



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Transportation, local area municipalities and other agency stakeholders have been working toward a long-term plan for the Highway 17 corridor for many years. This Corridor Strategy is designed to build onto the *Vision for Highway 17* report prepared in 2001. Through discussions with the study Steering Committee as represented by all agency stakeholders on the Peninsula, several key issues and concerns regarding the Vision were identified. Some of those concerns were related to the lack of connections to the highway in the southern portions of the corridor between Royal Oak Drive and Sayward Avenue. Other issues included the provision of essential roadways to support the planned grade-separated connections to the Highway and the closure of some cross-streets and direct accesses along the Highway. In some cases, the concerns were largely related to some uncertainty regarding the potential configuration and general feasibility of the specific interchanges along the Highway 17 corridor as identified in the Vision document.

The purpose of the Corridor Strategy was not to address every outstanding issue and concern that would be better resolved through subsequent stages of planning and design. Rather, the Strategy was designed to provide a long-term direction for the corridor that is supportable by local municipalities and other agency stakeholders. Based on previous planning work, several guiding principles have been established and used as the starting point for developing the Corridor Strategy for Highway 17. The planning principles summarized below have been used to shape the ultimate Strategy based on principles for corridor form and function, safety and reliability, as well as for a multi-modal transportation system. The following discussion highlights those planning principles.

### Corridor Form and Function

- The corridor should be a four-lane highway between Swartz Bay and McKenzie Avenue Interchanges with a posted speed of 90 km/hr (except on the approach to the Swartz Bay Terminal);
- All major roadways crossing and intersecting with the Highway should connect to the highway with grade-separated interchanges;
- All other roadways that currently connect to the Highway should be closed with the provision of a frontage or support roadway system that provides alternative access to and from the Highway; and
- There should be no local accesses onto the Highway. A frontage road system should connect current and future land uses along the corridor to nearby support roads that are linked to the planned interchanges.



### Safety and Reliability

- Remain a safe and reliable route for all travelers;
- Ensure the efficient movement of goods to improve our competitiveness and reduce costs for consumers;
- Provide effective connections to the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal as well as the Victoria International Airport;
- Provide for the efficient movement of emergency response vehicles at all times of the day; and
- Access to adjacent lands will be subordinate to providing service to the through traffic movement.

### Travel Choices

- Promote regional goals for direct, express bus services along the corridor and support infrastructure needs as part of the interchange concepts;
- Manage the highway corridor to ensure travel choice and increase the proportion of other travel modes, reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles (SOV's);
- Focus more on moving people than moving vehicles;
- Minimize the total volume of vehicle emissions;
- Minimize impacts on Blanshard Street; and
- Protect and improve the visual appeal of the highway corridor.

The Corridor Strategy illustrated in Figure 1 highlights the fundamental features of the long-term plan. In particular, the Strategy defines the preferred interchange locations and cross-street closures to achieve the planning principles previously described. The preferred interchange locations north of the Royal Oak interchange include Sayward Road, Mount Newton Cross Road, McTavish Road, Beacon Avenue, Wain Road and Lands End Road. Options for interchange locations have also been identified at Claremont Road and Haliburton Avenue as well as at Keating Cross Road and Island View Road. These alternatives should be examined further with local area communities and other agencies. All other intermediate cross-streets and accesses along the corridor will be closed and essential support roadways have been identified.

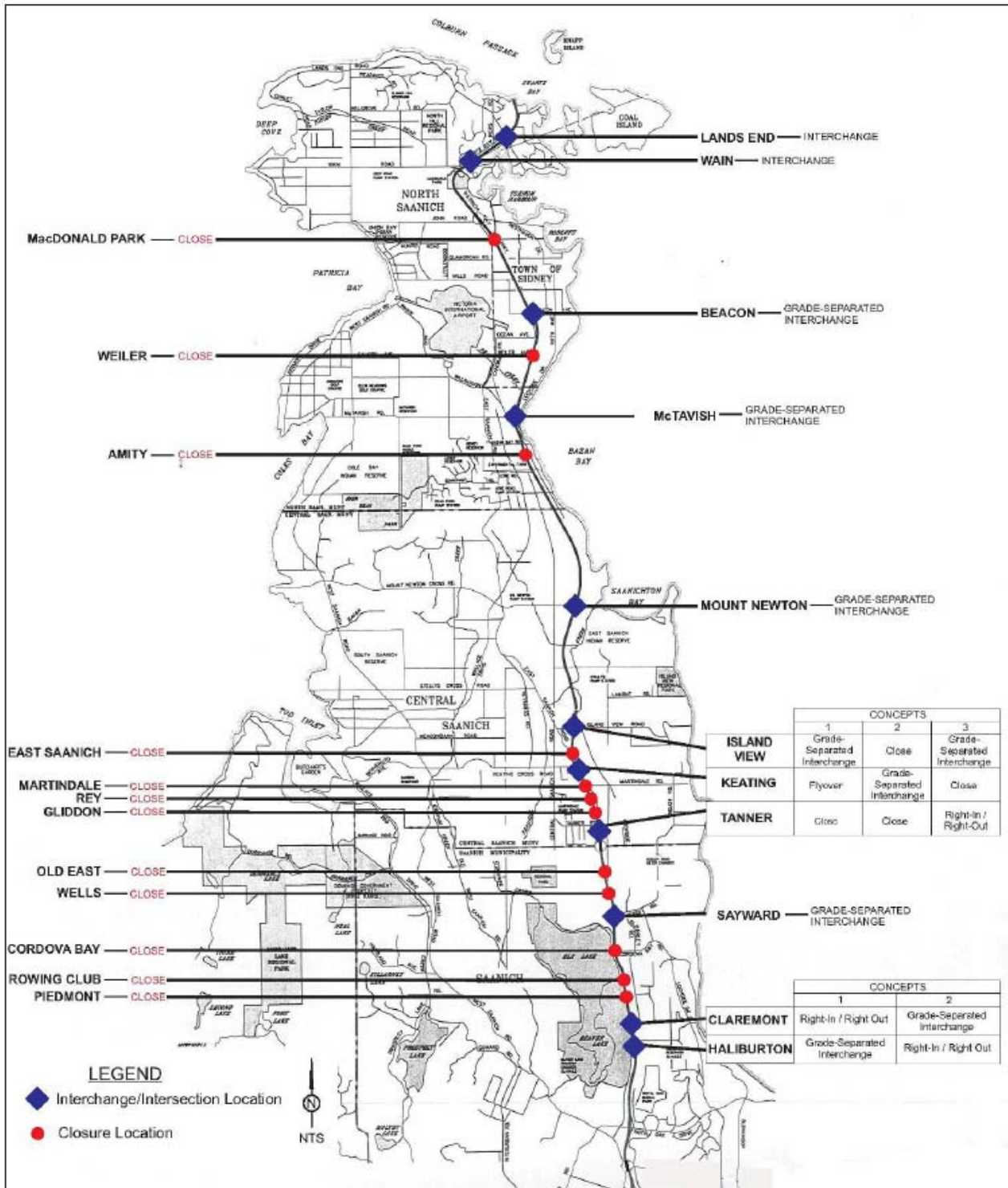
Achieving the Corridor Strategy requires significant effort, resources as well as consultation with all stakeholders, including the Tsawout First Nation. In some areas of the corridor – such as in the area of Haliburton and Claremont as well as between Keating and Island View, further work is needed with the local municipalities and the broader community on locally defined processes to identify and assess the optional interchange locations. For example, Official Community Plan updates may provide sufficient opportunity for the community to engage in discussions about the alternative interchange locations and community preferences. In several other areas of the corridor where the interchange locations have generally been defined and the feasibility of



options are confirmed – such as Sayward, Mount Newton, McTavish and Beacon – strategies to advance the planning and design of the alternative interchange concepts, interconnecting streets and accesses could be advanced. Depending on local, provincial and other available resources, these strategies could be concentrated on everything from simply preserving lands for specific concepts as part of a local planning initiative through to preparing functional and preliminary designs of preferred interchange concepts. For the Ministry of Transportation, the design and implementation of any capital improvement – either the ultimate interchange concept or an interim condition – will rely on the project merits relative to other provincial projects as defined through the Ministry’s business cases.



Figure 1 – Recommended Corridor Strategy





The interchange concepts described in this Strategy have been developed to varying levels of detail. However, there are no shelf-ready projects to be advanced without significantly more planning and design. Table 1 summarizes the relative complexity of the implementation challenges and issues to be addressed in order to advance any of the interchange concepts along the corridor in terms of planning and design, community assessment, roadway network, alternative modes, as well as finances and agreements. It should be recognized that the Ministry will want to explore intermediate improvement concepts that advance the Corridor Strategy where there are significant benefits relative to the impacts and costs, and where potential partnerships with other stakeholders can be identified.

Table 1 – Implementation Complexity <sup>1</sup>

Highway Section/ Interchange	Key Challenges				
	Further Planning and Design	Community Assessment	Roadway Network	Alternative Modes	Finances & Agreements
Royal Oak Drive to Claremont Avenue	◐	◐	◑	◑	◐
Sayward Interchange	◑	●	◑	◐	●
North of Sayward Road to Island View Road	◑	◑	◐	◑	◑
Mount Newton Interchange	◑	◑	○	◑	◐
McTavish Interchange	◑	◑	◑	◑	◐
Beacon Interchange	◐	◑	◑	◑	◐

<sup>1</sup> Measures of Complexity: ○ Low ◐ Low to Medium ◑ Medium ◑ Medium to High ● High

The Ministry has worked extensively with local area municipalities and other agency stakeholders along the corridor. They are also working with the Tsawout First Nation on local area development interests along the Pat Bay Highway which may impact the Corridor Strategy. Because of the unique challenges in each area of the Corridor, the Ministry has committed toward continuing to work with communities individually in order to address those issues and challenges noted above, and to perhaps move specific projects forward over time. In most cases, it will rely on the partnerships with local and provincial agencies as well as other stakeholders to identify what steps may be required to identify the preferred interchange locations and concepts that may be developed further with public input and feedback.