

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

OCTOBER 23, 2014

2:30PM

NELSON

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Colin Farynowski, Town of Creston Mayor Ron Toyota, Town of Creston Mayor Greg Lay, Village of Kaslo Garry Jackman, Regional District of Central Kootenay Mayor Lawrence Chernoff, City of Castlegar Councillor Bob Adams, City of Nelson Colin Innes, City of Nelson Mayor John Dooley, City of Nelson Chair John Kettle, Regional District of Central Kootenay
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Norm Parkes, Executive Director of Highways, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Darrell Gunn, Operations Manager, West Kootenay District, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Carmen Bennett, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1)	Airports: Participants noted that improvements to local airports are needed in order to accommodate access to health care and for tourism.
2)	Transit: Participants agreed that the expansion of public transit services is needed for increased connectivity between communities.
3)	Highways: Participants expressed that Highway 33 between Rock Creek and Kelowna is a vital corridor for accessing health care in Kelowna and is in need of improvement.
4)	Highways and side roads: Participants expressed that improvements to Highway 3A (Balfour) are necessary for safe and reliable transportation and for connecting communities.
5)	Highways and side roads (tourism): Participants expressed a desire for infrastructure that supports tourism, such as safe pull-outs and viewpoints on highways.
6)	Highways: Participants noted that increased maintenance and re-design of culverts is necessary for adequate drainage on highways.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1)	Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor John Dooley of Nelson referenced a letter that was written by a regional coalition to Minister Stone regarding the need for improvements to Highway 33 between Rock Creek and Kelowna (including maintenance, pull-out lanes and passing zones). Mayor Dooley would like to revisit that issue and noted that Highway 33 is a critical corridor for accessing health care services in the Okanagan. The Mayor of Nelson asked about strategies for small airports, noting that some of the small airports need infrastructure repairs and that air transportation is critical to the livelihood of the region. The Mayor of Kaslo would like to see a timeline for long-term upgrades to Highway 31.
2)	Growing the Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Greg Lay of Kaslo agreed with the importance of improving rural airports and suggested that there could be opportunities to integrate/undertake repaving of runways over a 10-year period, given that there are already paving operations in these regions. He noted that airport reliability impacts tourism and that the existing level of airport funding is not adequate for future needs. Airport funding accommodates growth, therefore expansion of airports is critical, not just maintenance. The Mayor of Kaslo noted that where tourism routes are identified, the ministry could consider a program to improve safe pull-out areas and viewpoints for tourists. The Mayor of Castlegar noted that highways are economic links to all communities, and it is important for work to be done on a consistent basis to increase the reliability of highways.
3)	Connecting and Strengthening Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants from Nelson noted that they would like to see an expansion of public transit as well as improvements to cycling infrastructure (particularly across the Orange Bridge in Nelson). The Mayor of Castlegar noted that airports are key for providing connections between communities. The Mayor of Creston noted that funding for rural airports is a challenge and upgrading airports could better accommodate medical services flying directly to Kelowna or Calgary. Runways need turnaround areas to accommodate airlines such as King Air.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Castlegar noted that Highway 3B is a well-used connection to Highway 3, which is important for connecting communities. Alternative transportation options, such as public transit, are important for seniors and people with diverse transportation needs.
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Castlegar noted there is a partnership opportunity between communities and the Ministry to accomplish goals. Participants expressed that pull-outs and viewpoints could be enhanced with Ministry participation and through community directed funds. One participant suggested that joint paving contracts would be beneficial to communities.
TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
<p>Nelson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway 33 improvements between Rock Creek and Kelowna. Airport funding and infrastructure repairs. Increased cycling and transit connections between communities, as well as a cycling path across the Orange Bridge.
<p>Kaslo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved airport infrastructure, focusing on expansion, not just maintenance, is important for growth. The Mayor of Kaslo suggested there could be opportunities to integrate/undertake repaving of runways over a 10-year period, given that there are already paving operations in these regions. The Mayor would like to see a timeline for long-term upgrades to Highway 31. The Mayor would like to see improvements to infrastructure that supports tourism, such as pull-out areas and viewpoints on tourist routes.
<p>Regional District:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Regional District Chair would like to revisit airport funding (particularly in Creston valley). The Regional District Chair suggested doing a cost-benefit analysis on repaving side roads and looking into more cost-effective alternatives, like chip seal. The Regional District Chair suggested alternatives to grading weeds on the side of roads, such as spraying. Grading can cause damage to roadways, which impacts the overall cost of maintaining roads.
<p>Castlegar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Castlegar noted it is important for work to be done on a consistent basis to increase the reliability of highways. The Mayor of Castlegar noted that it is important for the Province to recognize that airports are key to these communities. The Mayor of Castlegar suggested reclassifying Highway 3B, as this is a well-used connection to Highway 3. Connections between communities are important.
<p>Creston:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Creston noted there is an opportunity to enhance tourism (Community Directed Funds). Pull-outs and viewpoints could be enhanced with ministry participation. Mayor of Creston noted that increased funding for rural airports, such as in Creston, is necessary to accommodate medical services and airlines such as King Air. The Mayor noted that it is good to see improvements on Highway 3 west of Princeton and suggested that further improvements to Highway 3 should be incorporated in 10-year plan.
<p>General/Regional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that culvert maintenance is an issue. The current size of culverts cannot handle runoff capacity. This creates a safety issue and could become an economic burden. As storm events are changing, climate adaptation is a key issue to consider. Culvert designs should consider the intensity and duration/impact of storm water management. Participants noted that designs need to look at accommodating aging populations. Accommodating seniors on highways and in urban environments is important. Participants noted there are concerns that seniors may have their licenses taken away, but they will continue to drive due to lack of transit options. It is important for seniors to have alternate transportation options for access to goods, services and health care. Participants noted the need to acknowledge the increasing diversity of communities, making moderate adjustments to highway right of ways and designs to safely accommodate cyclists and diverse users. One participant suggested that joint contracts on paving would be beneficial. Participants expressed that Highway 3A through Balfour is an important route when the summit is closed.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Nelson suggested that the Ministry should discuss plans with communities before making a decision to proceed with a project. He referenced the passing lane that was recently completed on Highway 3A leaving Nelson and noted that this was not a need for the community. The Mayor noted that improvements to Beasley Bluffs between Nelson and Castlegar would have been the priority project. One participant expressed the importance of generating public awareness regarding travel considerations, especially during peak travel times, and noted it is necessary to make sure people have the awareness to adjust expectations and travel times accordingly.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One participant suggested that moving the ferry crossing to Queens Bay would increase capacity and decrease delays. The participant noted there is a safety concern on the smaller ferry when it is at capacity and that car passengers may not be able to evacuate in the event of an abandon ship order, due to lack of space. The participant suggested that a 50 vehicle ferry would meet safety and efficiency challenges through the winter months. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Mayor of Kaslo noted right of way issues on Highway 3A and that many people do not know their property boundaries. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mayor Lawrence Chernoff of Castlegar noted that working around growing the economy and connecting communities is a big step forward in development of this 10-year plan and that working together is important. |