

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 4, 2014

1:30 PM

TERRACE

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Councillor James Cordeiro, City of Terrace Councillor Stacey Tyers, City of Terrace Councillor Brian Downie, City of Terrace Andrew Webber, Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine CAO Ron Poole, District of Kitimat Mayor Alice Maitland, Village of Hazelton Councillor Shirley Muldon, Village of Hazelton Councillor Ray Sturney, District of New Hazelton
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Scott Maxwell, Acting Regional Manager, Northern Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Randy Penner, Acting District Manager, Transportation, Skeena District, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Selina Bull, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1) Highways/ Transportation planning: Participants agreed that there was a need to consider the expected growth in the region and to carefully analyze that when redesigning portions of the highway. They also noted that the Highway 16 corridor will play a critical role in the province's economic strategy of LNG development. Participants expressed concerns with both safety and capacity issues that can be expected to arise with increased heavy trucking traffic on that corridor.	
2) Highways and side roads: Participants agreed that there are capacity problems with the Sande-Keith intersection and the Sande overpass in Terrace.	
3) Rail: Participants felt that the railroad through Terrace presented a connectivity problem for the community, as there is only one overpass (Sande). More broadly, many participants were interested in promoting their communities' connectivity through pedestrian walkways.	
4) Forest roads/MoTI roads: Participants indicated a frustration with the jurisdictional split between forest service roads and MoTI roads in the region. Certain forest service roads are no longer used or supported by industry, but there are other uses and participants felt that the maintenance was not appropriate for these uses. Participants expressed a need for MoTI to take a closer look at these and to work closely with the forest industry to find a kind of middle-ground jurisdiction.	
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants noted a concern that portions of Highway 16 create "pinch points" for current traffic levels and that the whole corridor needs to be closely considered to ensure that the infrastructure will meet the growing needs of the area's economy and communities. Participants from Terrace noted that the airport's capacity is a challenge to growth of the area. The terminal does not accommodate current passenger levels, and this needs to be considered in light of LNG development and the expected increase in air traffic to move workers. Participants expressed an interest in increasing the pedestrian/cycle travel choices for their communities. The Mayor of New Hazelton noted that she strongly prioritized expenditure for highways upgrades over airport spending. 	
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1) Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants from Terrace agreed that the Sande-Keith intersection was a problem for their community. As Highway 16 traffic has increased, traffic flow has worsened and drivers are making more dangerous manoeuvres to get through the intersection. One participant noted that resident populations on either side of the overpass are expected to increase, which will exacerbate this problem. A participant from Terrace noted that the 4-way stop at the Highway 16-Highway 37 intersection was dangerous because it confuses drivers. A participant from Kitimat indicated that there was a concern with safety in the region as Highway traffic (and especially trucking traffic) increases. He noted for example that, on Highway 37 between Terrace and Kitimat, as traffic grows, drivers get more frustrated and undertake more dangerous manoeuvres. In light of this, he indicated that the Ministry should consider adding more capacity to the highways in this region. Participants from Terrace noted that the Sande Overpass sidewalks were not adequate for current pedestrian traffic, and that it was unsafe for pedestrians to be so close to heavy load trucks. They indicated a need to either widen the sidewalks or to install railings at the curb. A participant from Terrace also noted that because there is only one overpass for pedestrians, there is a safety issue with people getting frustrated and walking over the tracks. The Mayor of New Hazelton noted a need to invest in a safer walking path in her area, especially from the New Hazelton high school to Gitanmaax and the village of Hazelton. Currently, school children walk on the highway shoulder. 	
2) Growing the Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Terrace noted that predicting the traffic from an unknown amount of LNG development will be difficult. He indicated a concern that this economic development will cause a dramatic increase of heavy and oversized loads. He noted that there was a need to look at the corridor as a whole, from Alberta to Prince Rupert in light of the expected growth in 	

traffic.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another representative from Terrace noted that the changes to the Sande-Keith intersection and the overpass need to be considered not in terms of current traffic needs, but in light of the expected growth. 	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Terrace noted that the issues with the Sande Overpass are not just safety-related, but also related to the connectivity of the community. The railroad bisects Terrace and Sande Overpass is the only pedestrian crossing; thus, it is critical to her community's connectivity. Participants from Terrace indicated that this is a pinch-point for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic, although they have identified distinct potential locations for pedestrian and vehicle overpasses. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine noted that there is an issue with the jurisdiction of some side roads in the region, especially the "Cranberry Connector." He indicated that investment into this Forest Service Road have been ad-hoc and there are emergency utility, increasing resource activity, and tourism uses that make the case for this road to see a clear development plan and more attention from the ministry, whether the funds come from industry, the Forestry service, or MoTI. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine noted that it is important to invest in the Dease Lake airport, and that it would provide important connections for remote areas. 	
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representative from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine expressed frustration with Forest Services' jurisdiction of roads, especially with the Forest Service Road to Sleeping Beauty Mountain. He indicated that the road has been nicely improved up to the last 100 metres, where it gets very bad. Scott Maxwell noted that there might be a middle ground where Forest Services could work with MoTI to maintain roads like this. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Terrace noted a similar problem with the Forest Service road between Laxgalts'ap and Kinkolith . He indicated a need for MoTI and Forest Services to find a middle ground to keep these roads in adequate condition for the type of traffic there now. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from Kitimat indicated a strong concern with the ownership of Haisla Boulevard through the community. He noted that the mixed ownership of the road (part Provincial, Municipal, and private) has created problems with consistent maintenance and southern access on the privately owned portion. He hopes that the Province will take over the road, or at the minimum, will lead a discussion with the parties involved about these issues. He noted that it does not make sense for Rio Tinto Alcan's (RTA) taxes to be raised to pay for infrastructure which is seeing increasing development (especially in the case of Northern Gateway approval). Other sections of industry thus unfairly benefit from RTA's contribution, and the province needs to review ownership and funding structure issues. 	
TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	
<u>Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine indicated that the Ministry should prioritize Highway 16 west of Terrace. He noted that, overall, it is in good shape, but that there are a few specific spots that need upgrading. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The participant from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine that rail-highway conflict and rail safety are top concerns, especially for areas to the east of Terrace, and in the city itself. He noted that while rail is a federal responsibility, it can be very difficult to deal with CN and request support from the province and this plan to increase rail safety. 	
<u>New Hazelton:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of New Hazelton noted that a top priority for her community was the realignment of Highway 16, especially in the Hazelton area, near Mud Flat Creek and Trout Creek. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of New Hazelton noted a second priority for Highway 16 at boulder Creek East, where there are often accidents. She indicated that this should be considered, since people from the community are increasingly commuting between Hazelton and Terrace/Smithers/Houston/Burns Lake. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of New Hazelton also indicated a local need for traffic lights at the Hagwilget Bridge. She noted that because fog centers in that area, drivers often cannot see whether there is oncoming traffic on the one-lane bridge. 	
<u>Terrace:</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representatives from Terrace indicated a clear short-term need to fix the flow and capacity problems of both the Sande overpass and the Sande-Keith intersection. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representatives from Terrace indicated a longer-term need to increase opportunities for both pedestrian and vehicle crossings of the CN rail tracks. 	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scott Maxwell noted that the Ministry would be happy to work with the federal government and local governments in order to address concerns with rail safety and rail-highway conflicts in the area. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A participant from Terrace noted a concern that the Discussion Guide materials did not address the larger picture of the Asia-Pacific Gateway. Scott Maxwell indicated that the big picture of the Asia-Pacific Gateway is still a commitment for the Ministry, but that the materials have attempted to present this in plain language. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The representative from Kitimat inquired as to whether the Ministry, in its planned upgrades to Highway 16 to make it a heavy-haul route, would consider twinning. Scott Maxwell indicated that MoTI is not considering twinning at this point; rather to make 16 a heavy haul route it would have to upgrade structures for greater weight and height. He noted that passing lanes can add a lot of capacity if there is a concern about that. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mayor of New Hazelton noted that there is a sharp corner and steep hill on Highway 16 at the Suskwa River. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant from Terrace expressed frustration with the imbalance of resources for overpasses in her city versus the Sea-to-Sky highway.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant from Terrace noted that if a second overpass were built, it would probably be done at Braun Street/Nisga'a Highway, where there is enough land to do so. The participant also noted that if this second overpass were built, it would be good to integrate Keith Avenue with it as a trucking route.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant from Terrace noted that seal-coating (on the Nisga'a Highway) past Dover Road would be beneficial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant from Terrace indicated a need for lighting on roads outside of the city, for example, between Terrace and the airport.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some participants noted that residents of Terrace and the surrounding area might not initially like the idea of a roundabout for the Sande-Keith intersection, but that it could be the right solution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One participant from Terrace noted that the redesign of the Sande-Keith intersection could be faced with space problems when the hospital is replaced. Scott Maxwell noted that if the intersection gets redone, the Ministry will probably have to sit down with the hospital and consider purchasing some of that land.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MoTI representatives presented a short video of the avalanche upgrade trials near Mile 35 of Highway 16. They noted that the district team is excited about the work being done. Randy Penner noted that this trial will cost \$2-3 million and to address the entire avalanche risk area at Mile 35 would cost about \$ 174 million.