



Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group

Ministry of Transportation – Fraser Boardroom
2nd Floor (Suite 213) - 1011 4th Avenue, Prince George
Wednesday, March 30, 2016
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Conference Call Information: [REDACTED] – Participant ID [REDACTED]

These minutes are considered to be complete and correct. Please advise the writer of any error or omissions, otherwise these minutes will be considered to be an accurate record of the discussions.

Chair:

Deborah Bowman, Assistant Deputy Minister – Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Members:

Penny Anguish, Chief Nursing Executive & COO - Northwest Health Services – *by phone*
Joseph Bevan, Chief Kitselas First Nation
Shane Brienen, Mayor - District of Houston – *by phone*
Wanda Good, Deputy Chief Council - Gitanyow Band – *by phone*
Richard Jock, Chief Operating Officer - First Nations Health Authority – regrets
Alternate: Devi Goberdhan – *by phone*
Carol Leclerc, Mayor - City of Terrace
Rob MacDougall, Mayor - District of Fort St. James
Reg Mueller, Saik'uz First Nation - regrets
Karen Ogen – Chief of Wet'suwet'en First Nation - regrets
Luke Strimbold, Mayor - Village of Burns Lake
Mary Teegee, Executive Director - Carrier Sekani Family Services
Steve Raper, Chief Communications Officer, Northern Health Authority

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Staff:

Silas Brownsey, Executive Director - Transit and Crown Agency Policy
Cam Filmer, A/Executive Director – Policy and Programs
Carl Lutz, District Manager - Bulkley-Stikine District Office
Scott Maxwell, Regional Director - Northern Region - regrets
Jodi Newnham, Senior Manager - Aboriginal Relations – regrets

Guests:

Chris Fudge, Regional Transit Manager
Kevin Schubert, Director – Regional Transit Systems BC Transit
Michael Woelcke, VIA Rail - General Manager Regional Services (Item 7 – *by phone*)

Meeting Commenced at 1:00 pm

Welcome – Review Agenda/Last Meeting Minutes - Deborah Bowman

- Reviewed agenda
- Minutes accepted as distributed

First Nations Representation (new Advisory Group members) – Deborah Bowman

- Thank you for being here Chief Bevan
- Roundtable introductions

Office of the Auditor General – Deborah Bowman

- Advisory committee members spoke about being contacted by the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and requested further information. Deborah encouraged the Advisory Committee to participate in the meetings and noted that the ministry will have an opportunity to review the draft report for technical fact checking prior to it being published in the fall
- Discussion surrounding the information the OAG has been provided and the understanding that they are aware that work on the initiatives has not yet been completed or has not yet been implemented:
 - There are 23 recommendations from the Wally Oppal report on the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry that are being reviewed by the OAG, one of the recommendations refers to public transportation under the responsibility of MoTI.

BC Transit Services - Status/Update on Pods – Mayor Strimbold / Silas Brownsey

- Updates regarding the pods:
 - Burns Lake to Smithers pod
 - Three meetings have taken place to discuss costs and details
 - Memorandum of Understanding has been distributed and signed by Burns Lake, Telkwa and Smithers
 - Positive feedback, interested in participating
 - Burns Lake to Prince George pod
 - First meeting will take place March 31st in Vanderhoof
 - Terrace to Prince Rupert pod
 - Prince Rupert has indicated that they are not interested in participating at this time due to competing priorities
 - Hazelton to Terrace pod
 - Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine.
- Discussion regarding the funds allocated for Prince Rupert to Terrace transit service and if they should be reallocated. Silas Brownsey to provide options for use of Prince Rupert transit funds. Options may include contributing back to pods, contributing to community vehicle program, etc. These options will be emailed to the Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group within two weeks.
- Discussion regarding concerns of other communities declining transit funding.

BC Transit Services - Information on Referendum Requirements – Silas Brownsey / Mayor Strimbold

- Information received from Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development (CSCD) on referendum requirements; they largely depend on the nature of the service, the participating jurisdictions, and existing agreements:
 - If there is a new service being established by an electoral area and/or regional district, there may be a need for a bylaw – which would require an approval process
 - CSCD is ready to provide further advice and support as needed

- The Memorandum of Understanding is proof of an intent to participate – this will assist with the next steps – each pod is different in how we approach that implementation is not based on the need for a referendum.

Community Vehicle Program Draft Application Forms, Draft Criteria and Timelines Update– Cam Filmer

- Concerns regarding difficulty and time for preparation of proposals for Community Vehicle Program, reminder that Friendship Centres have offered assistance to First Nations organizations / communities in preparing and completing proposals
- Draft application distributed:
 - First Nations and First Nations partnerships will be given priority
 - 70/30 split contribution has been incorporated – NOTE: Some communities are very remote and have little ability to raise funds – we can consider adjusting those ratios based on exceptional circumstances
 - Website development ongoing, draft site up right now – website to be completed by end of next week
 - Still time to make changes and receive final feedback
- Thank you to Mary Teegee, Wanda Good, Reg Mueller and Bob Marcellin for being active participants and providing great advice as we move forward
- The same working group will be reviewing the applications; however, if any advisory committee member is an the applicant, they will recuse themselves from the selection process
- Distribution has not yet been determined, however, there were many suggestions
 - First Nations Health Authority
 - Hard copies sent and available in First Nations community band offices.
 - MoTI District Offices
 - Distribution to all health representatives in the region
 - Utilize networks with First Nations leadership as well as health leadership and community members
 - Newsletters
 - CFNR – First Nations radio station
- Community Vehicle Program Committee to review communication strategy for the application process for discussion at April 20 advisory meeting.
- Once the website is ready, the link will be sent to the Advisory Group members to test and provide feedback
- Thank you all, for all the work you have done to get us where we are.

Discussions with INAC and FNHA, and BC Bid Process for Driver Training – Cam Filmer and Mary Teegee

- ICBC has advised that they can provide some support for the driver training as we move forward.
- We have actively pursued other partnerships as well – hopefully by the next meeting will have some additional news
- Request for proposal will be ready in a good draft by the end of next week
- Mary Teegee and Cam Filmer have had separate discussions with INAC. They have new funds but no indication on how they will be spending or able to support at this time.
- Mary Teegee is also working with First Nations Health Authority new manager, Megan, to determine what their contribution may be.

Collaboration between Northern Health Connections/BC Transit/FNHA – Devi Goberdhan, Steve Raper, Silas Brownsey

- Review of new layered map and discussion on further data elements/needs from the committee
- Update on opportunities for service collaboration
- Excellent support from GeoBC has continued
- Steve advised there is a lot of complex data that is starting to compile into workable areas now.
- The preliminary analysis tells us there are alignment opportunities – we can see there is opportunity to increase ridership for the Northern Health Connections service
 - We think we can do that work quite quickly through information and education
 - We need to determine appropriate engagement
 - We're excited – good evidence that says we can do this work – maximize the ridership
 - There's a real opportunity that can complement some of the other services – perhaps some of the links off of the Highway 16
- Devi spoke of the FNHA community network
 - They have numerous venues and ways to connect through programs but also through more formal caucus sessions twice a year
 - Have a Spring caucus starting in a week where they can share a brief update on the work
 - Looking at other ways we can get into this service (Northern Health Connections)
 - Happy to discuss any other initiatives that can tap into our services
 - Very excited to work with Northern Health Authority and really increase the level of services and quality for community members
- The potential to have an MOU between the two organizations outlining a commitment to work together in this area was mentioned
- Steve advised there were many things that were happening that could be communicated – one of which is that 80% of their drivers have now enrolled or completed the indigenous cultural competency training
- In terms of financial savings, for FNHA it's difficult to say what that would be for sure
 - Can say it will be a significant number, however, we aren't sure yet why these members aren't using the Northern Health Connection. These are conversations that need to be had.
- The layered map was shared and discussed
 - MoTI to share the map via email to all members in the advisory group for their review and subsequent feedback as to what they would like added as layers on the map.
- Discussion regarding the publication of this map on the transportation website for Highway 16
 - NOTE: this map is a draft and will not be publicized/shared publicly at this time.

VIA Rail Proposal – Michael Woelcke

- Welcome to the Highway 16 Transportation Action Plan Advisory
- VIA Rail offers train service three times a week from Prince Rupert to Prince George and three times a week from Prince George to Prince Rupert
 - Occasionally have 'on-time' performance challenges that are out of our control due to CN Rail priority
- VIA Rail is proposing to offer fare for a minimal fee (\$5) regardless of origin or destination along the route
 - Open to suggestions as to determining the criteria for these \$5 fares
 - Proposing these to the 'at risk' or 'vulnerable' – First Nations, youth, elders, etc.
 - Do not want to be unreliable and/or unsafe as that would defeat the purpose
 - We need to identify who would qualify for this program, as we cannot provide everyone with these reduced fares

- Normal fares, minimum \$75 one way with Aboriginal fare 33% less than regular fare
- VIA Rail does not want to create more risk, wants to do it right and help serve the purpose
- VIA Rail is currently working on ability to provide GPS updates on the internet
- Discussion
 - Time challenges
 - Schedule
 - Criteria for \$5 fare
 - Distribution through communities or First Nation Health Authority
 - Shelters to assist with safety
 - MoTI to have conversation with VIA Rail to discuss opportunities and locations for shelters along route from Prince Rupert to Prince George (and return)
 - Appreciation for this offer and opportunity
- Advisory group is to come up with some suggestions for criteria and eligibility for \$5 fares and provide to Cam Filmer. Wanda Good has offered to assist on a committee to identify criteria. Once determined, follow up with Michael Woelcke at VIA Rail.

Update on Project Management Support/Documentation – Cam Filmer

- Project management documentation and integration
- Thanks to Kyle Drummond out of MoTI Northern Region – he has provided the services of Brooke Clasby, Project Manager to help us lay out an integrated plan
- Cam has forwarded all information that the Advisory Group has been working on and will be working with all the program leads.

Highway 16 Safety Initiatives: Transit Shelter/Webcam Program – Carl Lutz

- MoTI has purchased eight shelters and will be reaching out to the communities as to where exactly they should be installed this summer
 - We want to have these shelters put where they will be most useful, including where those pickup points will be on the corridor for new transit stops
- Announcement with Telus and the provincial government announcing expansion of internet services in the Telkwa area with more to come about internet expansion
- Question as to pricing of shelters - \$15,000 and up – depending on size, weather conditions, loads on the roof, etc.

Communications/Engagement – Next Steps – Deborah Bowman

- Discussion regarding engagement around industry and business partners and a communication plan going forward
 - Working groups will continue on the initiatives
 - Would be happy to meet after a few months to review the status of the initiatives.
 - Implementation plan of Action Plan announcement
 - Tentative by mid to end of April 2016 (timing depends on availability of Minister)
 - Topics
 - BC Transit expansion
 - Community vehicle program launch
 - Drivers education program for First Nations
 - Collaboration with Northern Health Connections and First Nations Health Authority
 - Via rail offer
 - Safety/internet expansion
 - Shelters

- Location to be determined
- Minister would like to take the opportunity to thank the Advisory Group
- News releases, quotes, invite stakeholders, communities
 - We have quite a few of the partners around this table that we would want to include in the announcement
- Social media – twitter, websites, Facebook, links to your website/cross promote
- Please provide any feedback to me
- Going forward
 - Opportunities for additional announcements in future when some of the initiatives start
 - Discussion regarding including local community logos or visuals for consistency
 - Community announcements, communications
 - Acknowledging all of the support and the work that the communities have done.

Opportunities for Industry and Business Partnerships – Cam Filmer

- Cam provided update on behalf of Jodi Newnham
- QUESTION: How can we engage with industry and business to raise the profile for opportunity for others to see what we are working on?
 - Materials distributed
- Open to feedback regarding ideas and finalizing of the document
- Request the Advisory Group provide thoughts by end of next week (April 8th) on layout and proposed actions for consideration on the strategy distributed
 - Does it make sense?
 - Within our categories, are there others that should be added?
- Consultation has taken place with a number of individuals
- There was indication by the Advisory Group when first meeting that industry may be interested in partnering with the communities
 - Are some communities not interested in industry partnerships?
 - There are some natural partnerships at present – perhaps an opportunity to expand a service already provided
- Request that the community and First Nations leaders begin work with industry/business immediately, so that the information and partnerships will be in place at or soon after the announcement is made mid-end of April
- Discussion regarding timing – grant applications likely to be distributed at the time of the announcement.

Roundtable – All

- Chris Fudge noted that BC Transit Planners will be reaching out to communities
- Deborah Bowman advised the necessity of sharing MoTI communication strategies with the Advisory Group
- Mayor Rob MacDougall commented that the commitment/intent can be interpreted in different ways with regards to the Memorandum of Understanding
 - Kevin Schubert noted that he would take those concerns into consideration
- Carl Lutz advised MoTI will be working with partners to ensure the shelters are in the correct place
- Mayor Luke Strimbold asked for examples of other communities that were 50% rural and 50% electoral district
 - Kevin Schubert advised he would be happy to provide information.

Next Steps & Action Items – Deborah Bowman

- Thank you all for coming today and engaging in the discussion
- Very full agenda – appreciate you travelling to Prince George, and the great distance many of you travel to be here
- Thank you for joining us Chief Bevan and welcome.
- Thanks for the work you are doing to make it positive and successful
- Mayor MacDougall returned the thanks to MoTI staff and to you for making this possible.

Meeting adjourned: 4:06 pm

Next Meeting: April 20, 2016 – 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group Action Items from March 30, 2016 Meeting

BC Transit Services - Status/Update on Pods – Mayor Strimbold / Silas Brownsey

- ACTION 1: Silas Brownsey and Kevin Schubert to provide options for use of Prince Rupert transit funds. Options may include contributing back to pods, contributing to community vehicle program, etc. These options will be emailed to the Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group within two weeks.

Update on Community Vehicle Program Draft Application Forms, Draft Criteria and Timelines – Cam Filmer

- ACTION 2: Community Vehicle Program Committee to determine a communication strategy for the application process and bring to next meeting.
- ACTION 3: Once the website is ready to be tested, the link will be sent to the Advisory Group members to test and provide feedback.

Service Collaboration Northern Health Connections/BC Transit/FNHA – Devi Goberdhan, Steve Raper, Silas Brownsey

- Review of new layered map and discussion on further data elements/needs from the committee

- ACTION 4: MOTI to share the map via email to all members in the advisory group for their review and subsequent feedback as to what they would like added as layers on the map.

VIA Rail Proposal – Michael Woelcke

- ACTION 5: MOTI to have conversation with VIA Rail to discuss opportunities and locations for shelters along route from Prince Rupert to Prince George (and return).
- ACTION 6: Advisory group is to come up with some suggestions for criteria and eligibility for \$5 fares and provide to Cam Filmer. Wanda Good has offered to assist on a committee to identify criteria. Once determined, follow up with Michael Woelcke at VIA Rail.

Opportunities for Industry and Business Partnerships – Cam Filmer

- ACTION 7: Request the Advisory Group provide thoughts by end of next week (April 8th) on layout and proposed actions for consideration on the strategy distributed. Does it make sense? We are looking to community leaders in particular within our categories, are there others that should be added?
- ACTION 8: Request that the community and First Nations leaders begin work with industry/business immediately, so that the information and partnerships will be in place at or soon after the announcement is made mid-end of April.