

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 20, 2014

8:30AM

CRESTON

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Curtis Wullum, Director of Development Services, Lower Kootenay Band Arlene Basil, Councillor, Lower Kootenay Band
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Norm Parkes, Executive Director of Highways, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Hugh Eberle, District Manager, West Kootenay District, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Carmen Bennett, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1)	Transit: Participants noted there is not enough transit in the region, and if transit were available near the reserve, this would allow more people to commute to employment opportunities in town.
2)	Rail: Participants noted that more opportunity for railway transportation in the community would be beneficial for the movement of goods from the region, so goods can be transported to B.C.'s ports, rather than across the border to Seattle.
3)	Highways and side roads: Participants expressed interest in partnering on projects such as improving infrastructure near the bridge in west Creston, side roads and paving projects. Participants also expressed that access to gravel would give them the ability to build and improve some of their own infrastructure.
4)	Highways and side roads: Participants expressed the need for improvements with respect to safety concerns, such as lighting on the highway near the reserve, as well as traffic calming and safe pedestrian crossings in some areas of the community.
5)	Highways and side roads: Participants noted that preserving the local traditional language is a priority, requesting that, where possible, signage include the traditional language.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving goods efficiently and in a cost-effective way can be a challenge, and more efficient access to rail is desired. Public transportation is lacking in the community, which limits access to employment opportunities for residents.
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1)	Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One participant noted that the highway down to the border has some dangerous turns. There is a sharp turn just past the reserve on the road that follows the railway bed. One participant noted that improving rest areas for truckers and travelers is important. Wi-Fi in different areas, such as at rest areas or the top of the pass, would be a great way for people to stay connected. One participant noted that one of the challenges in this community is railway transportation, as there is no convenient place to load goods onto trains. The region exports hay to Japan, but at the moment it is loaded down through the United States to Seattle. Participants suggested that loading goods onto a Vancouver-bound train would reduce transportation costs by 20%. Participants noted that the Band needs to get products on trains and at the moment it is not possible to do so. They can either load in Spokane or Kings Gate, but this increases transportation costs. A railway siding in the community would benefit agriculture, the brewery, sawmills, different economies. Participants suggested this could be a good partnership opportunity. Participants noted that moving goods by truck through town is a safety concern, and getting trucks off the main street is a priority. More passing lanes on the Hope-Princeton Highway are desired. This is a priority for cutting trucking times to the coast, as trucking is important for moving goods from this community. In the community of Ainsworth there are some concerns with traffic speeds, and participants noted a lack of safe pedestrian crossings. A flashing light in this area, near Central Road, would be desirable. Participants noted that more passing lanes or pull outs on Highway 3A going up to the lake are desirable.
2)	Growing the Economy
3)	Connecting and Strengthening Communities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that bus transportation is important, as a number of community members do not have driver's licenses. There is no bus stop at the reserve to allow people to get to employment opportunities in town. An infrequent bus a couple times a day would be helpful to get people from the community to town in the morning so they can work.
4)	Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Railway siding would be a good opportunity for partnerships in the community

- Participants noted that street lights near the reserve are desired and suggested there could be a partnership opportunity for lighting. People often walk back and forth from the community, which is a safety concern in the dark.
- One participant noted they are looking at an economic opportunity at Highway 3 near the bridge in the west Creston area, and suggested it would be nice to partner with the Province to add a turning lane coming off the bridge.
- The community would like access to gravel in the Creston Valley. Participants suggested that working together with the Ministry regarding access to gravel would be very helpful so the Band can work to provide some of their own infrastructure to build up roads in the flood plains.
- Participants noted there are likely opportunities for paving partnerships, and if future paving opportunities exist, the Band would like to work on paving their main roads.
- Participants noted that putting more money into side roads through partnerships would be desirable in a few key areas.
- Participants noted they would like to see the traditional local First Nation language incorporated on new signage, if this opportunity exists, and they noted there are key areas where signs could be installed. Preserving the traditional language is one of the biggest challenges (there are only 22 speakers left in the entire nation), and generating awareness is important.

TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	
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- Participants noted that a railway siding in the community would reduce transportation costs related to the movement of goods. Participants are interested in this and other partnership opportunities.
- Participants noted that improving safety in the community by moving truck traffic away from the main street, incorporating street lighting and addressing some problem areas on the road to the border, are important priorities.
- Participants noted that access to alternate modes of transportation, such as expanded transit, is important to community members so they can access employment opportunities and services in town.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION	
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