

Transcript to you from the Alberta Legislature on March 6, 2014

The Speaker: The hon. Member for Calgary-Glenmore.

Calgary Southwest Ring Road

Ms L. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last fall, after many years of negotiations, an agreement was signed to allow for the construction of the southwest section of the Calgary ring road. My questions are all for the Minister of Transportation. Minister, many of my constituents are questioning the design of the bridges crossing the Elbow River. Can the minister confirm that the designs will be reviewed in light of the water levels and flow rates that were experienced during the flood of 2013?

The Speaker: The hon. minister.

Mr. Drysdale: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to this member. She is always advocating hard for her constituents. Last June's floods in southern Alberta resulted in an unprecedented amount of damage to many provincial roads, highways, and bridges. Part of the recovery effort includes making sure new transportation infrastructure like the south Calgary ring road can withstand the low flow rates and increased water levels experienced last spring. All design requirements for proposed bridges over the Elbow and Bow rivers will indeed be reviewed and will incorporate the high water levels that are based on the latest flood maps.

The Speaker: The hon. member.

Ms L. Johnson: Thank you very much. My constituents are also concerned about the impact of construction and traffic on the Weaselhead environmental park. What measures will be taken by your department to address these concerns?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to building Alberta's transportation infrastructure in a way that is responsible for our natural environment. My department will continue to work closely with the city of Calgary and interested stakeholders to ensure that there is minimal impact on the Weaselhead environmental park. The road design will follow all legislated environmental requirements.

Ms L. Johnson: My final question: when and where is the construction expected to begin on the final section of the southwest ring road?

Mr. Drysdale: Mr. Speaker, completing the Calgary ring road is just one of the many examples of how we are building Alberta to increase market access for our province's goods and services while supporting growth in local communities. Currently we are considering building the final stages of the Calgary ring road in two segments, using a P3 model. Project updates will be posted regularly on the Alberta Transportation website.