

ORAL QUESTION—KEVIN O'REILLY, MLA FRAME LAKE

QUESTION 322-18(2): HIGHWAY NO. 4 CONSTRUCTION, SIGNAGE AND SAFETY CONCERNS

October 14, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. There's been some serious construction all summer outside of this Assembly on the highway. Can the Minister of Transportation explain what is happening and when it will be completed? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Transportation.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, there has been construction completed recently just outside the Legislative Assembly and the department has worked with the City of Yellowknife on this project as well as the developer of Nova, and an unofficial group of representatives of the Niven Lake Community, Ecology North, and a former MLA. They've all agreed that we need to provide an active transportation corridor from the Niven Lake area and access the downtown area. The city continues to hold the leading role in developing this overall city wide footprint on this issue, and we will continue to meet with them and work closely with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. O'REILLY: A large new hotel complex has just opened up on the other side of the highway. We can expect to see a really significant flow of pedestrian traffic across to the Northern Frontier Visitors Centre. Can the Minister explain what type of improvements are being made now and planned in the future to this stretch of highway in the interest of public safety?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: As I've said, we've worked closely with various groups on this. The developers actually paid for the improvements that were made on this section of highway this year. We will continue to work with the City of Yellowknife and all user groups. That's the best way forward with this.

MR. O'REILLY: I'm glad to hear there are some meetings going on. I'm worried about what's going to happen when those tourists start to cross the highway to go to the Visitors Centre. While we're on the subject of the Visitors Centre, there's still no signage for the Visitors Centre along the highway beyond the small sign near the intersection with 49th Street, and there's nothing here at the turnoff that comes into the Legislative Assembly. Can the Minister tell this House when new signage for the Visitors Centre will finally be installed?

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: This would be something that we'd have to take up with the City of Yellowknife, as signage is not all the responsibility of all of the Northwest Territories. If the City would like to have a meeting for signage for the Tourist and Information Centre, we can work closely with them and arrange to have something put in place.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like a very complex problem that requires a lot more meetings perhaps, but I've got members of the public approaching me about unsafe conditions along the highway from Niven Lake to the downtown; there's no sidewalks or separation from vehicular traffic for pedestrians. Will the Minister commit to meet with interested parties, including Niven Lake residents, the owner of the nearby hotel, City of Yellowknife, and the Visitors Centre to develop and put in place a proper plan for this busy stretch of highway? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. WALLY SCHUMANN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've already stated, that we've met with a number of user groups on this whole issue and the department has already suggested, with the city and Ecology North and other people that are related to this issue, is that we would like to have a meeting moving forward on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.