag ban is moving through Council and has been discussed further at the recent Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) forum. Plastic bags that are deposited for recycling in PG are collected by a recycling company for processing.

Q. Is the City considering green infrastructure projects in the community?

A. The new Fire Hall will include a bioswale and recharge chamber for stormwater management. The District Energy System provides alternative heating from Lakeland Sawmills for a number of buildings in the downtown. The City also pursues stormwater detention and treatment ponds where

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possible, and takes a cautious approach with any development of stormwater management systems near the City's aquifers.

Q. Will the District Energy System (DES) become a feasible option for local business in the downtown?

A. A DES connection has a better return on the investment with a higher building heating load. The City provides businesses with an opportunity to fund the initial costs of a DES connection up front or over the life of the contract.

Q. Is the City considering climate change and ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as using electric vehicles?

A. The City is working on climate change options and can provide further information on this subject.

Environment - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve air quality – buy back industrial land and rezone it in the Bowl• Cleaner air• Preserve our air quality• Support actions to adapt to and mitigate climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider ways to restore salmon population to the Nechako – talk to Spruce City Wildlife• More electric car charging stations• Keep our river free of pollution• Keep our lands habitable
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FINANCE

Q. Why are a number of City projects such as the Masich Place Stadium renovation over budget and what are the accountability measures for City staff with these outcomes?

A. The Masich project was on budget however some capital projects do go over budget largely due to factors such as an unanticipated market cost increase particularly for materials, systems, and labour which is similar in other communities. Any staffing issues are dealt with in confidence through the City's Human Resources Department.

Q. Do any of the City's projects over \$1 million come in under budget?

A. The Mayor's office can provide a list of such projects from City staff.

Q. Why are census population counts so important for City funding?

A. Some transfer payments are made from the federal and provincial government to municipalities based on the census population counts.

Finance - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data driven decisions• Evidence-based decision making• Further private sector investment• Library no fines. Increase dollars for collections• Be aware of personal damages to Homeowners in LAS areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Too heavy a burden on Seniors when taxes & utilities go up (every year, too!!!). Please consider an increase in homeowners 'grant' for Seniors (at least an additional 15% added to the one now). Thank you
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GARBAGE & RECYCLING

Q. Why is the City installing a radio frequency identification (RFID) system for household garbage carts and have all of the carts been tagged?

A. The RFID system is being used to improve customer service and help track the household garbage carts which are valued at over \$1 million. The RFID system includes a monitoring board on the garbage collection trucks which allows the truck operators to track and take photos of exceptions such as overflowing or missed carts, switched carts, and if recyclables can be diverted from the landfill. Most of the RFID tags have been applied to the garbage carts to date.

Q. Can the City swap the curbside garbage and recycling collection schedule to provide weekly recycling and garbage collection every two weeks?

A. This would not be possible as the recycling service is provided through a provincial Recycle BC organization who are funded through the product manufacturing companies. The weekly curbside garbage collection is required as we have not seen a decrease in the tonnage of garbage collected since curbside recycling was first introduced in Prince George years ago. The City is looking at other ways to divert recyclables from the landfill.

Q. What is the City doing to manage organic waste? Example – using vermi-compost, which has been successful in Fort Nelson.

A. A recent Source Characterization Study was pursued by the City and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG), which identified that 40% to 50% of household garbage contains organic waste. The City is working with the RDFFG to develop a solid waste strategic plan which will identify ways to divert organic waste from the landfill.

Q. Where will the next landfill be located?

A. The landfill is projected to have space for another 25 years of operations and any expansion or new locations would be pursued by the RDFFG as they manage the landfills within our region.

Garbage & Recycling - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recycle more• Reduce garbage pickup to once every 2 weeks and increase recycle pickup to weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start compost pickup• Reduce single use plastics at City facilities and events and at stores
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HOUSING

Q. Why has traffic increased and housing continues to be developed when our population hasn't grown?

A. Many seniors and young adults are staying in PG given desirable factors such as affordable housing costs and the potential growth in the region's resource sector.

Q. Why does the proposed student housing project not include wheelchair accessible rooms?

A. The City uses an accessibility lens when reviewing projects and follows the BC Building Code for all projects. However, the City will review the accessibility of this building further with the developer.

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Q. What subsidies are available for people who provide rental housing given the City's tax increases?

A. There are no subsidies through the City although landowners are encouraged to contact the Province to see what subsidies are currently available through the Residential Tenancy Act.

Q. Is the City considering housing options such as the 'Tiny Homes' concept which provides housing and a community for marginalized people?

A. The City is not in the housing business, but we are often in the position to take the lead and consider various options that are available. An example is the proposed integrated health and housing complex on 1st Avenue through a partnership with Northern Health Authority and BC Housing.

Housing - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing for homeless (government subsidies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come up with solutions to combat homelessness
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INDUSTRY

Q. Does the City have any plans to develop an Industrial Park north of the City?

A. There is an industrial area proposed north of the City limits. The City offers other industrial options and opportunities such as the large industrial park along Boundary Road. Ultimately developers will select these sites at their own discretion.

Q. Is the City supportive of the proposed West Coast Olefins Ltd. (WCOL) chemical plant despite the air quality concerns with this type of industry?

A. City Council will follow the regulatory process for the proposed land use change and conduct research, as well as review information such as the provincial environmental assessment, in order to make an informed decision. The WCOL representatives will continue to host public information sessions for the community to learn more about the project.

Q. Will the community be able to vote on the proposed WCOL chemical plant?

A. The City's regulatory process includes opportunities for community input such as a public hearing during a Council meeting. The input gathered through this process will be considered by City Council in their decision on any potential changes to the land use.

Q. What air quality regulations would the proposed WCOL chemical plant need to meet?

A. The proposed industrial development would require an environmental assessment and need to meet both the Provincial and City requirements.

Q. Can the City help residents get access to information about the WCOL chemical plant?

A. The City can contact the WCOL representatives to find out when public sessions are available and provide that information to residents.

Q. How will the WCOL chemical plant run natural gas when PG is currently running at a lower gas capacity?

A. Enbridge has increased the live natural gas capacity in PG.

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Industry - Post-it Note Comments:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider our legacy when making infrastructure investments. Do we want to make more plastic and ship it? |
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OFF LEASH DOGS

Q. What are we doing to control off leash dogs at parks like Cottonwood Island?

A. Concerns such as this should be directed to the Service Centre for follow-up by Bylaw Services.

Q. Would the City consider expanding off leash use by permitting this use during certain hours at Cottonwood Island Park?

A. Suggestions such as this should be directed to the Service Centre for consideration and follow-up.

Q. Can the City address the noise and smoking at the Duchess Fenced Dog Park?

A. The City will address this issue through Bylaw Services.

Off Leash Dogs - Post-it Note Comments:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move Duchess Park small dog park or just make it combined to reduce barking |
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PARKING

Q. Why do you get a parking ticket in the Downtown if your car is parked for less than a total of three hours per day?

A. The City is aware of this issue and residents are requested to contact Bylaw Services so they can reverse the ticket if you can provide proof of parking such as a receipt from a vendor.

Q. Can the City accommodate long-term on-street parking and provide a user-friendly parking app like the one used in Vancouver?

A. The City decided to remove long-term on-street parking in the downtown as areas like the high office towers impacted commercial businesses whose customers did not have available on-street parking. The City is developing a new parkade by The Keg and is reviewing user-friendly parking apps from other communities like Vancouver.

Parking - Post-it Note Comments:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fewer parking spaces• More parking options | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get rid of 3 hr parking Downtown! |
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PARKS & TREES

Q. What can the City do to increase the safety of areas outside of the downtown like Lorne Park that have social issues?

A. The City is aware of the increase of petty crime outside of the downtown and has increased bylaw enforcement and RCMP patrols, as well as working with the Baldy Hughes organization to remove

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graffiti. Residents are also encouraged to contact Community Policing to participate in a Neighbourhood Watch Program.

Q. Would the City consider designating a wall for graffiti or having a graffiti competition at the skate park?

A. Graffiti can be artistic and the City considers various options for graffiti management.

Q. Does the City own the land with the soccer fields near 15th Avenue and Ospika Blvd and why are the fields not being used outside of May and June?

A. The City owns this land and rents it to the PG Youth Soccer Association who schedule the use of these soccer fields as part of their exclusive use agreement with the City.

Q. Are there incentives for tree planting and recommended tree species for planting?

A. The City does not have an incentive program in place for tree planting, however trees in the downtown or in boulevards are replaced using operational funding. The City has a recommended tree list online through the City's website, which identifies species that are suitable for various applications such as residential, natural area, or downtown tree planting.

Q. Does the City still do stump grinding?

A. The City does do stump grinding, however the provision of this service can be delayed due to a high demand and limited available resources.

Parks & Trees - Post-it Note Comments:

- Officially hand over ownership of Lheidli T'enneh Park to Lheidli

SENIORS

Q. What is the City doing to address the wait list for seniors who require complex care?

A. The provision of health care falls under the Northern Health Authority, however the City advocates for additional care facilities and recently supported the development of the Riverbend complex which provides some housing for low income seniors.

SNOW

Q. Does the new snow removal policy discontinue removal of snow along very wide driveways?

A. Driveways will be opened to a maximum of 8.0m or less if there is not enough area for storage along the road frontage of the property.

Q. Can the City improve snow clearing along designated bike routes?

A. The City follows the snow clearing policy for snow removal and addresses snow removal along designated bike lanes within five days where possible.

Q. Would the City partner with residents who can provide snow clearing services?

A. Snow clearing services are delivered by City staff and contractors.

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & COUNCIL

Q. Can future Talktober sessions return to the four locations within the City (i.e. Bowl, Hart, College Hts., and Blackburn)?

A. We review alternative approaches to Talktober every year and will continue to review suggestions such as these for the following year's Talktober discussions.

Public Engagement & Council - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More involvement from residents of the City• (Any changes) - Engagement opportunities so all can hear – consider mailbox flyer – radio ads good – PGApp	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow permanent residents to vote in City elections• Voting Lheidli member on City Council
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TRANSIT

Q. What ever happened to the transit operations centre that was proposed near 18th Avenue and Foothills Boulevard?

A. The City is looking at alternate commercial or industrial locations as this type of facility will save money in transit operations.

Q. Will the City add more transit bus shelters and start to use wood in the structure?

A. The City has incorporated some hard weather transit bus shelters through a cost sharing agreement with BC Transit. Pattison transit bus shelters have also been added with advertising revenues which the City returns to the transit bus shelter program. Some engineered wood products have been used at the UNBC bus shelters.

Transit - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Active transportation & public transit• Car sharing. More transit options	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transit to Blackburn/airport!• Improve transit service and options
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TRANSPORTATION & ACCESSIBILITY

Q. What is the City doing to eliminate dead-end streets such as the end of Ospika Boulevard by Hwy 16W, Foothills and Massey, as well as Boundary Road?

A. Cost is a factor when pursuing these extensions and a priority would be to extend Cowart and Ospika Boulevard to meet the transportation demands west of PG.

Q. Can Boundary Road be extended and used as a Dangerous Goods Route to reduce the potential danger of using the Victoria Street route?

A. The City continues to work with the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) and is vigilant about accommodating safe commercial and industrial transportation by road, rail, and emergency routing. Currently the City is observing less of these users along Victoria Street and an increased use of Boundary Road or using the Queensway route near Ferry Avenue.

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Q. Why have turning lanes been added along Highway 97 and 16 between Spruceland and Costco, but we are not adding a 3rd lane of traffic in both directions?

A. These highways are under the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) jurisdiction and the turning lanes do increase highway safety. The City does have input into highway transportation and will discuss the possibility of a 3rd lane with MoTI.

Q. Is the City monitoring busy road intersections given the increase in local traffic?

A. The City is monitoring some of the busier intersections using traffic cameras for consideration in future improvements.

Q. Will the City add a signalized intersection at Highlands Drive and Foothills Boulevard to address increased traffic congestion?

A. The City is currently looking into options to address the congestion in this location.

Q. What is the City doing to make sidewalks more accessible?

A. The City upgrades sidewalks annually through capital funding and includes new wheelchair curb cuts like the one at Phoenix Medical.

Q. Why is the City not mowing roadside ditches in the Hart such as North Kelly or Ferguson Lake Road?

A. Major roadways and arterials such as Chief Lake Road are mowed three times a year, while local roads are not. The City will review these areas for follow-up.

Q. Can we activate alleyways for alternative uses?

A. The City considers such ideas and opportunities as this as they emerge.

Transportation & Accessibility - Post-it Note Comments:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winter cycling route• Walkable (especially Hart!)• Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pedestrian focused streets• Pedestrian focused streets and vibrant outdoor spaces
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UTILITIES

Q. What is the City doing to deal with inappropriate waste from entering into our sanitary sewer lines that creates blockages?

A. The City's website has information about the do's and don'ts for our sanitary sewer lines, such as placing food scraps in the sink and disposing of personal hygiene products. The City is also introducing a Sanitary Sewer Bylaw later this year for Council's potential approval.

Q. Do residences near Killarney and Sussex Roads incur an additional cost to hook up to the sanitary sewer?

A. After two years, residents in this area will start paying a utility bill for sanitary sewer whether they are hooked up or not. There are no other costs, from the City, associated with hooking up to this system.

Q. Is there still a volunteer water meter program for residents?

A. Yes the information is available online through the City's website under 'Water Conservation'. The water meter and plumbing permit is free, however residents must incur the cost of installation.