

Appendix D

Phase 2 Consultation Findings

Trans-Canada Highway 1 - Malahat Route Study Ministry of Transportation Phase 2 Consultation Report

July 2007



Malahat Corridor Study: Phase 2 Consultation Summary

Introduction

In July 2005, a comprehensive two-phase study began to identify and assess all options for enhancing safety, reliability, and capacity through the Highway 1/Malahat/Goldstream Park corridor, north of Victoria. A comprehensive range of options was studied in Phase 1. They included widening and improving the existing route, six new highway alignments, two bridge locations across the Saanich Inlet, increased ferry, transit, and rail service along with transportation demand management. Combinations of options were considered. Including a 'do nothing' option of maintaining the status quo, 20 options were developed and evaluated.

Phase 1 Consultation

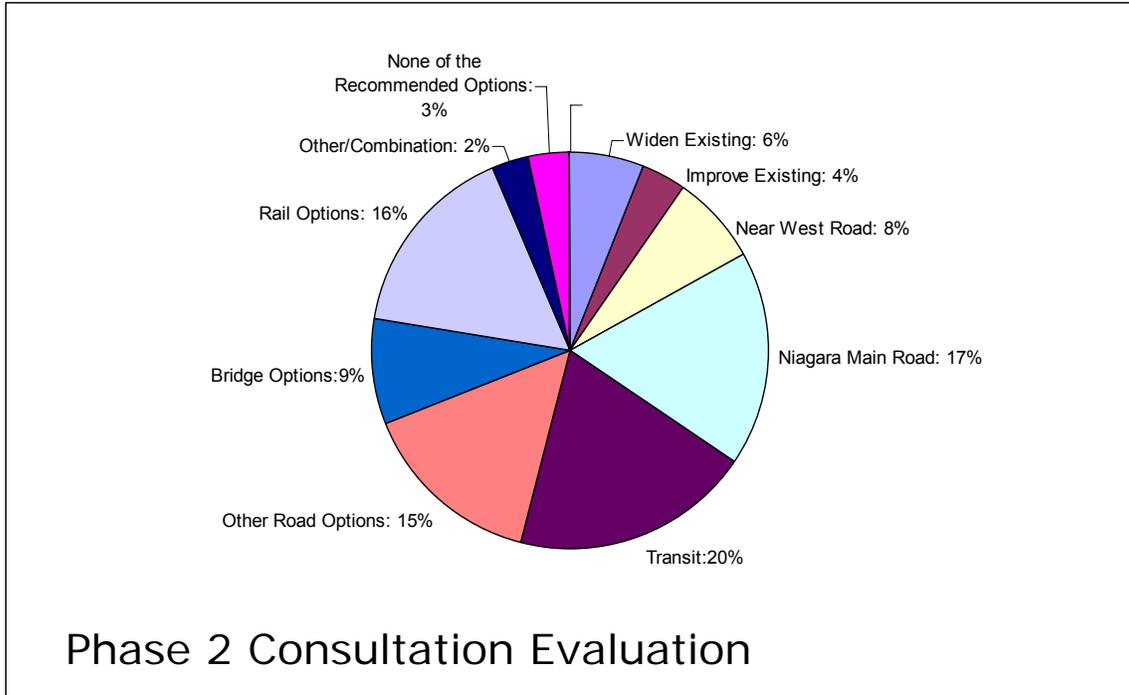
A consultation program for Phase 1 included workshops for stakeholders, First Nations, and local government; open houses in Duncan, Langford, and North Saanich with about 900 people attending; and a project website. Feedback forms were provided at the open houses and on the website. In addition, the project team received numerous emails.

Results from over 800 feedback forms and emails considered 26 options or combination of options. Results indicated a stronger orientation to roadway and bridge solutions, with a preference for a new highway alignment. The favoured alignment was the Niagara Main. Other options were discussed, including increased enforcement, safety improvements, growth management, high occupancy and transit lanes, and different bridge options. Other considerations were support for comprehensive strategic planning at the regional level, support for environmental protection and transportation alternatives. The Phase 1 consultation identified other topics to consider in Phase 2.

Phase 2 Consultation

Further analysis and evaluation by the consultants in Phase 2 identified a short list of five options for further consideration: widen the existing highway alignment, improve the existing highway alignment, a new Near West alignment, a new Niagara Main alignment, and implementation of an express commuter bus service. In addition, the consultants also suggested pursuing short to medium term safety improvements until a long term plan is in place.

The Phase 2 consultation program was similar to Phase 1 in that it included use of the website, stakeholder and local government information sessions, and open houses. Attendance at the open houses was about a third of attendance during Phase 1. Feedback forms were received from the open houses and through the website. Respondents were asked to identify their preferred and second most preferred options from the shortlist. In addition, emails were received.



Over half of results from the feedback forms (246 were submitted) favoured one of the five options identified by the consultants for further study. Of these, widening or improving the existing highway were 10%, transit 20%, and new alignments 25% with Niagara Main option (17%) about double that of Near West. (8%)

Just less than half of results favoured options not identified by the consultants for further consideration. Of the options not identified by the consultants for further consideration, other road options and bridges totaled 24% and rail options 16% from feedback forms. An organized email and campaign (104 emails and letters) indicated a higher level of support for rail and transit and opposition to more roads. Submissions also indicated some support for other alignments, reducing traffic congestion, improving safety, driver education, speed indicator signs, and site specific improvements. There was significant concern expressed about the need to protect environmental values.

Conclusions

- The Malahat Corridor is a complex situation and there is no general consensus of the public about a preferred option.
- There is significant support for options not recommended by the consultants for further consideration. This is based on other priorities or disagreement about costs and benefits of various options.
- Close to 60% of results were for road based options, whether it was improving the existing alignment, new alignments, or bridge based solutions.
- Of the road based options, there was a preference for a new alignment over improving and widening the existing highway. The strongest preference for a new alignment was for the Niagara Main alignment. Support for bridge options dropped by about half from Phase 1.

- Ferry options received next to no public support.
- Compared to the results from Phase 1, there was less proportionate support indicated for road based options focusing on private vehicles, with the preference for both rail and transit increasing significantly from Phase 2. There seems to be growing public concern with overall environmental impacts related to global warming. In addition, support for transit was often based on protecting parks and natural areas.
- Respondents that attended open houses had a higher preference for roadway options as compared to the transit options than those who responded after the public meetings.
- Responses varied by the location of the open house. For example, those submitting forms at the open house in Victoria favoured road based options (not including transit) at about 89%. This percentage dropped to 64% at Duncan. Similarly, those submitting at the Victoria open house put rail at 2% and transit at 9%, while this increased to about 15% and 21% respectively at Duncan. On-line forms after the meetings had rail at 32%; other emails and letter responses after the meetings had rail at 44% with the no roads category at about 28%. It is interesting to note that of drivers through the Malahat in a random survey, that only about 4% indicated a willingness to switch to either rail or bus.
- There was less input in Phase 2 from the stakeholder/municipal invitees than in Phase 1, so topics like an integrated transportation plan or integration with land use planning for the South Island were not raised to the extent that it was in Phase 1. This tended to be a stakeholder issue, not a public issue, although there was concern that improved road options might just relocate areas of congestion.
- There is still support for other options such as traffic enforcement, public education, and site-specific safety improvements.

The Ministry should be cognizant that the results of this survey may not reflect overall community preferences because of the self-selecting nature of respondents – either those attending public meetings or those responding to an internet campaign.

Next Steps

Submission of the final report, including this consultation summary, will complete the consultant's assignment. The consultants have recommended five options that should be considered further. It will then be up to the government to decide on an appropriate course of action.