

Tłı̄chọ All-Season Road

Mr. Speaker, securing funding to advance planning and construction of new transportation corridors is a key commitment in this government's mandate. These transformative projects help to connect communities, support employment and training opportunities, increase our resiliency to climate change, and create new social and economic opportunities.

Today, I am pleased to provide an update on the Tłı̄chọ All-Season Road project, an exciting new 97-kilometre highway that will provide year-round access to Whatì from Highway No. 3.

Mr. Speaker, the new road to Whatì is being developed as a P3 project, much like the Stanton Renewal Project and the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Link. As a performance-based structure, public-private partnerships are an effective way of delivering essential infrastructure projects by bringing private-sector expertise and accountability to the process while preserving government ownership of core public assets.

As part of the P3 approach, a Request for Proposals was issued in December 2017. Our government then announced in November 2018 that North Star Infrastructure was selected as the preferred proponent for the project. North Star Infrastructure is a consortium that consists of Kiewit Canada Development Corporation, the Tłı̄chọ Government, Peter Kiewit and Sons, Hatch Corporation, and Thurber Engineering Limited.

Mr. Speaker, in February, the GNWT signed an agreement with North Star Infrastructure to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the Tłıchǵ All-Season Road. Construction is expected to start this fall and will take approximately two years, with the official opening expected to take place in 2022.

In signing this agreement with North Star Infrastructure, we have agreed to contractual requirements that will increase economic and employment opportunities. Minimum thresholds for construction and operations and maintenance will ensure significant involvement of Tłıchǵ workers and businesses during both phases. These commitments will help to maximize benefits for Tłıchǵ communities, and will facilitate capacity building within its communities.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to our focus on local jobs for this project, we're also committed to protecting the environment. With the environmental assessment now complete, the Project has submitted the required land and water license applications to the Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board. The GNWT anticipates that permits and licenses will be granted by September 2019.

The Tłıchǵ All-Season Road will bring many benefits to the region and the Northwest Territories. It will help to reduce the cost of living for the region and create new social and economic opportunities, and is expected to attract investment from industry in the exploration and development of natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to work closely with our stakeholders, including the Tłıchǵ Government, through all phases of the project. Together, we will continue to build a safe, efficient, and resilient transportation system that meets the needs of the North for generations to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.