



**NORTH COURTENAY CONNECTOR PROJECT
INFORMATION SESSION SUMMARY REPORT**

FINAL

1. BACKGROUND

On June 9, 2015, the Province of British Columbia announced design work would begin on the \$15 million North Courtenay Connector to improve the connection between Highway 19 and North Courtenay. Since the announcement, preliminary-design of the North Courtney Connector has been complete with a proposed plan being recommended by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

The North Courtenay Connector is part of the Province's "BC On the Move" 10 year Transportation Plan and includes approximately 700m of new two-lane road alignment and a new two-lane bridge across the Tsolum River to replace the temporary one-lane structure currently located on Dove Creek Road. Access and safety for people walking and biking will also be improved with the inclusion of shoulders along both sides of the roadway.

The proposed roadway is located 3km north of the Courtenay City Centre and will run west from Dove Creek Road at Headquarters Road to Piercy Road – where Piercy Road continues to Highway 19.

More information about the project can be found at www.gov.bc.ca/northcourtenayconnector.

2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

On March 15, 2016, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure held a public information session in Downtown Courtenay. The information session was an opportunity for interested residents from the Comox Valley region to preview the recommended plan and provide comments. This engagement followed one-on-one direct engagement with the City of Courtenay, Comox Valley Regional District and local property owners with direct property impacts.

The information session was held at the Best Western Hotel on Cliffe Avenue on March 15 from 3 to 7 p.m. The event was designed as a come-and-go style event with the intent to:

- Present the recommended plan for the North Courtenay Connector to community members;
- Obtain input from community members on how the new connector may change travel patterns and other general comments; and,
- Enable community members to discuss the North Courtenay Connector project with the project team, and have their questions about the project answered.

The input received will be considered, along with technical and engineering factors, financial information and input from key stakeholders, when the North Courtenay Connector design is finalized.

2.1 Information Session Participation

The information session was well attended with **107 community members in attendance**. Attendees were encouraged to complete an event comment form either in-person at the event or at their own convenience following the information session (deadline: March 29, 2016). In total, **35 comment forms** were completed.

3. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

The following is a summary of the input collected through the **35 comment forms** received at the information session and by mail/email. The event comment form consisted of three questions/feedback prompts:

1. Once complete, how will the new North Courtenay Connector impact the way you travel in/around this area?
2. Please provide any general comments you have about the North Courtenay Connector project.
3. What additional questions do you have about this project?

As the comment forms, and questions within, were voluntary, not all comment forms were 100% complete.

Q1: Once complete, how will the new North Courtenay Connector impact the way you travel in/around this area?

The following table illustrates the themes identified based on the responses to this question. Many respondents felt the new bridge would have the greatest impact on how they travel in/around the area. Respondents acknowledged the new bridge would decrease delays crossing the bridge. Improved access was also a prominent theme, with respondents saying they would have quicker access to destinations around the region. A handful of residents were unsure or had concerns about how the North Courtenay Connector would impact the area, including:

- Concerns about impact on active transportation users;
- Concerns about access by car to Piercy Road from Dove Creek Road;
- Concerns about impacts to equestrians;
- Concerns about access to farm equipment;
- Concerns about speeding/traffic levels;

THEME	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
1. The new bridge will improve traffic flow	8
2. The North Courtenay Connector will improve access to destinations in the region	7
3. There will be improved safety for people walking and people on bikes	5
4. Unsure - have concerns	5
5. General support for the North Courtenay Connector	2
6. The improvements will reduce closures due to flooding	1
7. I will use Piercy Road more often	1

Q2: What additional questions do you have about this project?

The following table illustrates the themes identified based on the responses to this feedback prompt. Responses varied to this question with the most common theme relating to the intersection of Dove Creek Road and Headquarters Road. Comments cited concerns about the impact the North Courtenay Connector will have on traffic flow at this intersection. Some respondents suggested a traffic circle be installed to mitigate impacts. A handful of respondents were also concerned about the planned removal of the current one-lane bridge structure currently located along Dove Creek Road. Respondents suggested the river crossing be maintained for non-motorized uses.

THEME	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
1. Concerns about impact on traffic flow at Headquarters Road and Dove Creek Road	8
2. Consider maintaining the old bridge for non-motorized uses	6
3. Provide a more direct connection to Vanier Drive	4
4. Ensure safety for people walking and biking	4
5. Concerns about flooding and impact of rising water levels on land	4
6. Comments expressing general support	2
7. Ensure roadway is adequately lit	1
8. Consider trail improvements in the surrounding area	1
9. Reduce speed limits on Piercy west of new river crossing	1
10. Concern about impact on trees	1
11. Consider a 4-lane crossing to accommodate future population growth	1
12. Concerns about cost of the project	1
13. Consider de-commissioning Dove Creek Road between old bridge and Headquarters	1

Q3: Please provide any general comments you have about the North Courtenay Connector project.

The following table illustrates the themes identified based on the responses to this feedback question. Responses to this question varied and the majority of the responses were statements or suggestions rather than additional questions.

THEME	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
1. Questions/comments about flooding	4
2. Consider an alternative route	2
3. Questions about intersection configuration at Headquarters Road and Dove Creek Road	2
4. Questions about equestrian access	2
5. Questions about removal of old bridge	2
6. General comment of support for the project	1
7. Comment about language used in presentation material	1
8. Ensure adequate lighting along new roadway	1
9. Question about improving connection to Vanier Drive	1
10. Concern about noise along Stephen Road	1
11. Question about farm equipment access	1
12. Comment about design of roadway shoulder	1