



MINUTES - SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

March 17, 2025, 9:00 a.m.

Council Chambers

8645 Stave Lake Street, Mission, BC

Council Present: Mayor Paul Horn
Councillor Mark Davies
Councillor Jag Gill
Councillor Carol Hamilton
Councillor Danny Plecas

Council Absent: Councillor Angel Elias
Councillor Ken Herar

Staff Present: Barclay Pitkethly, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Jennifer Russell, Corporate Officer
Chris Gruenwald, Director of Forestry
Taryn Hubbard, Manager of Communications and Public Engagement
Tracy Kyle, Director of Engineering & Public Works
Doug Stewart, Director of Finance
Christine Brough, Executive Assistant

Guests Present: MLA Reann Gasper, Abbotsford-Mission
MLA Lawrence Mok, Maple Ridge East
Christopher Logie, Constituency Assistant to MLA Lawrence Mok
Chelsa Meadus, Director of Communications for MLA Reann Gasper

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

SC25-018

Moved by Councillor Plecas

Seconded by Councillor Gill

RESOLVED: That the March 17, 2025 Special Council Meeting agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion with MLA Gasper and MLA Mok

1. Introductions and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Updates, Overview of Priorities and Key Positions

Mayor and Council welcomed MLA Reann Gasper, MLA Lawrence Mok and their staff representatives:

- Christopher Logie, Constituency Assistant to MLA Mok; and
- Chelsa Meadus, Director of Communications for MLA Gasper.

MLA Mok and MLA Gasper provided an overview of their time in office thus far. MLA Mok expressed his views on the provincial budget, fiscal responsibility, and the need for a more financially sustainable, business-like model of government. MLA Gasper expressed her appreciation for the community and the willingness of Mission residents to identify problems and work toward solutions. She pledged to be an advocate for the constituents she represents.

2. Downtown Parking

In response to questions from MLA Gasper, Mayor Horn explained that the results of the Downtown Parking Study, which was completed in August of 2024, revealed the following:

- There is enough parking for Downtown Mission though some changes need to be made in terms of the type of parking in certain areas.
- There is a need to change expectations and experiences, so people feel comfortable walking further distances between their parked vehicles and their destinations.
- A parking management strategy is needed to manage the continued growth of Downtown Mission and increasing pressure on parking.

The Director of Engineering and Public Works confirmed that new signage is coming, and that an Employee Permit Parking Program will be piloted as per the recommendations in the study.

More information on the Downtown Parking Study can be found online at: <https://www.mission.ca/business-building/current-city-projects/downtown-parking-study> and <https://www.mission.ca/media/file/2024-downtown-parking-study>.

Council expressed concern about the growing vacancy rates in the downtown core and about the potential impact that Bill 47 may have on the downtown and waterfront areas.

3. Youth Hub Project (Foundry) Update

Mayor Horn explained that, in recent years, Mission has submitted two applications for a Foundry. Staff were told that the applications were unsuccessful, in large part, because Mission youth can access the Foundries in Maple Ridge and Abbotsford and are, therefore, better served than youth in many communities throughout the province. Given the unlikelihood of a future application being successful, the City is taking another approach. The Mission Youth Centre, located at 33100 10th Avenue, will be the site for the Youth Hub Project. The City of Mission's Manager of Community Wellness, Jason Payne, is spearheading this project. He is currently seeking input from frontline staff, youth, and families and connecting with local community partners to plan for the long-term success of the project. The goal is to have some regular programming / support services within the Youth Centre, by September 2025, to complement the current work being done. Mayor Horn asked MLA Gasper and MLA Mok for their support with future funding requests related to this important initiative.

4. Brief Introduction to Key Strategic Projects Involving / Requiring Provincial Assistance

1. Waterfront e.g. Diking, Highways and MOTI Assistance, Connection to Existing Services, Expanded Transit

The Director of Engineering and Public Works gave a brief overview of the importance of dike improvement to the development of Mission's waterfront, noting that the costs are significant and require provincial and federal funding.

2. Mission Bridgehead Investment Corporation (MBIC) - What is it and how does it work?

Mayor Horn informed MLA Gasper and MLA Mok that the Mission Bridgehead Investment Corporation (MBIC) is a municipally-owned development corporation created to facilitate development in and on behalf of the community. While MBIC's initial focus is on the waterfront revitalization project, it's overarching mandate is community-wide.

It was noted that there are transportation and transit challenges unique to the waterfront and that the Province's transit-oriented

area (TOA) legislation has had unintended negative effects on the City's ability to negotiate with the development community.

3. Employment Lands Needs

Mayor Horn stressed the importance of employment land to the future of Mission while also acknowledging the need to retain the character of the community.

4. Water Supply Project and How the Joint Shared Services Committee (JSSC) Works

The Director of Engineering and Public Works outlined the upgrades that will be required to the Abbotsford Mission Water and Sanitary Sewer Treatment system and the Joint Abbotsford Mission Environmental Systems Wastewater Treatment Plant (JAMES Plant). Council requested MLA support in identifying grants and securing funding for these important and necessary upgrades.

Council also requested MLA support in securing any funding that might be available to advance the City of Mission's water metering program.

5. Silverdale - Importance of Phased Approach and Accurate Assessments, and Developer Request for Provincial Infrastructure Funding for DCC Funded Works

Council explained the importance of the phased approach to development in the Silverdale area, noting that the Silverdale Central Neighbourhood Plan was undertaken to realize the vision of an urban destination mixed-use neighbourhood as outlined within Mission's *Official Community Plan* within the Silverdale Comprehensive Planning Area (SCPA). Development is intended to start in the Central Neighbourhood, in phases, and efforts to accelerate urban development in other areas is premature.

Mayor Horn noted that he and City staff will be meeting with representatives from BC Assessment to discuss the impact of real estate speculation, as opposed to actual development potential, on home values in areas of Silverdale outside the Central Neighbourhood.

6. Forestry / BC Hydro - Issues with Road Closure, Parking, Frequent Requests to Pave Road

The Director of Forestry explained that the Florence Lake Forest Service Road (FSR) is one of the busiest FSRs in the Province, with an average of nearly 400 vehicles per day. While other users in the area have requested that the road be paved, it is the City of Mission's position that the FSR should remain in a gravel condition as paving it would only lead to increased safety and capacity issues in the Stave West Forest and Recreation Area. The municipality is committed to working with the Province on upgrades to the existing running surface to reduce maintenance issues.

Discussion also ensued on parking, access, safety, and communications issues related to the operation of BC Hydro recreation sites in Mission.

7. Reconciliation Efforts e.g. Land Swap, Fraser River Heritage Park

The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer gave background information on the Í:xel Sq'eq'ó (Together We Paddle) Agreement which involved the Province returning title of the lands located immediately to the east of Fraser River Heritage Park to the LMS Society. The LMS Society is comprised of Leq'á:mel, Matsqui and Sumas First Nations. As part of the agreement, the lands have been subdivided to create a park parcel of approximately 50 hectares, which will be leased to the City of Mission to co-manage with the LMS Society for public use as a community park, and two 5-hectre development parcels, to be developed by the LMS Development Corporation to support housing in the area and increase economic and social opportunities.

8. Physician Recruitment and Fraser Health Authority (Mayor Horn)

Discussion ensued on local and regional healthcare services, the various challenges faced by residents seeking healthcare, the need to attract and retain medical professionals, and the overall need for greater community consultation and long-term regional healthcare planning.

Council expressed their willingness to work in cooperation with the Fraser Health Authority and asked MLA Gasper and MLA Mok to

keep them apprised of opportunities that may arise to participate pilot projects and regional healthcare discussions / initiatives.

9. BC Parks and Recreation Association - Seeking Support for Recreation Infrastructure

A letter dated September 17, 2024 from Katie Fenn, CEO of BC Recreation and Parks Association, to Premier Eby, regarding the need for provincial and federal infrastructure investment programs in support of parks, recreation and culture was provided for Council's and the MLAs' information.

The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer noted that Mission is the fastest growing community in the province and that additional support will be required to ensure that recreation infrastructure keeps pace with current and future growth.

5. Provincial Response to Tariffs and US Policies

MLA Gasper and MLA Mok expressed their thoughts on the United States Government's new trade policy.

Council thanked MLA Gasper and MLA Mok for their willingness to meet to discuss matters of mutual interest and asked for their advocacy on issues of importance to the community.

4. ADJOURNMENT

SC25-019

Moved by Councillor Hamilton

Seconded by Councillor Gill

RESOLVED:

That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

PAUL HORN
MAYOR

JENNIFER RUSSELL
CORPORATE OFFICER