



October 24, 2017

Statement from the Council of the Town of Balgonie:

The Town of Balgonie has met with members of the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure on multiple occasions to discuss their decision on the closure of Main Street and its impact on our town. The closure has been a great loss to the vitality of our Town and has created emergency response considerations as well as impacting traffic patterns within our community.

The Ministry and its engineers are unwavering in their view that the intersection, including “Right In/Right Out” at Main Street, must close. The rationale given by the Ministry is that there is not enough room between Highway 10 and Main Street and between Main Street and Highway 46 to design a safe access. The distances between the bypass and the Highway 10 overpass have made it impossible, by today’s engineering standards, to accommodate this access point.

The Ministry engaged an outside engineer to review any possibility of retaining a “Right In/Right Out” at Main Street in Balgonie. The engineer also reviewed the options presented by Council at the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Ministry of Highways. His review concluded the same results that were presented to the Town by the Ministry of Highways. There was no safe way to keep the access from Highway 1 at Main Street.

While this closure is a great loss to our community, the Town and the Ministry have discussed work which will be done to address the impact on traffic operations and emergency responses. Both the parties have agreed to a gated access for emergency vehicles and evacuation. The safety of the Town residents and the response times for our emergency personnel is paramount. The work on a temporary gated access will begin very soon and the planning has been initiated for permanent remote controlled access for emergency response purposes. Additionally, the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure has agreed to provide the Town with certain improvements to our roads, lighting and traffic controls within our Town. This will be important as the Town is impacted by the closure and these measures will assist the municipality in responding to these challenges.

The Town Council would like to acknowledge the efforts of, and thank the local community residents and the “Save our Main Street” group for their determination in having the issues of Balgonie heard. Progress has been made in the discussions with the Ministry of Highways---this progress would not have been possible without the community voicing concerns. The Town and the Ministry are working towards a Memorandum of Understanding which will outline the details of the negotiations.