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Alberta Hansard

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Flood Damage Mitigation Pg. 2073

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been more than five years since the devastating floods struck southern Alberta. The constituency of Calgary-Elbow was hit especially hard. But in the past five years no significant flood mitigation has been built to protect my constituents or the core business district of downtown Calgary. To the Minister of Transportation. My constituents are extremely frustrated by the lack of progress on the Springbank off-stream reservoir. They haven't heard an update since the federal regulator asked your department for more information this summer. Is that project still on track to protect downtown Calgary by the spring of 2022?

Mr. Mason: Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, we do keep in regular contact with the groups in Calgary that are fighting for flood protection, that were badly affected. We don't want to see that ever happen again. Calgary, of course, downtown Calgary in particular, is the nerve centre of the Alberta economy. There are hundreds, in fact thousands of homes that are at risk for flooding, and our project is dedicated to make sure that that doesn't happen. We are working through the regulatory process very systematically and rigorously because we do not want to be sent back to the starting post as we've seen in the case of the federal government . . .

2:30

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister. Thank you. Hon. member, you exceeded the time. I passed the motion. Please, when I acknowledge you, you'll stand but not before. Okay? Thank you.
First supplemental.

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the next answer I would hope the minister could please give us an update on the timeline for this project. Given that this past summer the federal environment regulator asked your department to provide more information and given that part of their request was a call for further consultation with indigenous groups, again to the Minister of Transportation: when will your government provide a response to the regulator, and can you assure me that you are conducting extensive two-way consultations with all indigenous peoples impacted by this very important project?

The Speaker: Now, hon. minister.

Mr. Mason: Now, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Mason: Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you.

Mr. Mason: I can assure the hon. member that we are working diligently through the hundreds of questions that we've been asked to answer as part of the regulatory process, and we intend to meet our self-imposed deadline of the end of this year to answer all of those questions. We are systematically meeting with indigenous groups that are affected or have a historical claim to this territory. We have reviewed the court decisions with respect to TMX to make sure we are in full compliance with respect to indigenous consultation requirements that the court has set, and we are confident that we are going to get this done, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.

Second supplemental.

Mr. Clark: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now, another important aspect of managing flood risk is flood mapping. Given that the Minister of Municipal Affairs has been working with Environment to create new flood maps and given that the floodway development regulation is still a work-in-progress and given that developing this regulation without a full understanding of mitigated flows could devastate property values, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs: when can Albertans expect to see updated flood hazard maps, and will you commit to doing this in the right order, mitigate, then map, then regulate?

The Speaker: The Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. S. Anderson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. I appreciate his advocacy on this issue. It has been a complicated and comprehensive review and mapping process, and we do feel that having in hand the most information possible to make this decision is the best way forward. To do this regulation, as the member stated, to have that there in the right way and the right process and the right order I think is what we want to do, and we intend to do that. We have put a lot of money into Calgary for mitigation in other aspects. AUMA and my department do a lot of work down there with the emergency management professionals. As I did state, we will get this done in the right order.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. minister.