



Resource Municipalities  
**COALITION**

10631 - 100th Street,  
Fort St. John, BC V1J 3Z5

250-793-6754  
ed@RMCoalition.com

**Honourable John Horgan, Premier**

Province of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E1

February 4, 2021

**RE: Ensuring Lasting Transportation in Northeast British Columbia**

Premier Horgan,

The Resource Municipalities Coalition (RMC) in our discussions with yourself and your Ministers over the last several years, recognize that your government understands and realizes the value of the resource sector to the Province's overall well-being. As you noted in your speech during the 2021 BC Natural Resources Forum, "Every sector is a benefit to the province..." and therefore, we raise the question - what if parts of those sectors were not accessible?

We recognize that there have been efforts to improve the maintenance and quality of the Taylor Bridge infrastructure, which the RMC believes is a critical piece of the northern highway infrastructure. This is demonstrated by comparing data from 2019 to that of 2015, traffic over this critical piece of infrastructure has grown to between 6,000 and 7,000 vehicle movements per day with a healthy mix of passenger traffic, industrial and commercial goods moving across the bridge. Comparing this data to data collected in 2015, this demonstrates a growth of 30% on infrastructure that is 60+ years old. This critical piece of infrastructure has surpassed what is considered to be, a feasible life cycle limit for a bridge of this design.

This critical piece of infrastructure was cited as, "It's probably our most important bridge," by Scott Maxwell, the Executive Director, Northern region with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in May 2015, and when considering the forecasted \$26+ Billion in major projects for the Northeast as identified within the Province's Major Projects Quarterly Report - growth of the region and traffic will adversely impact the safety and reliability of the current Taylor Bridge.

The Taylor Bridge is critical to the oil & gas sector of British Columbia, an industry that creates 840 jobs across the province for every 100 jobs in the sector. Based on 2019 stats from WorkBC, that equates to approximately 200,000 jobs throughout British Columbia. A failure of the Taylor Bridge will have a significant, negative impact for access to this sector and impact the lives of British Columbians throughout the Province.

The RMC also recognizes that infrastructure replacement of this magnitude is a complicated process and requires the time to ensure the replacement is what best serves the needs of the region sustainably for today and into the future.



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Therefore, we encourage open engagement with the communities and stakeholders that rely on this critical piece of infrastructure to support and improve their quality of life. Through effective dialogue and by providing updates on the status of work that commenced in 2020 on engineering and public engagement, not only will the residents of the region understand the process, but they will also better understand the timelines associated to the Taylor Bridge replacement.

The RMC looks forward to an opportunity to further discuss this concern with yourself, and the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation, and the Minister of Finance so that we can work towards a replacement of this vital aging infrastructure.

Sincerely,

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Mayor Lori Ackerman  
City of Fort St John

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Mayor Rob Fraser  
District of Taylor

Keith Bertrand

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Mayor Keith Bertrand  
District of Tumbler Ridge

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Mayor Joan Atkinson  
District of Mackenzie

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Executive Director Mike Whalley  
Resource Municipalities Coalition

CC: Minister Rob Fleming

Minister Bruce Ralston

Minister Selina Robinson