

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

NOVEMBER 13, 2014

10:00 AM

ABBOTSFORD

<b>ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION</b>	Parm Sidhu, Abbotsford Airport Allan Asaph, Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce Carly Ferguson, Chilliwack Chamber of Commerce
<b>MOTI REPRESENTATIVES</b>	Renée Mounteney, Deputy Director, South Coast Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Mike Kelly, Operations Manager, Chilliwack Area, MoTI
<b>NOTE TAKER</b>	Christel Guenette, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
<b>KEY THEMES (3-6)</b>	
1)	<b>Highways:</b> Participants expressed the need to continue widening Highway 1 to Whatcom Road to accommodate the congestion on the road.
2)	<b>Airports:</b> Participants noted that improving connections to the airport along Mt. Lehman Road especially between Simpson Road and Abbotsford International Airport are needed.
3)	<b>Highways and side roads:</b> Participants noted the need to improve 16 <sup>th</sup> Street to move trucks from Highway 1 to this route.
<b>CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Zoning of land that adjoins Fraser Highway is part of the ALR which limits improvements that can be accommodated along that corridor.</li> <li>Employers in Langley are encouraging their employees to work, walk, and live in their community. Abbotsford needs to compete with this.</li> <li>Abbotsford's downtown core has three at grade crossings together at Maclure, George Ferguson Way, and Essendene. During any malfunction or misdirection, trains shutdown the downtown core. This does not allow for emergency vehicles to access residents on the opposite side of the tracks.</li> </ul>
<b>MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES</b>	
1)	<b>Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants noted that the continuation of improvements along Highway 1 is needed, to take pressure off of Fraser Highway.</li> <li>Maximizing and capitalizing on Highway 1 through the use of HOV and bus lanes could prevent taking land from the ALR.</li> <li>Improvements to the Sumas Way Interchange could improve safety and transportation efficiency.</li> <li>Additional rail crossing is needed along Vye Road to ensure the reliable movement of people through the area.</li> <li>There are safety concerns at Abbotsford's at grade crossings. There was a recent accident where a car crashed into the side of a train, derailing it.</li> </ul>
2)	<b>Growing the Economy</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements along 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue are needed to create an East-West Corridor for a truck route and to alleviate pressure along Highway 1. Numerous accidents have occurred along this route. During peak times, 5-6 trucks can be travelling along in a row.</li> <li>Agriculture processing plants are unable to be constructed in the area due to the restrictions of the ALR. A transportation link is vital to get products from the farm to the processing plants and then to the Port of Metro Vancouver. A truck corridor would provide a link to these areas.</li> <li>There are concerns from businesses that an overpass over Vye Road would make it difficult for trucks to make the grade.</li> <li>A report detailing the feasibility of using the Fraser River for offloading east of Mission has been conducted. The report was comprehensive, and asked the federal government to work with the province and other ministries to build a plan for the Lower Fraser River. Issues of transportation, diking, rising sea levels, etc. were investigated. This report will be forwarded to Mike Kelly.</li> </ul>
3)	<b>Connecting and Strengthening Communities</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Widen the shoulders from Simpson Road to Abbotsford International Airport to accommodate cyclists.</li> <li>As the eastern part of the Fraser Valley is cheaper to live, it is important to be able to accommodate commuters to move around the Fraser Valley affordably and comfortably. People are unable to afford two cars so a Fraser Valley Exchange would be able to move people around reliably.</li> <li>There is no transit service to the Gloucester Industrial Park forcing workers to use their cars.</li> </ul>
4)	<b>Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements are needed to Mt. Lehman Road between Abbotsford International Airport and Simpson Road. There are safety concerns along this route. When Tradex hosts events, there is increased congestion as the airport traffic competes with event traffic.</li> </ul>

- The installations of sidewalks and/or bike lanes are needed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists seeking to access the airport. Infrastructure needs to be low maintenance in keeping with the current standard. Sidewalks would be best installed on the east side of the road. It was noted that the majority of those using the airport are pedestrians and any cyclists are utilizing Mt. Lehman as thoroughfare to access the University of the Fraser Valley.
- In consideration of multimodal transportation, options are needed at the airport. Some options include transit servicing the airport and removing restrictions to users in order for Uber to service the airport.
- Allow for buses to be branded as part of the airport. Airlines are including a bus leg on their travel itinerary for travelers. Delta and Alaska Airlines will beat everyone by bussing travelers to the Seattle airport. It is also important to drop the price point down to entice travelers to utilize Canadian airports. It has been said that the US would like travelers' first entry point to the Americas to be a US airport. If we don't keep up, they will take all the traffic.
- Remove screening regulations at small airports to make it easier for travelers and commuters to get to their destination.

#### TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce:

- Widening of Highway 1 from 264<sup>th</sup> Street to Whatcom Road
- Improvements to Mt. Lehman Road especially between Simpson Road and the Abbotsford International Airport
- Additional rail crossing along Vye Road
- 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue – continuation of an East West connector.
- Abbotsford International Airport supports the priorities provided by the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce.

#### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION

- A participant from the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce expressed disappointment for the omission of the Abbotsford International Airport on page 9 of the Discussion Guide.
- A participant noted that Abbotsford International Airport has the distinction of being the most efficiently run airport in Canada.
- A participant indicated that the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce supports the priorities set out by Abbotsford's Mayor and Council.
- A participant indicated that the Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce's Transportation Committee has conducted a research study and the recommendations found in the study align with the four focus areas outlined in the Discussion Guide.
- A participant from the The Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce noted that improvements to Fraser Highway are low on their priority list as the current congestion is due to the inability of Highway 1 to accommodate the traffic.
- A participant noted that upgrades to Fraser Highway are difficult due to funding issues and adjoining land owned by the City of Abbotsford.
- A participant from Abbotsford International Airport noted support for the Chamber of Commerce's priorities.
- A participant noted that travelers are doing more research and choosing routes that are more convenient and cheaper. This leads many to fly out from an American airport.
- A participant noted that people are moving away from purchasing cars. If car purchases are down, why is so much money being invested in the roads? Money should be invested differently.
- A participant noted that Langley is constructing condos to accommodate new home buyers. This is the market. Once Langley has been saturated, the next place to go is Abbotsford. Abbotsford has a defined urban boundary for the creation of residential housing. It is constrictive for residential growth and will increase in density once Langley has become saturated. This development will increase the transportation needs for the Abbotsford area.
- A participant noted that technological advances have made drones possible.
- A participant noted support for the Ministry of Transportation engaging the province in this discussion.
- A participant noted that the more levels of investment that are given, the more buy in is received.