

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

OCTOBER 28, 2014

9:00 AM

KAMLOOPS

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION:	Darcy Alexander, Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality Rob Bremner, Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality Al Raine, Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality Allan Chabot, City of Merritt Mayor Susan Roline, City of Merritt Rod Crowe, Village of Chase Joni Heinrich, Village of Chase David Lepsoe, Village of Chase Robyn Cyr, Columbia Shuswap Regional District Larry Morgan, Columbia Shuswap Regional District Sukh Gill, Thompson-Nicola RD Colleen Hannigan, District of Barriere Mayor Bill Humphries, District of Barriere Councillor Bill Kershaw, District of Barriere Councillor Virginia Smith, District of Barriere David Trawin, City of Kamloops Mayor Peter Milobar, City of Kamloops
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Paula Cousins, District Manager, Thompson Nicola District, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI)
NOTE TAKER	Carrie Peacock, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES:	
1)	Highways and side roads: Participants stressed the need for an alternate road up to the Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality, to support tourism and economic development opportunities.
2)	Highways: Participants requested that the reliability, safety and maintenance of Coquihalla Highway be addressed promptly.
3)	Highways: Participants requested improvements to Highway 1 (specifically to Trans Canada East) to encourage transportation with Alberta.
4)	Highways: Participants asked that efforts be made to maintain and address the beautification of Highway 8.
5)	Highways: Safety enhancements to Highway 5 (i.e. passing lanes, pullouts) were requested.
6)	Pedestrians and cycling: Enhancements to pedestrian/cyclist routes were strongly encouraged.
7)	Highways and side roads: Participants requested that access be provided to municipal programs/funding for shoulders and/or off-road pathways.
8)	Highways and side roads: Participants requested that the access to the Kamloops Southwest Industrial Park be addressed.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues were raised concerning line marking and the quality of paint. Participants suggested replacing rumble strips to a location that is safer for cyclists. Participants noted challenges with aging transit fleets, and a replacement strategy is needed Participants suggested improvements to signage, to better promote small communities and guide drivers. Improvements are needed for bridges at Scotch Creek and Peterson (replacement needed for Scotch Creek and a long term plan for Peterson, which is a critical link). Heavy truck traffic is being added to already-congested areas. Participants noted considerable accidents and fatalities between Chase, Sorrento and Salmon Arm
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1)	Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Merritt noted that the 290 overpass needs a pedestrian crosswalk, particularly with Walmart on the other side and more development occurring. This area is currently unsafe for pedestrians. Participants noted that passing lanes are needed in sections of the Yellowhead Highway, as well as left-hand turns (through Barriere and at Little Fort). Participants noted that line painting is insufficient, particularly in the North Valley. Increased truck traffic impacts the centre lines and fog lines. The Mayor of Barriere noted that improved shoulders are needed where they soft and falling away (particularly between Barriere and Kamloops). Participants highlighted a need to complete the four-laning between Kamloops and Salmon Arm. Communities want to

<p>support better access for patients, health care facilities and auxiliary services.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that more resources are needed for warning and other signs (e.g. curve warnings), particularly since the recent speed limit increase. Participants expressed support for more LED curve warning signs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted enhanced signage is needed to promote economic development in small communities. Communities could work with the Ministry to support better signage that encourages people to visit their communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that Chase would benefit from improvements to Highway 1 and access to other areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted a need to address the treacherous stretches on Highway 1, to encourage traffic from Alberta.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted the Chase/Falkland Road has a 6 kilometer-long unpaved section, which people have complained about for years. Nearly a dozen mountain sheep were killed on the hill near Chase last year. Some fencing could help prevent this.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that roads to bridges can be steep and difficult to access. Access should be incorporated during bridge maintenance projects. Specifically at the Barriere Town Bridge, where the bridge crosswalk could be connected to local dirt trails in a rehab project.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new bridge over Adams River is terrific. Participants would like to have the old one-lane Scotch Creek Bridge replaced, as all the salmon run traffic and plans to expand Roderick Haig Park are contributing to a bottleneck and presenting challenges here.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Kamloops noted a cohesive plan is needed regarding Pederson Creek Bridge, which is nearing 45 years old. It is a critical link. If it were closed, it would significantly impact Columbia Street (i.e. with truck traffic, etc.).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted the Squilax Anglemont Road needs to be paved from St. Ives. The road from St. Ives to Seymour Arm is a forest service road, and needs to be considered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that major closures on the Coquihalla create economic impacts for the trucking industry and Sun Peaks. The Ministry should consider advanced technology (i.e. gas-ex detonation devices). Capital costs of preventative measures need to be considered. Fines should be increased for truckers not pulling over to chain up.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants suggested that Environment Canada should focus its messaging about the Coquihalla on the weather; the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure should focus on the roads. Need to improve messaging to stop scaring off winter road users.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The webcams on the Coquihalla are useful. People can see what the roads actually look like in real-time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted those who travel the Coquihalla without proper winter tires should be fined. Drivers need to drive to the current conditions, and cannot expect to travel 120 km/hour in winter snow conditions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor of Barriere noted that truckers with over-width loads require pilot cars (particularly on Highway 5 North) as there is nowhere for them to pull over safely to chain up. Traffic on the highway has increased in the evening hours.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor of Kamloops noted Vickers Road is getting worse. Trains, tourists and high-speed traffic create challenges for that area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mayor Roline noted the Highway 8 and Voight Street intersection continues to get busier. Land needs to be acquired to put right hand turn lanes in. Exit 290 needs a pedestrian overpass. Communities can't afford to do these improvements on their own.
<p>2) Growing the Economy</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted a road connection between Shuswap and Sun Peaks is needed to: improve the local economy, support a 12-month tourism window for both communities, and provide connections between Highway 5, Yellowhead and Highway 1. This supports accessibility from northern Alberta to Sun Peaks and Shuswap, and better access to Sun Peaks via the road from Salmon Arm and the North Okanagan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key priority for Sun Peaks and other areas is a road to the east. This would improve the year-round recreational economy; support relationships with adjacent First Nations communities; be helpful in the event that people needed to be evacuated in a fire; and provide improved access to Shuswap residents. The road could be phased in, starting with a gravel road, then gradually paving one section at a time. A moderate road (not a deluxe "cadillac" road) would suffice initially.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A road to Sun Peaks should be prioritized, announced and incorporated in the Ministry's planning discussions now, as it could take another 8 to 10 years to complete. Once the Ministry gets agreement by communities, they can focus on the plans and dollars needed. The best route to Sun Peaks will need to be determined.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider paving the current route from Sun Peaks, down through the back roads to Barriere, as this is shorter route.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The forest service road from Chase (the McGillivray Lake Forest Road) is drivable during the summer but could be plowed to provide some access in the winter. Participants noted that First Nations consultation on this connection may be required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the route to Sun Peaks the last 7 kilometers goes up significantly and then declines significantly. Consider a road on the inside of the municipal boundary then connect back to McGillivray Forest Road. As the crow flies, it is only 12 kilometers from Sun Peaks to Chase, however it is 32 to 48 kilometers to drive. Participants noted this needs to be in the 10-year plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the Kamloops South West Industrial Park is a priority for the City of Kamloops.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider connecting the Coquihalla to Abbotsford, to connect with the U.S. border. This would create a west coast north-south route, provide a more direct route than Highway 97, and enhance traffic on the Yellowhead to Hope.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tourist and commuter cyclists are using the highway systems and back-country roads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The airport in Merritt wants to slightly expand its runway. The airport can provide improved access to the province's Wildfire Training Facility, and can absorb flights when Kamloops and Kelowna airports get fogged in. The adjacent landowner has been contacted about extending the runway. Grant funding could be sought for new lighting, and to assist traffic in the area.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term parking should be made available at the Kamloops airport, so frequent commuters can “park and fly”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a backup airport for Kamloops (Merritt) could be a good idea if airport studies support it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the washroom facilities along the Trans Canada and other corridors. Truckers use the side of the road as a washroom, which is unpleasant to clean. Consider including rest area facilities in upcoming work between Chase and Kamloops.
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants would like to see an increase to BikeBC grants, noting that bicycle paths are needed along the main road to Sun Peaks and a walking path 8 or 10 metres parallel to the road, to allow space for snow banks beside the highway. To support cyclists’ safety, rumble strips should be nearer to the fog line.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where appropriate, provide a marked lane for pedestrians and cyclists when repaving.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor of Kamloops suggested finding shorter and safer ways for people to walk and bike, away from roads and busy streets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance cycling infrastructure, making it possible to bike from Salmon Arm to Sicamous. A cycling path from Chase could connect to “Rails to Trails”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor of Kamloops said to consider using the Pederson Creek/6th Avenue path as a multi-use pedestrian path, as it is away from Columbia Street and highway interchanges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When looking at plans to move people and grow the economy, major infrastructure costs need to be considered.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor of Kamloops noted that replacement and amortization of Kamloops’ aging transit fleet should be considered in the 10-year plan. Significant fleet issues are anticipated across BC in the next 3 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transit improvements and links between rural communities even once or twice daily would improve work opportunities and assist seniors, particularly in the winter months. Transit levies (a few cents a liter) could assist this.
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives from Pritchard, Salmon Arm, Chase and adjacent First Nations communities have participated on the “Moving Forward Together” Working Group for 8 or 9 years. The group focused on tourism, signage, regional transportation issues and options for a transit system between Kamloops and Salmon Arm (Chase would be an excellent hub for this).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Shuswap applied to Western Diversification for funding for a connection to Sun Peaks. Other funding sources could be considered (i.e. Build Canada).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations need to be consulted on the route to Sun Peaks. The Sea to Sky Highway signs to Whistler are in dual languages, which could be considered heading east from Kamloops.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the maintenance contractor on the Coquihalla, as lengthy closures on the Coquihalla are unacceptable. Encourage the contractor to leave a skiff of snow rather than cleaning it down to the pavement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants noted that conversations between the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure and municipalities have improved.
TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternate route to Sun Peaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway 1 eastbound improvements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway 5 (passing lanes and pull-outs)
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants noted the Ministry must be commended for achievements over the past years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The show “Highway through Hell” confirms that more than one towing company should be on call on the Coquihalla.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants noted communication is critical, and this discussion session has been appreciated.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants said to continue the good work on Yellowhead 5.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautification projects need to be maintained. Address aesthetic, pedestrian and safety issues on Highway 8 in Merritt, near the commencement of the four-lane portion of Nicola Avenue, particularly considering the community’s efforts to beautify other parts of Merritt.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts are needed to prevent transporting noxious weeds around, as this is a ranching community. A number of gravel pits need treatment.