

15th Legislative Assembly

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Kam Lake Access Road

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The subject of my Member's statement today will come as no surprise to my colleagues in this Assembly, as it has to do with an issue that is very important to both my riding and the city of Yellowknife. That is the issue of the Kam Lake access road, and the secondary access into and out of the city of Yellowknife.

I have taken this issue up with the government from a variety of different angles. The first is from the standpoint of public safety, because of the increased heavy traffic on Old Airport Road and the fact that Highway No. 3 is the only way in and out of the city of Yellowknife. In case of emergencies, like we saw with the CF-18 -- the one that went off the runway -- and another one that dropped a missile on the golf course, we have experiences there that show that emergencies can happen, Mr. Speaker.

Both of these incidents effectively shut down Highway No. 3. Mr. Speaker, the question has to be asked, "What if a major incident happened at the Yellowknife Airport?" From a public safety standpoint, this road, and secondary access into and out of Yellowknife, has to be addressed. With the Kam Lake industrial park also having only one way in and out, we also have been very lucky that a major accident or a spill hasn't taken place on Kam Lake Road which would cut residents and businesses off.

Of course, road infrastructure does not come without a hefty pricetag. The estimate that I have heard would be in the neighbourhood of \$5.5 million to build this road. The questions have been: who would build, and be responsible for, the road; how would it be paid for; and the land availability issue. I have asked the Minister of Transportation many questions in the past about where this road is in his department's plans.

I was very surprised when I read intently the Minister's press release on the National Highway Strategy dated October 14th, where there was absolutely no mention made of a Kam Lake access road. Would it not have made sense to put this vital piece of roadwork into this strategy? This would ensure that federal dollars would eventually be earmarked to help build this road.

I don't understand its omission from the National Highway Strategy, and, Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned that, to my knowledge, it is not included in the Corridors for Canada II proposal. Why is this road not in there? Why are we not making every effort and exploring every possible funding source to make sure that this road gets built? Mr. Speaker, I will have questions for the Minister of Transportation at the appropriate time. Thank you.

---Applause