

B.C. on the Move: Engagement Meeting Notes

NOVEMBER 13, 2014

1:30 PM

CHILLIWACK

ATTENDEES/AFFILIATION	Cal Crawford, Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce Ann Harper, Mission Regional Chamber of Commerce
MOTI REPRESENTATIVES	Renée Mounteney, Deputy Director of the South Coast Region, Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Mike Kelly, Operations Manager, Chilliwack Area, MoTI
NOTE TAKER	Christel Guenette, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
KEY THEMES (3-6)	
1) Highways: Participants agreed that the continuation of the Highway 7 expansion is a high priority to alleviate congestion.	
2) Transit and Cycling and Pedestrian: Support for economic opportunities that bring communities to Mission was requested. This includes West Coast Express improvements, support for Experience the Fraser project, and improving subsidies to the West Coast Express from other communities.	
3) Highways and side roads: It was noted that bypass opportunities are needed to transfer goods movement from Downtown Mission to another corridor. This would also increase safety to residents.	
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission is a bedroom community. Many people do not visit downtown Mission and thus do not care about changes. There are concerns related to not feeling safe in downtown Mission. The Chamber of Commerce is looking to promote downtown to encourage residents to shop locally. Using the Fraser River as an alternative for truck traffic is not feasible as it is too shallow with the silt build up. The Fraser River had been managed for years and then was stopped. Effects of this need to be investigated. This needs to become a corridor for industry. There are a high percentage of riders on the West Coast Express that are not from Mission. Even if Abbotsford decided to compensate their riders, the contract states the money would be paid to the government. It costs Mission \$750,000 to subsidize the West Coast Express and Mission does not want to subsidize Abbotsford and Chilliwack riders. There is a lack of public parking in Mission. Riders of the West Coast Express park in Downtown Mission instead of the parking lot to avoid paying \$2 a day. There is also a lack of enforcement for the two hour time limit in downtown. Taking the \$2 a day parking fee away would entice more people to park in the West Coast Express parking lot. 	
MOVING FORWARD – STRATEGIES	
1) Moving People and Goods Safely and Reliably	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants expressed concerns about truck traffic moving through 1st Avenue. Trucks are not following posted speed limits and may hit someone pulling out onto the road or pedestrians in crosswalks. An option could be moving the truck traffic to the lower road. This is a priority, regardless of who is elected. A transportation hub would be helpful. There is a lot of diversity in Mission's transportation and there is no exchange connection. This brings confusion to the community. 	
2) Growing the Economy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dredging the Fraser River would allow log booms to use the river instead of the highway. It was noted that 1 log boom was the equivalent of 50 logging trucks taking these trucks off the highway. This would be cheaper and more environmentally friendly than moving trucks through town. 	
3) Connecting and Strengthening Communities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The District of Mission holds many celebrations that require the shutdown of the highway. Regulations have been put in place that made this increasingly difficult and more costly to accomplish. Mike Kelly from MOTI noted that arrangements can be made to simplify the process of highway shutdowns for celebrations, and will work together with Mission. MOTI requires a level of comfort that Mission would be working off a plan that all understand. Volunteers need to understand road controls. There is a need for a bus to travel to Maple Ridge. There are a number of people that work in Maple Ridge. There are also a number of people who have connections to residents of Mission that require a connection (i.e. seniors) 	
4) Maximizing Collaboration and Investment with Partners and Stakeholders	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The West Coast Express has drawn young people to Mission and provides them a stress-free way to get Vancouver. Increasing the number of runs would entice Vancouverites to access Mission for their recreational activities (i.e. cross country mountain biking). Currently it runs in the morning and evenings only on weekdays. This leaves riders stranded downtown until the evening which discourages people from using the train. Support for tourism opportunities was requested. A top priority of the Chamber of Commerce is to increase tourism to Mission. Tourism projects include Experience the Fraser, Stave West, and mountain biking trail improvements. 	

TOP THREE PRIORITIES FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	
<p>District of Mission's top priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The removal of trucks moving goods through downtown Mission • Dredging of the Fraser River to move log booms from the highway to the river • Completion of the widening of Highway 7 • Transit improvements including bus service from Mission to Maple Ridge and more frequent runs of the West Coast Express. 	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants noted appreciation for aligning the priorities for the District of Mission. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant noted that the Mission Chamber of Commerce has put forth a resolution to the BC Chamber of Commerce to get dredging done in the Fraser River. This will be forwarded to Renée Mouteney. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Kelly from MoTI noted that a two-way lower road would move the problem of truck traffic there. Instead of side by side traffic, trucks would run single file and the speed limit would be increased. This would then interfere with West Coast Express traffic. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renée Mouteney noted the importance of understanding what is important to the people of Mission. Mission needs to demonstrate that their residents are supportive of change. She noted that Mission was not the first municipality looking for alternate good movement routes. MOTI is waiting until there is a consensus from the community in order to make changes. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants expressed concern regarding the current accessibility of the West Coast Express to those utilizing the parking lot. Riders must use a pedestrian overpass to access the Express which has many stairs. There is also no wheelchair accessibility from the parking lot. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Kelly noted that MOTI works together with FVRD and the District of Mission to understand OCPs to make sure transportation plans mesh. It is the goal to have a consistent highway system from Mission to Vancouver. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A participant noted that Mission has lower housing rates, and thus has attracted buyers. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Kelly noted that there have been challenges in continuing the four-laning of Highway 7 to Mission. These include rail issues and environmental mitigation. MOTI will be working with the rail company. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to a question regarding the reflectivity in the delineation lines along Highway 7, Renée Mouteney explained that the longevity of the reflectivity of the paint has been compromised. MOTI is investigating ways to improve road delineation. It was requested that if the District of Mission had specific areas of issues to inform Mike Kelly of their locations. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike Kelly informed of MOTI's commitment to support Mission with their tourism opportunities through helping finance designs, geotechnical support, etc. 	