



PEACE RIVER REGIONAL DISTRICT

Rural Roads in the North Peace

an economic development initiative of the Peace River Regional District

Project Charter and Task Force Terms of Reference

Effective May 22, 2018

Background

The North Peace Economic Development Commission (NPEDC) established and funded a Rural Roads Task Force (RRTF) between 1997 and 2003. In 2003 the BC Ministry of Transportation (MoT) established Regional Transportation Advisory Committees (RTACs) throughout the province, based in large part of the success of the RRTF and the millions of dollars in transportation investment that was a direct result of the task forces activities. RTAC's continued under the direction of the MoT though the fiscal 2007/08.

The RRTF was extremely successful as it demonstrated the benefits to government and the return on investment for infrastructure spending by creating certainty for industry, shortening travel cycle times, reducing the duration of annual load restrictions, increasing the competitiveness of the region and making it an attractive area for private industry investment. That investment translated to increased royalties for government, more jobs for workers and a strong economy for the region and the province.

The North Peace has a diverse economy of agriculture, forestry, energy and contains a large, undeveloped portion of the world class Montney natural gas play. A single 2017 natural gas land sale generated \$77 million in government royalties last year. Investing in infrastructure will stabilize industry, encourage positive investment decisions from the private sector and provide the revenue for government for a strong and reliable economy.

In 2017, the NPEDC retained the services of JK Solutions Ltd. to conduct a high-level gap analysis on road conditions and investment since the end of the previous two transportation initiatives. The majority of the previous RRTF came together and prioritized current road priorities which formed the basis for the report and developed and delivered a report to the Ministry of Transportation in February 2018.

The NPEDC ceased to operate effective December 31, 2017 with economic development coming directly under the direction of the Peace River Regional District (PRRD). Funding for 2018 has been established under the PRRD and this document provides the charter for the new North Peace rural roads (NPRR) initiative process and the terms of reference for the task force to be established.

Purpose

To develop, facilitate and sustain a Rural Roads process that will demonstrate to the provincial government the social and economic importance of safe and reliable rural roads that are upgraded and maintained to a condition suitable for the type and volume of traffic that rely on them.

Objective

To ensure a collaborative, unified, consistent and well supported message from the region, the NPRR will engage rural residents, industry (individuals and associations) and elected officials to participate and provide input to the process and priorities to be delivered to the provincial government.

The NPRR will develop open and respectful relationships with elected members and staff of the provincial government ministries and the maintenance contractors with responsibility for rural roads.

Scope

The initiative scope includes roads and associated infrastructure (e.g. bridges, culverts, ditches) managed and maintained under the direction of the MoT that meet the following criteria:

- located in the North Peace area of the PRRD;
- predominately serve rural residents and industry (e.g. agriculture, forestry, energy and oil and gas)

Excluded from the scope are:

- non-provincial roads within municipalities boundaries
- subdivision roads
- numbered highways (Hwy 97 and 29)
- industry roads (Petroleum Development Roads or Forest Service Roads)

Accountability

The elected directors of the PRRD for Area B, Area C, District of Taylor and District of Hudson's Hope (Directors) are accountable for the initiative and will:

- determine annual resource requirements and at their sole discretion, allocate and have a budget approved to support the initiative;
- set or reaffirm annually the initiative purpose, objective and scope;
- determine delivery methodology and hire or otherwise procure contracted services to support the initiative;
- select from the elected Directors, one (1) Director to serve as the Chair of the task force;
- determine/approve appointments of individuals to the task force
- direct the staff/consultants, negotiate rates, approve timesheets and/or invoices and manage all other business relations between the PRRD and staff/consultants.

The Directors, at their discretion, may delegate any accountabilities and/or responsibilities identified in this document to the Director selected as the Chair.

Methodology

The Directors will annually determine the most effective methodology to sustain the initiative and will engage consultant(s) to facilitate and deliver the annual workplan with input and support from the task force. Services may include but not be limited to:

- facilitation of an appropriate process to solicit feedback, gauge public interest and support and determine a suitable level of ongoing communication required to sustain the rural roads process;
- support the Directors to establish/maintain a steering committees and/or task force as appropriate to meet the desired end results;
- development of an annual workplan with key deliverables and target dates;
- facilitation of meetings with road users, business and industry stakeholders, affected government agencies and business groups;
- assess current road conditions, evaluate economic impacts and facilitate prioritization by the task force;
- compile statistics, develop business case(s), prepare briefing papers, reports, presentations and other communications as required to meet the objectives of the initiative;
- organize meetings, prepare and deliver presentations;
- develop and maintain a professional and productive business relationship with the Ministry of Transportation and Highways and the maintenance contractor;
- organize meetings with appropriate Ministries in Victoria and/or organize Minister tour(s) in the North Peace;
- develop specific analysis based on the needs identified by Directors, stakeholders or the task force;
- prepare or support initiatives to develop funding partnerships, grants or other opportunities to leverage resources to support the purpose and objective; and
- other activities as approved by the Directors within the purpose, scope and objectives.

Resources and Continuity

The PRRD will determine annual funding requirements and may choose to continue to fund the initiative, seek external funding or partner with like minded organizations, provided the initiative is achieving the purpose and objectives stated above. The PRRD may at any time, without notice, terminate the initiative at the discretion of the Directors.

Reporting Requirements

Consultants/staff report to the Directors and will provide any progress reports, updates or formal reports as required from time to time by the PRRD. Where required, lobbyist registration for initiative activities will be held by consultants/staff and required reporting will be reviewed by the Directors prior to submission.

Stakeholders

The initiative will solicit input from and provide feedback to rural road stakeholders as broadly and effectively as can efficiently be done including but not limited to:

- social media
- meetings (one-on-one, group, public)
- open door policy for input from affected rural road users

Stakeholder input may be sought or received by Directors, task force members, consultants or staff.

Task Force Terms of Reference

The Directors will solicit volunteers to establish a task force to identify impacts, provide sector specific input and determine overall strategies for the message to be delivered to government regarding North Peace rural roads.

Membership

Membership will be sought from the following groups:

- rural residents or their elected representatives (regional/provincial)

- agriculture industry
- forest industry
- oil and gas industry
- trucking/transportation industry
- other as determined by the Directors

The task force membership should reflect the geographic areas of the North Peace. Where practical, a task force member would be able to represent more than one sector and/or geographical area.

All decisions regarding membership to the task force will be made by the Directors. There will be no reimbursement for time on the task force, but where travel out of town (e.g. Victoria) is required by a task force member, it may be pre-approved by the Directors and covered by the initiative.

Size

The Directors will determine the number of task force members, ideally selecting between 7-12 members, based on annual priorities.

Duration

Task force members shall be appointed for a term of the fiscal year associated with PRRD funding. Annually, the Directors will review task force membership and make changes at that time if necessary. If a member leaves the task force during the year, the Directors may choose to select a replacement or continue the year with the vacancy.

Meetings

Meetings will only be held when there is a specific purpose, need or value identified. The process will rely when possible on remote communication (email, telephone, conference calls, Skype, etc.). Task force members should expect 3-4 meetings per year. Roberts Rules of Order apply.

Location

Meetings will generally take place in Fort St. John unless there is a specific value in an alternate location (e.g. as part of a specific area tour). Meetings will generally be held in the evening and limited to a maximum of 3 hours.

Alternates

Every effort will be made to select times when all task force members are available for meetings. Due to the progressive nature of the content and decision making of the task force, alternates will not be used if a member is unable to attend a meeting.

Decision Making

The goal with decision making is to reach consensus, but where that can not be achieved in a reasonable time frame, simple majority will prevail. In the event of a split decision, the Chair will cast an additional and final vote. Staff and consultants do not vote.

Quorum

A task force meeting quorum will be the Chair plus 4 task force members.

Agenda and Minutes

Agendas will be developed prior to meetings and minutes of key discussions and decisions will be kept.