

# B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 4, 2014

2:00PM

PENTICTON

<b>ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION</b>	Doug Eaton, Penticton Chamber of Commerce Loraine MacKenzie, Hwy 97 Task Force Susan Robinson, Princeton Chamber of Commerce Colleen Christensen, Keremeos Chamber of Commerce
<b>MOTI REPRESENTATIVES</b>	Mike Lorimer, Regional Director, Southern Interior Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Jeff Wiseman, Operations Manager, Okanagan Shuswap District, MoTI
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Kai-lani Rutland, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
<b>KEY THEMES (3-6)</b>	
1)	<b>Highways:</b> Participants reiterated the importance of investments in Highway 3 to improve safety and mobility throughout the region.
2)	<b>Highways:</b> Participants reiterated the need for continued improvements along Highway 97 south of Penticton to address reliability issues.
3)	<b>Highways and side roads:</b> Participants from Peachland expressed the community's desire for a bypass and requested that the Province share planning strategies with the community as soon as they are developed.
4)	<b>Transit:</b> Participants expressed a need for, but lack of, community public transit connections throughout the region. Participants highlighted the usefulness and need for public transit from both a social and economic perspective.
5)	<b>Airports:</b> Participants noted that increased inter-connectivity between communities and airports is important for tourism.
6)	<b>Cycling:</b> Participants agreed that cycling is a priority for the region's tourism industry and request that the Ministry look into widening road shoulders to provide safer routes.
<b>CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety and reliability of Highway 3 and 97 are the primary concerns for the region.</li> </ul>
<b>MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES</b>	
1)	<b>Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing investments for Highway 3 and 97 are important for safety and reliability. The region recognizes the importance of continued investments in these highways to address congestion, safety and facilitate economic growth in the region.</li> <li>Side-roads and bypasses are a priority for many of the communities in the region and additional investments are needed to increase safety at congested and unsafe intersections. Participants indicated that investments such as shoulder-widening, calming mechanisms and increased maintenance are priorities.</li> <li>Improvements to local airport infrastructure in Penticton are needed to allow the airport to meet user demand.</li> <li>Investments in side roads are important for the further development of the region's cycling-based tourism industry.</li> </ul>
2)	<b>Growing the Economy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic development is directly connected to the ability to move goods and services. Ongoing investments in Highway 97 and 3 are vital for economic development in this region.</li> <li>In the Okanagan tourism is a key economic driver and will continue to grow. The community relies heavily on Highway 3 and 97 to accommodate this.</li> </ul>
3)	<b>Connecting and Strengthening Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transit between communities is needed in order to connect people with the airport, health care services and to support tourism and families working in other regions.</li> <li>Participants noted that investments in the Penticton airport are needed to increase terminal capacity.</li> <li>Investments in cycling trails such as the Kettle Valley Rail Trail and side road improvements are a priority for the regions tourism industry and economic development.</li> </ul>
4)	<b>Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants expressed appreciation for good relationships with the Ministry and local offices.</li> <li>Participants noted that maximizing collaboration with partners and stakeholders is critical. Partnership and collaboration are necessary for continued investment in infrastructure including maintaining side roads, cycling trails and airports.</li> </ul>
<b>TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investment in Highways 3 and 97 is highest priority for safety, reliability and capacity.</li> </ul>

- Participants indicated a need for shoulder-widening for cycling as well as maintenance of side roads for safe transportation.
- Participants desired investment in local airport infrastructure.
- Participants expressed a need for expanded connectivity between communities and airports through regulated charter bus services and transportation options

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Princeton noted that there is an opportunity through the Port of Ashcroft to use Princeton as a gateway to the Kootenays, which in turn, would generate growth for Princeton.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Penticton discussed the importance of Highway 97 to the region. The participant noted important highway usage for tourists and industry, specifically for manufacturers in Penticton that rely on the transportation system to deliver their goods. The participant noted a desire to see the population in Penticton grow and that the city is looking to entice a younger working population to the city. However, there are challenges with this, because without improved transportation to support industry, industry can't grow to support jobs, and with no jobs, there is no growth in the community. The participant noted that they recognize that a lot of improvements have been made to Highway 97 throughout the years, but that there is a need for improvements to a number of bottlenecks preventing the efficient movement of good and people, in particular, south of the connector to the winery area.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Princeton added that in addition to enticing young families, for the Princeton community specifically, there is not a single trucking company rooted there. The participant noted that local business relies on trucking companies in the Lower Mainland or Calgary and that naturally, there is no migration to Princeton. There needs to be planning to promote growth and spending in this region.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Princeton mentioned the possibility of taking freight in and out of Ashcroft 24 hours a day and the potential that could be there. The participant noted that government could encourage that by educating others about the opportunities and expanding the roadway from Vancouver to Ashcroft to 4 lanes.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Keremeos mentioned that the roadway from Princeton up to 5A is a primary concern, noting that the 5A is not currently a great road to drive on, although it has the potential to be a good road to drive.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants reiterated that Hwy 3 improvements are very important to them.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from the Hwy 97 Task Force noted that they have been working to improve the safety of the highway through Peachland with the addition of new traffic lights. The participant indicated that from an economic and social perspective, most drivers do not want to stop in Peachland – they are simply driving through. The participant noted that four-laning the highway through Peachland would exacerbate safety issues, and reiterated the proposal to build a bypass. The participant cited the Oyama bypass as a successful project on which to model the Peachland bypass.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Princeton noted that cycling and hiking is a priority for the Chamber of Commerce. The participant noted expressed an interest in safer access from the highway to the trails to increase use and promotion of the trails.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Penticton noted that cycling is a priority for the Chamber of Commerce and stated that they are interested in seeing the shoulder of the roadways widened to accommodate cyclists. The participant noted the importance of tourism and cycling in the region as a draw for visitors.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Penticton requested that the BC fuel tax be reduced to allow businesses to be more competitive. The participant suggested that in lieu of the BC fuel tax, tolls or user-pay programs should be implemented to fund projects.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from the Hwy 97 Task Force noted that there is no accessible public transit between Princeton and Penticton, that there is lacking transit connections between these communities.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Keremeos noted that a large issue for this area is the lack of public transit available between surrounding communities. The participant noted that, currently, there is no public transit system that connects Keremeos, Cawston, Osoyoos and Penticton. The participant noted that, because of the communities' aging populations, public transit is necessary to allow residents' access to much-needed services that may not be available in their own community. The participant mentioned that with the growth of the wine industry in the Cawston area, public transit would serve to provide a service people will want and need.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Princeton noted that Princeton does have an airport that was overseen by a former city employee. However, since the employee has retired, the airport not in use. The participant requested that the Ministry look into funding options for the airport to potentially increase its usage.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from the Hwy 97 Task Force asked whether MoTI could contribute dollars to an airport. Mike Lorimer noted that the Ministry does have grant programs which could provide funds through that mechanism. Mike Lorimer also mentioned that there are some federal grant programs and dollars available. The participant expressed interest in working on this with Transport Canada.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from the Hwy 97 Task Force noted the effectiveness of the recessed reflectors in other areas of the province and asked if the Ministry had considered installing them in Peachland or the region. Mike Lorimer indicated that there are some issues with the recessed reflectors in this region because of weather conditions and winter maintenance. Jeff Wiseman noted that the Ministry had tested the recessed reflectors with little success in the region because of weather conditions and maintenance, but indicated that the Ministry continues to test new technologies and reflective paint on guardrails to try to improve safety.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Peachland thanked the Ministry for installing reflectors on the post and indicated that they thought they were very effective.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Keremeos expressed appreciation for the meeting to discuss the transportation plan. The participant noted that it is important to discuss things like this with people on the front line.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants from Princeton and Peachland indicated that the layout of the survey was very easy to use, extremely useful and allowed them to provide the feedback they wanted.</li> </ul>