

May 24, 2023

Fortis BC Eagle Mountain Pipeline Project

The Fortis BC Pipeline project represents both potential economic benefits and associated risks that need to be carefully considered. On the one hand, the project has the potential to positively impact the economy by creating employment opportunities for contract services offered within Squamish, stimulating local businesses, and contributing to regional energy security. These economic benefits can lead to increased investment and economic growth within our community, province, and country.

However, it is crucial to acknowledge the potential risks and challenges that may arise from the project. Concerns such as, the impact on housing supply or the risk of the business community losing skilled workers for higher paying Fortis jobs. The increased workforce and potential influx of residents during the construction and operation phases of the project may put pressure on the local housing market, potentially leading to increased housing costs and limited affordable housing availability. This issue needs to be proactively addressed to ensure housing stability and affordability for the community. One additional way that Fortis BC can address the risks associated with the project is to consider long-term funding committed to the Squamish Housing Authority.

In addition, increased municipal expenses can be a potential challenge for the Squamish municipality. The project may place additional demands on municipal services, such as infrastructure upgrades, public transportation, healthcare, and emergency services. These expenses can strain the municipality's budget and require careful planning and resource allocation to manage the increased demand effectively.

In conclusion, the Fortis BC Eagle Mountain Pipeline project presents potential economic benefits to the region, such as job creation and energy security. However, it is important to address and mitigate the risks associated with housing supply, skilled workers, community safety, and increased municipal expenses. By carefully considering these factors, engaging in dialogue, and implementing appropriate measures, it is possible to find a balance that maximizes the benefits while minimizing the potential negative impacts of the project. This is an opportunity for Fortis BC to set an example of what corporate social responsibility is. While the project timeline is 5 years, the positive impacts to the community can last a lifetime.

Sincerely,

Christopher Fehr
Executive Director
Squamish Chamber of Commerce