

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

OCTOBER 29, 2014

10:00 AM

PRINCE GEORGE

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Lara Beckett, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Terry Burgess, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Jim Martin, Regional District of Fraser-Fort George Bill Gall, City of Prince George Mayor Stephanie Killam, District of Mackenzie Pat Crook, District of Mackenzie
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Paula Cousins, District Manager, Transportation, Thompson Nicola District, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Karen Andrews, District Operations Manager, Fort George District, MoTI Ron Blight, District Program Manager, Fort George District, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Carrie Peacock, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1)	Highways and side roads: Participants asked that traffic impacts from trucks and vehicles accessing the mines in the north be considered.
2)	Highways: Participants expressed that highway passing lanes, shoulder enhancements and pullouts (i.e. on Highway 97 North) should be considered to improve safety.
3)	Highways: Participants recognized the need to enhance highways to accommodate increasing traffic volumes. The road from Dawson Creek to Fort St. John is busy; Highway 16 has experienced a huge increase in traffic to the port; and four-laning is needed on Highway 97 North.
4)	Cycling and pedestrian: Participants recognized the need to continue to invest in cycling and pedestrian networks as an important priority.
5)	Highways and side roads: Participants stressed the need to address much-needed improvements to the Prince George bypass intersection.
6)	Transit: Participants requested transit expansion to the Prince George system, in particular improved connections to rural communities.
7)	Airports: Participants requested support for enhancements to rural airport runways.
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
Security of dangerous goods transportation. (C&O)	
The community of Myworth want to realign its main road to avoid rail crossings	
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1)	Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Salmon River Bridge is an old narrow bridge, built in 1950, which needs to be addressed. Parsnip River Bridge also needs to be addressed, as a lot of truck traffic movement is getting stalled between the Peace and the Interior. The passing lanes on Highway 97 South are appreciated, however they should be added on Highway 97 North. The road north of Mackenzie through Pine Pass is narrow and winding. There is a lot of constant truck traffic. Look at passing lanes, shoulder enhancements and pull-outs. What can be done by MoTI to address the security of dangerous goods transportation? (C&O) (Mayor Killam) Continue with the Cariboo Connector and four-laning to Cache Creek. Consider the Prince George to Prince Rupert corridor. Do it all. Four-lane Highway 97 North. The truck traffic is getting busy. Also look at Highway 16 to the border and the Cariboo Highway. Address the Prince George bypass intersection improvements. We will likely need to contribute, but these are important to the City of Prince George. Maintain and fix existing infrastructure. Road crews should focus on areas of the highway with safety issues. Some portions of the road can be challenging to fix as the asphalt is very old. Some of the tourist attraction signs are no longer valid. Cyclists dislike the rumble strips on the highway, from a safety perspective. These could be better positioned. On Route 66 in California rumble strips have been installed to play “America the Beautiful” when ridden over, at the speed

limit (AKA an “asphaltophone”).	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the stretch 250 km north of Prince George there are only 2 rest areas. More rest areas are needed particularly during the winter as drivers get fatigued. 	
2) Growing the Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a mine at Mount Milligan with a forest service road. A new mine up north on the Ospica has to come back down, which will produce even more traffic. There will be a lot more traffic. Forestry has upgraded the road, but highways should take this over. The north road needs to be looked at. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of the District of Killam noted that traffic impacts from mines in the north need to be considered, if mining continues to increase Williston Lake may become a transportation corridor, beyond what it current is used for (forestry). The Mayor urged the Ministry to consider what is coming out of Mackenzie. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The road from Dawson Creek to Fort St. John is busy, with oil and gas traffic. Mining equipment travels that route. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highway 16 has experienced a huge increase in traffic to the port. There is support for double-laning Highway 16 to accommodate higher volumes and big trucks. We want this four-laned, instead of having more passing lanes. Traffic will increase due to the port. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With increased train traffic, Vanderhoof will be tough to drive from one side to the other. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myworth Road is in a small community outside Prince George with one road in and out. There are three rail crossings over the road. The road was there first. The community wants to realign the road to avoid two of the rail crossings. Due to the length of the trains increasing, people try to race the trains. Sometimes both crossing are covered by a train at the same time. The Nechako River bank is right beside this road. Realignment of the road and an overpass over the third rail crossing is a priority of the community. Alternatively, or look at a new road – a second egress coming to the west through Beaver Lake (currently a trail). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider pushing the rail over a few hundred feet. Something must be done. Expectant moms are choosing to stay in town to avoid delays caused by trains. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no control over trains. They don't have to report to UBCM or FCM on dangerous goods going through the community. If oil is moved through Prince Rupert it will take 26 103-car trains to fill one super tanker. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Prince Rupert Port Authority has buildout plans that see rail traffic increasing 3 to 4 times. Ask the Port Authority on this. There will be challenges due to this. Myworth is an isolated community; a rail disaster would block people in the community. 	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ADM discussed with OBAC, transportation to communities with limited access to main routes. A number of communities lack access to main highways. A rural community transit and inter-community transit options should be considered. This will benefit elderly and others with accessibility issues. OBAC's strategies and recommendations are posted on their website. (Mayor Killam) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase investments in transit in the City of Prince George. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide continued transit support. The province supports transit – we want that to continue. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit needs to expand to get clusters of the population into the city. Transit expansion into the Prince George system is needed and must include rural communities. Consider a Park and Ride to encourage central transit use from outside areas. This could assist the morning and evening commuters. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The province should continue to invest in cycling and pedestrian networks. Increase investments in Bike BCGrants. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on cost sharing options for a cycling and pedestrian network. This is a key recreation need for Prince George. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding bike lane improvements – more tourists bike on the highway in the summer. To promote cyclist safety, bike routes should be separated from the highway (i.e. off-network trails). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are conflicts between cyclists and traffic in the Myworth area. People are using this narrow road for training, with three or four cyclists riding side by side. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Prince George Airport Authority to discuss their issues with NAVcan or otherwise. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some First Nations have a runway which they can't use as they aren't paved. They need help with this. They need fencing to meet Transport Canada standards. Give them avenues to achieve the standards. Support is needed for rural airport runways. (Mayor Killam) 	
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is important to maximize collaboration and partnerships. We don't have the money or mandate at the Regional District level for roads. We can't be a 1/3 funding partner as has been suggested in other initiatives. Even small municipalities do not have the funding for this. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform political leaders that the northern communities have some strong feelings about the socio-economic impact analysis of BC Ferries done by UBCM. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication is important. We need to maintain communications with each other. The Fraser Fort George District has been helpful in the past few years. (Mayor Killam) 	
TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance of roads with traffic and tonnage exceeding the use they were designed for |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Road realignment in Myworth to avoid rail crossings |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cycling and pedestrian networks |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new provincial signs are very large and very reflective.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please extend thanks to the person who cleared the brush along the sides of the road into Mackenzie. (Mayor Killam)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants appreciated group discussion opportunities to know their concerns are being heard.