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Building Canada Fund Priorities

MR. RAMSAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to discuss an issue that I spoke of on Wednesday, November 28th, in which I was questioning the Minister of Transportation on the Building Canada Fund.

During the last federal budget, an announcement was made of a \$33 billion infrastructure plan known as the Building Canada Fund. The Government of the Northwest Territories will certainly be able to subscribe to this fund over the coming years and will need to start identifying projects that qualify for this federal funding.

As returning Members will know, I have stood up in this House numerous times over the past four years questioning why the Government of the Northwest Territories was not moving forward with partnering with the City of Yellowknife to construct a secondary access or bypass road from Highway No. 3. With the construction of a combined services building and an expansion of the Yellowknife Airport, the government has a role to play in partnering with the City on the construction of this road.

Mr. Speaker, every day that passes, public safety of my constituents and those here in the city of Yellowknife is being compromised. There is only one route into Kam Lake Industrial Park. Given the nature of businesses located there, the potential exists for a spill or an accident at the top of Kam Lake Road that would cut the industrial park off, and those who reside there off, from necessary emergency services.

Mr. Speaker, an accident at the Yellowknife Airport, as was evidenced with the dropping of a missile from an F-18 and another F-18 sliding off the runway, cuts emergency access for people from Highway No. 3. If there was an accident on Highway No. 3, emergency vehicles would not be able to get there. So obviously a secondary access to the capital is urgently required.

I asked the Minister of Transportation on Wednesday whether or not the bypass road was on a list of projects to the federal government. The response was that there was no list. I told the Minister on Wednesday in question period that I didn't buy the fact that there wasn't a list. The Minister said he'd be working with Members to formalize a final list.

Mr. Speaker, I have some questions about how the Minister proposes to do this when it would appear that Cabinet is already making decisions in isolation of input from Regular Members. Every Member of this House has the right to have input on competing infrastructure priorities in this territory, especially when our projects -- and Mr. Jacobson spoke earlier of one in his riding -- mean so much to the people we represent.

Mr. Speaker, I will have questions today at the appropriate time for the Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs on the Building Canada Fund. Mahsi.

--- Applause