

# B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 20, 2014

9:00AM

DEASE LAKE (CONFERENCE CALL)

<b>ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION</b>	Marie Quock, Iskut Band Council Joe Waite; Lakes District Maintenance, Service Area 28 CEO/President Garry Merkel, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation Ed Van Mierlo, Tahltan Nation Development Corporation
<b>MOTI REPRESENTATIVES</b>	Scott Maxwell, Acting Regional Manager, Northern Region (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI)) Dan Cumming, Area Manager, Roads, Bulkley-Stikine District, MoTI
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Selina Bull, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
<b>KEY THEMES (3-6)</b>	
1) <b>Highways:</b> Participants noted that highway safety on Highway 37 and Telegraph Creek Road (Highway 51) were key concerns. Participants indicated that highway maintenance of erosion areas and winter maintenance were critical for improving the safety and connectivity of their communities.	
2) <b>Highways:</b> Participants also stressed the need for increased capacity of Highway 37 especially with the expected increase in industrial trucking traffic, like that expected to come through the development of Red Chris mine.	
3) <b>Airports:</b> Participants noted that increased funding for the airport to maintain year-round scheduled flight service is critical to communities' connectivity and economic development in the region.	
<b>CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants noted that the airport is an important community asset. However, participants noted that it is in bad condition, the runway needs repaving, and year-round scheduled service is not provided.</li> <li>Participants noted a challenge that businesses in the area are dependent on the development cycle, which can cause uneven employment cycles and business growth.</li> <li>Participants agreed that the increased industrial traffic in the area due to Red Chris mine and other development posed a challenge to highway safety.</li> </ul>	
<b>MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES</b>	
1) Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A participant from Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that Highway 37 was very narrow and had no shoulders. This was a safety concern for participants, especially given increased trucking traffic.</li> <li>Participants noted that the airport runway was in bad condition.</li> <li>Iskut Band Council noted that safety was a prime concern for its people. Iskut Band Council indicated that with existing industrial traffic and expected growth in those levels coming from the Red Chris mine, there was a need for more passing lanes and additional width on Highway 37 between Iskut and Dease Lake.</li> <li>A participant from Iskut Band Council indicated a safety concern with the logging and other trucks which take up a lot of space on the road, causing danger to other vehicles on the road.</li> <li>A participant from Iskut Band Council noted a concern with erosion areas along the roads in the region, and indicated issues with spots between Iskut and Dease Lake (especially Stikine Hill) and south of Iskut near the Transmission Line.</li> <li>Iskut Band Council indicated that Telegraph Creek Road needs improvements, as there have been trucks going off the road. Iskut Band Council noted a specific issue near Tahltan where the road is very narrow and rocks fall onto the road.</li> <li>Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that while the area needs medium- or long-term plans to improve safety on Highway 37 and Telegraph Creek Road, like adding passing lanes and extra width, there are some short-term measures that should be undertaken to improve safety now, including more roadside reflectors and warning signs.</li> </ul>	
2) Growing the Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A participant from the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that the Northwest Transmission Line was a gateway to the development of the region, and that the Development Corporation was a major force for development in the region.</li> <li>The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation indicated that it has just started a flight charter service out of Dease Lake Airport in partnership with Pacific Coastal, with the first charter to be for Red Chris Mine.</li> <li>A participant from the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that business fortunes in the region followed the development cycle, which can make it difficult to provide employees with full-time work. The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation expressed interest in becoming a maintenance contractor for MoTI in order to be able to provide steady, year-round employment for its people.</li> <li>Participants agreed that truck traffic has increased in number, and has grown in size and weight. Participants agreed that the area is likely to see further growth in trucking traffic, given Red Chris mining operations and the potential construction of industrial parks nearby. Participants also noted that tourism is likely to increase.</li> </ul>	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tahltan Nation Development Corporation stressed that year-round, scheduled flight service was critical for the community.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A participant from Iskut Band Council indicated that the roads in the area (especially Highway 37) are lifelines for the community, and that it is important for the Ministry to deal proactively with erosion problems along the roads to ensure that residents are not stranded.</li> </ul>
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants expressed a strong interest in working with the Ministry and partnering with others to ensure that Dease Lake Airport can improve its runway and maintain year-round scheduled flight service to serve the area.</li> </ul>
<b>TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS</b>
<u>Tahltan National Development Corporation:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that there should be some short-term efforts, such as signage, to improve safety on these roads.</li> <li>The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation stressed that Dease Lake airport was a top priority for the community. As such, the runway needs to be paved, and it needs support from the government and partners in the development of regular scheduled flight service available throughout the year.</li> </ul>
<u>Iskut Band Council:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Iskut Band Council noted that the Ministry should be proactive, not reactive, in addressing erosion issues on Highway 37, especially between Iskut and Dease Lake, and south of Iskut near the Transmission Line.</li> </ul>
<u>Regional:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants agreed that safety improvements – such as additional passing lanes and width – on Highway 37 and other roads in the area (like Telegraph Creek Road) were a priority.</li> </ul>
<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tahltan Nation Development Corporation inquired whether this engagement process would include feedback on BC Ferries.</li> <li>Tahltan Nation Development Corporation expressed a strong interest in earning the local maintenance contract in order to provide jobs for its community. The Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that as a company, it is not ready to take on such major works, but that it would explore options of partnering in order to work its way into the maintenance contract.</li> <li>Participants expressed interest in the potential upcoming project of paving of the airport runway.</li> <li>Tahltan Nation Development Corporation noted that the province may not have banked on needing to spend money to accommodate heavier trucking traffic in the region.</li> <li>A participant from Tahltan Nation Development asked Lakes District Maintenance about how the contract with the province works. The participant from Lakes District Maintenance noted that they could speak about that offline.</li> <li>Iskut Band Council noted a concern that Highway 37 did not appear on page 5 in the Discussion Guide materials. Participants agreed that Highway 37 was an important connector to the Yukon and that they were proud of the geography of the region.</li> <li>Participants indicated a concern that the survey puts forward very high level and general statements, but that their issues are more locally focused. One participant requested information about how the Ministry would deal with this type of local input. One participant noted that the attendees want to fit into the province's overarching goals, but that the specifics in how the plan is applied, especially in their own region, are important.</li> </ul>