

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

OCTOBER 28, 2014

1:30PM

PRINCE RUPERT

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	CAO Ron Bedard, District of Port Edward Mayor Dave MacDonald, District of Port Edward Deputy CAO Bob Payette, District of Port Edward CAO Joan Merrick, Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Scott Maxwell, Acting Regional Manager Northern Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Randy Penner, District Manager, Transportation, Skeena District, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Selina Bull, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1) Highways and side roads: Participants noted a need to facilitate heavy and oversized truck hauling, especially with the development of LNG facilities in the area. This will be vital to the economic development of the area and communities' ability to benefit from LNG development.	
2) Airports: Participants noted a need for better access to the Prince Rupert Airport, which will be key for the development of LNG facilities in the area. There was a concern that without expansion of, and better access to the airport, cities with better facilities, such as Terrace, will gain the economic benefits.	
3) Engagement with Ministry: Participants requested a follow-up meeting with MoTI to discuss how the input of municipalities, First Nations, and stakeholders has been worked into the 10-year plan.	
4) Highways: Highway 16 will form an important link through which construction materials for LNG facilities will pass, and participants noted a need for upgrades on Highway 16 to increase safety and to support economic growth.	
5) Cycling and pedestrian: Participants had an interest in the development of a walking/cycle trail along Highway 16.	
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prince Rupert Airport does not have the capacity or ease of access to deal with the expected increase in air traffic from LNG development in the area. Participants suggested that if nothing is done to remedy these issues, the gains from LNG development will end up in Terrace. There is an opportunity for the Ministry to partner with communities in the Prince Rupert/Port Edward area in the development of a walking/cycle trail along Highway 16. The Mayor of the District of Port Edward noted that the district has more opportunity and money to undertake these kinds of projects now. Participants noted that the development of LNG facilities in the area presented challenges of increased traffic and heavy hauling as well as an opportunity to gain from this economic growth. 	
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1) Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that there is a need for passing lanes on Highway 16 near Rainbow Crescent. A participant from Port Edward also noted that if LNG development goes forward, trucking involved with LNG construction will increase traffic a lot on the highway between Prince Rupert/Port Edward and Prince George. Participants from Port Edward noted a need to deal with safety issues at “car wash rock,” the Mile 29 level crossing, and the 35 Mile avalanche zone. The Mayor of Port Edward expressed the need to deal with safety concerns in the whistle cessation process in Port Edward. 	
2) Growing the Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants expressed concern that the infrastructure in their area does not have the capacity to deal with the potential growth in air and road traffic should LNG development ensue, and that this may adversely affect their communities' ability to gain from the economic development. 	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District noted that cutbacks to ferry services has been a problem for communities in Haida Gwaii, as residents depend on ferries for access to medical and education services. A participant from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District also noted that her community was interested in the development of a water-taxi service for Dodge Cove (Digby Island) and Oona River (Porcher Island). The representatives from Port Edward emphasized that there is a need for better access to the Prince Rupert Airport, and were frustrated with the proposed routing of Simpson's Passage to Port Simpson (which is linked to a LNG facility). 	
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants appreciated the opportunity for communities to give their input and requested a follow-up meeting Representatives from Port Edward saw an opportunity for the Ministry to collaborate with their community for the development of a walking/cycle trail 	

TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	
<u>District of Port Edward:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Port Edward indicated a priority for an overpass on Highway 16 at the Mile 29 rail crossing. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Port Edward noted there was a need to address the Mile 30 S-curves and “car wash rock” on Highway 16. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Port Edward indicated the need to address the 35-mile avalanche zone on Highway 16. 	
<u>Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representative from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District noted that the rural side roads on Haida Gwaii were a concern, especially to maintain access to the recreational parts of the coast. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District noted that increased regular maintenance was important to the communities in Dodge Cove and Una River. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representative from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District indicated that her board is considering the development of a private water access route for Dodge Cove (Digby Island) and Oona River (Porcher Island). She expressed an interest in garnering funding from the province for this purpose. 	
<u>All/Regional:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants felt that opening up access to the Prince Rupert airport is critical for the region and in order for the area to be able to take advantage of the economic benefits of LNG development. 	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants agreed that there are two different scenarios that should be considered in the development of the 10-year plan: Firstly, in the instance that the development of LNG facilities does not go ahead; and secondly, in the instance that it does go ahead 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Port Edward noted a need for more regular maintenance (brushing) alongside Highway 16, as it affects both tourism prospects along the Skeena River and highway safety. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District noted that the maintenance of side roads on Haida Gwaii is a concern for residents. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Skeena-Queen Charlotte Regional District indicated that the communities on Haida Gwaii have been suffering from the BC Ferries cuts. She noted that the ferries provide a vital link for freight and goods, and for residents to access medical and dental services, extracurricular activities on the mainland. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Port Edward was frustrated with the process for developing a route for Simpson Passage. He noted that the Ministry and local communities had spent \$300 000 on a study to devise the best routing option, but then the province appeared to be leaning towards two other options that provide access to Simpson peninsula LNG plants but do not provide access to the airport. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted that it is difficult to plan for transportation projects on the verge of the potentially massive change that will come from LNG development in the area. They indicated that from a planning perspective it might be useful to develop two scenarios, one in which LNG goes ahead, and the other which is the status quo. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Port Edward noted that the Highway 16 corridor from Prince Rupert to Prince George is going to be critical if LNG development is approved. With that in mind, he noted that it would be good to get extra capacity through passing lanes near Rainbow Crescent. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Port Edward inquired as to whether the rail crossing at Mile 29 was going to be re-engineered for an overpass. Randy Penner noted that there is still some environmental and design work remaining. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A representative from Port Edward indicated that it would be beneficial for local governments of the region to meet again once the plan has been published in order for the Ministry to explain how the input it received during this engagement process has been put to use in decision-making and in the plan. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Port Edward noted that CN whistle cessation was a concern for his community. Randy Penner indicated that Port Edward might consider working with Terrace and/or Prince Rupert, which have successfully dealt with the whistle cessation program. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of Port Edward indicated that his council has an interest in collaborating with the government to divert traffic from Skeena Drive, which goes right through the town to a bypass around Port Edward. 	