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Contract Awarded for Simon Fraser Bridge Construction

PRINCE GEORGE – Surespan Construction has been named the contractor for the construction of the Simon Fraser Bridge, announced Prince George MLAs Shirley Bond, Pat Bell and John Rustad.

A \$31,607,061 construction contract was awarded for the \$42 million project, which will increase the capacity of Highway 97 across the Fraser River to four lanes by twinning the Simon Fraser Bridge. The project is expected to be completed in fall 2009.

"The twinned Simon Fraser Bridge will not only reduce congestion to help facilitate the movement of goods, but will also increase convenience for residents and visitors travelling across the bridge," said Bond. "This is an important piece of infrastructure for Northern B.C."

"With 21,000 vehicles crossing the bridge every day, this expansion is necessary to reduce congestion and keep our economy on the right track," said Bell, Prince George North MLA. "The bridge connects Prince George to the BC Rail Industrial Site and the increased capacity will help to resolve traffic delays for industrial traffic."

"Our government believes it is important to update and upgrade infrastructure when it's required to enhance public safety or capacity," said Rustad, Prince George-Omineca MLA. "I'd also like to thank the federal government and the City for supporting our investment."

This section of Highway 97 services the southern approach into Prince George and provides highway access for southern communities, tourists and businesses. The bridge also connects a large industrial area on the south side of the Fraser River to Prince George.

The Simon Fraser Bridge was constructed in 1963 providing two-lane traffic across the Fraser River into Prince George. The design was completed by Buckland & Taylor Ltd. The Ministry of Transportation received eight tenders for the bridge construction, ranging from the successful bid from Surespan Construction to \$55 million.

The federal government is contributing up to \$18 million toward the estimated \$42 million total project cost. The funding comes from a federal commitment to fund transportation infrastructure projects through its Mountain Pine Beetle Program under the Asia-Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative.

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