

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

NOVEMBER 5, 2014

9:30AM

VERNON

<b>ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION</b>	Andrew Laird, Armstong-Spallumcheen Chamber of Commerce Corinne Peard, Enderby & District Chamber of Commerce Roy Nuriel, City Planning, City of Vernon Ian Adkins, City of Vernon James Rice, Public Works, City of Vernon, / Manager, Vernon Regional Airport Dan Rogers, Vernon Chamber of Commerce
<b>MOTI REPRESENTATIVES</b>	Mike Lorimer, Regional Director, Southern Interior Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Danny Morris, 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 expressed a need for continued investments on Highway 97 to address reliability and safety issues.	
2) <b>Rail:</b> Participants were in agreement that the province has an increased role to plan in the short and long-term plans for the decommissioned CP rail line and that the land should be used to connect the community as a cycling/pedestrian trail.	
3) <b>Airports:</b> Participants were in agreement that additional funding is needed for rural airports with no regularly scheduled flights.	
4) <b>Transit:</b> Participants expressed concerns about the lack of community public transit connections throughout the region.	
<b>CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safety and reliability of Highway 97 is the primary concerns for the region. Investment planning for the decommissioned CP rail line is a priority for the region.</li> </ul>	
<b>MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES</b>	
1) Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing investments for Highway 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.</li> <li>Improvements to local airport infrastructure in Vernon are needed.</li> <li>Investments in side-roads and public transportation are important for the further development of the region's cycling-based tourism industry.</li> </ul>	
2) Growing the Economy	
<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 is 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 97 to accommodate this.</li> </ul>	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<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 Vernon airport are needed.</li> <li>Investments in cycling trails (the CP rail line initiative) and side road improvements are a priority for the regions tourism industry and economic development.</li> </ul>	
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders	
<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>Participants noted that they would like to see investment and planning for the decommissioned CP rail lines.</li> </ul>	

- Participants indicated that investment in Highway 97 to improve reliability and safety was a priority.
- Another priority noted was investment in local airport infrastructure.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A participant from Vernon inquired what role the Ministry will play in rural airport investments. The participant indicated that up to this point they do not have scheduled carrier flights, and so have had difficulty securing federal funding for improvements. The participant indicated that the airport is in need of improvements to the terminal and the runway. However, to gain funding the airport needs to have scheduled flights, while in order to secure scheduled flights, the airport needs to make improvements – it is a catch 22 that many rural airports face. The participant requested that the Ministry look into grant programs that could provide funding to rural airports.</li> <li>• A Participant from Vernon Chamber of Commerce indicated that the airport is a critical airport link for international commerce. A local example, KalTire, which uses the airport, demonstrates the business opportunities the airport offers. The participant indicated a need for the Ministry to consider providing funding to airports that service business, not necessarily passenger-based services. The participant noted that, in the past, funding for rural airports have been on the low end.</li> <li>• A participant noted that with increased development of the industrial park and UBC, there is a growing need to provide public transportation services to the airport from surrounding communities like Vernon. The participant indicated that investment in public transportation services is a priority for this region and will drive economic development.</li> <li>• A participant from Enderby indicated that investment in public transportation is a priority for this community, which has inadequate access to surrounding communities and the Kelowna airport.</li> <li>• A participant from Armstrong indicated that the greatest issue for the community is the lack of public transportation between Vernon and the Airport; it is a service that is needed.</li> <li>• The Vernon Chamber of Commerce indicated that it would make a formal submission about Highway 9 reliability and safety concerns. There are issues with congestion, lack of left-turn signals, inadequate crosswalks and pedestrian access. The participant was reluctant to use the term 'bypass,' but noted that the community was interested in discussing alternative routes for truck traffic.</li> <li>• A participant from Armstrong indicated issues with congestion along the highway.</li> <li>• The Vernon Airport indicated that it is currently trying to understand the economic impact and flow of traffic into downtown Vernon to be able to assess challenges they are facing, which include congestion, aesthetically unappealing road sides, and lack of traffic stopping in the community. The participant noted a bypass may be preferred.</li> <li>• Armstrong noted that it would prefer not a bypass, but to mitigate congestion and safety issues, and requested that the Ministry consider improvements to the highway. The participant noted that there are safety issues with the highway near Swan Lake and Stickle Road because of trucks turning from the left lane into the scale facility.</li> <li>• A participant from Armstrong requested that the Ministry address the section of highway between 42<sup>nd</sup> to 48<sup>th</sup> because of congestion and unsafe left turn lanes.</li> <li>• A participant from Vernon indicated a need for the Ministry to work with the city to address congestion and traffic in urban areas. The participant noted that congestion must be addressed within the next 10 years, or it will not be solved for another 40 years.</li> <li>• A participant from Enderby noted that one section of roadway from Armstrong to the Salmon Arm turn-off is a single lane and is dangerous.</li> <li>• A participant from Armstrong requested that the Ministry study traffic volumes and report on traffic trends in the busiest summer months.</li> <li>• A participant from the City of Vernon indicated that with the CP rail shutting down last year, there has been no railway connection for 6 months and it has had an economic impact. The participant indicated that the community is looking for further engagement from the Ministry to initiate plans for the rail lines. The participant noted that the decommissioning of the railway has led to increased truck traffic.</li> <li>• A participant from the City of Vernon noted the importance of working with private sector companies and the federal government to fund large infrastructure projects.</li> <li>• The Vernon Chamber of Commerce expressed support for the "Rails to Trails" initiative for the decommissioned CP rail line and indicated that there is value from a tourism perspective to pursue trail and public access on this corridor. The participant noted that the Chamber is looking to the rail line corridor as a transportation corridor in the next 50 to 100 years.</li> <li>• A participant from the City of Vernon noted the importance of continued investment in Highway 97 to the US border for economic development and tourism opportunities in the region. The participant noted the importance of cross-border partnerships between B.C. and the United States Department of Transportation.</li> <li>• A participant from Armstrong requested clarification on the Ministry's road-marking and new paint technologies.</li> <li>• A participant from Vernon asked for clarification about when the barriers would be finished. Mike Lorimer indicated that the piece that was announced has since been completed.</li> <li>• A participant from the Armstrong Chamber of Commerce thanked the Ministry for the good work that they have done and expressed appreciation for the projects that have been completed.</li> <li>• A participant from Vernon expressed support for a rapid transit line to UBC.</li> </ul>