



Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group

Ministry of Transportation
Aleza Room, 4th Floor-1011 4th Avenue, Prince George
Thursday, September 15, 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 & Chief Operating Officer - Northwest Health Services
Joseph Bevan, Chief Kitselas First Nation - regrets
Shane Brienen, Mayor - District of Houston - regrets
Wanda Good, Deputy Chief Council - Gitanyow Band - regrets
Richard Jock, Chief Operating Officer - First Nations Health Authority - regrets
John Mah - First Nations Health Authority
Carol Leclerc, Mayor - City of Terrace
Rob MacDougall, Mayor - District of Fort St. James
Reg Mueller, Saik'uz First Nation
Luke Strimbold, Mayor - Village of Burns Lake - regrets
Mary Teegee, Executive Director - Carrier Sekani Family Services – regrets

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) Staff:

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

Guests:

Chris Fudge, Regional Transit Manager, BC Transit

Meeting Commenced at 1:00 pm

Welcome – Review Agenda/Last Meeting Minutes/Update/Office of the Auditor General – Deborah Bowman

- Roundtable introductions
- Minutes adopted from May 2016 Advisory Group meeting
- Review Agenda, no additions
- Since last advisory meeting, in June, Minister Stone announced an increase of \$2 million to Transportation Action Plan, with new Federal and increased Provincial funding.
 - \$2.4 million over 3 years for transit expansion;
 - \$800,000 over 3 years for community transportation grant program to purchase and operate vehicles;
 - \$300,000 over 3 years for First Nations driver education;
 - \$1.5 million over 2 years for highway infrastructure safety improvements including webcams and transition shelters; and,
 - The Ministry has recently signed a contract with INAC (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada) for their \$1 million contribution towards the \$1.5 million safety improvements
- Office of the Auditor General update on Missing Women Commission of Inquiry Recommendations Audit Report
 - Audit Report expected to be published in December 2016

Transit Expansion – Update/Next Steps – Silas Brownsey & Chris Fudge

- Acknowledgement that the public engagement along Highway 16 was completed throughout the summer months
- Completed Work – Service Options
 - Draft service discussion document distributed to local government partners – July 15, 2016
 - Meetings with local government partners were held in Terrace, Burns Lake and Vanderhoof from July 20-22, 2016
 - Updates to local government partners
 - August 8, 2016 – Summary of actions and timelines
 - September 1, 2016 – Progress report and revised service discussion document
- Completed Work – Engagement
 - Consultation meetings with several First Nations communities
 - August 16, 2016 – Burns Lake
 - August 23, 2016 – Hazelton and Wet’suwet’en First Nation
 - September 1, 2016 – Gitwanganak
 - Additional in-person and phone meetings
 - Concurrently BC Transit also held public engagement through:
 - Highway 16 BC Transit Service – Website launched
 - Online/Print Survey (closes September 16, 2016)
 - **Please share with your contacts – ACTION ITEM**
 - Advertising & Media (web alerts, Facebook and social media)
 - 20 public engagement events from Prince Rupert to Prince George in 3 phases
 - Over 700 “participants” at engagement events
 - Participants = where an actual conversation was held with a person
 - Experienced a moderate to high level of participation
 - Over 600 completed surveys received to date
 - Key themes emerged from open house and online feedback
 - General support for the transit service initiative
 - Feedback received on routes and schedules will help shape final proposals

- Proposed fare structure was supported
 - Bus stops and bus shelter locations were generally supported
- Current status & next steps:
 - Ongoing dialogue among Regional Districts, other local governments and First Nations with a view to enhancing existing transit committees or forming a new committee;
 - Regional Districts and municipal governments have begun considering cost sharing models and are starting to initiate conversations with other partners; and,
 - Pending Board approval by respective Regional Districts, BC Transit will work with staff to finalize and sign Memorandum of Understanding to initiate implementation process.
- **Question as to whether feedback received by BC Transit about the Community Vehicle Grant Program will be included in the Final Engagement Report – ACTION ITEM**

Transportation Shelters – Update – Scott Maxwell

- Thanks to Rosemary Barnewall as Project Lead
- Working with BC Transit to finalize shelter locations to support new transit service
 - New shelters to be constructed this year in: Kitimat, Gitau, Moricetown, Kitwanga, Houston, Wet’suwet’en Village, Burns Lake, Fraser Lake and Vanderhoof
- Funding is \$1.5 million with \$500,000 being spent this fiscal
 - Installing 9 shelters this year as well as lighting
- Work completed
 - 6 pullouts in Smithers and Telkwa
 - Construction of intersection and pedestrian improvements in Moricetown
 - Earthworks for Gitau shelter
 - Survey for lighting at various sites
 - Reviewed UNBC hitchhiking study to ensure shelter locations align with research on hitchhiking areas
- Additional Work:
 - 5 new webcams planned to be installed along the Highway 16 corridor
 - Improvements to lighting at shelter locations
 - Pedestrian and other safety improvements
 - Additional transit signage
- Future plans
 - Install community shelters to support Community Vehicle Grant Program
 - Install additional transit shelters based on ridership
 - Construct other safety improvements
- Discussion surrounding shelters
 - Cell coverage
 - Lighting
 - Wi-fi access
 - Safety
 - Maintenance (Ministry installs, communities maintain)
 - Webcams
- **Ministry is asking BC Transit, local governments and communities to provide information back to MoTI for suggestions for locations for new shelters – ACTION ITEM**
- A number of separate discussions with INAC representatives by Mary Teegee, Cam Filmer and the Minister’s office contributed to the success of gaining an additional \$1 million in funding.
- INAC staff, have been very engaged and supportive, and provided opportunities where possible. Discussions with INAC continue as to future opportunities.

- INAC funding for shelters can now be spent over 2 fiscal years

Community Vehicle Grant Program/Driver's Education RFP/VIA Rail Discussion – Update – Cam Filmer

- Discussion surrounding reimbursement for costs for First Nations attendance at meetings. Highway 16 Community Vehicle Grant Program information and applications
 - \$800,000 (increase from \$750,000 with additional MOTI funding)
 - Preference to First Nations or partnerships with First Nations
 - Eligible – First Nations, local governments, non-profit organizations
 - Supporting capital and operating costs (up to 70%)
 - Flexible to meet local needs and opportunities, linkages to other services
 - Apply online
 - Application deadline extended to October 28, 2016
 - MOTI planning workshop sessions along corridor – week of October 3, 2016
- **Advisory members to provide dates of any stakeholder meetings in October, as well as any advice on non-profit organizations that already provide a service to Cam Filmer – ACTION ITEM**
 - First Nations Health Authority assisting through Community Engagement Coordinators (logistics in advance and facilitation assistance in sessions)
 - Application adjudication will take place through the month of November
- First Nations' Driver Training Program
 - \$300,000 – MOTI and Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation
 - Partnership was finalized, funding has doubled.
 - Training to support a need for qualified First Nations drivers
 - Focus on Class 5 and Class 4 driver's licences
 - Request for proposals closed in August
 - Successful applicant to be announced shortly
- VIA Rail
 - Additional internal checks by VIA staff on train schedules and IT support opportunities have occurred since the original offer
 - A working group has been formed, based on the success of the previous vehicle grant program working group.
 - **Michael Woelcke (VIA), Wanda Good, Mary Teegee, Reg Mueller, Bob Marcellin and Cam Filmer have committed to the working group and are seeking two more local government representatives – ACTION ITEM**
 - Will meet regularly in the coming months, and undertake a working group trip using this system, with an opportunity for site visits
 - Given the inability to accurately predict arrival times, safety remains the top consideration/concern at this time, and requires considerable review
 - Discussion to include options for ticket purchase and dissemination, timeliness, and safety

Collaboration – First Nations Engagement – Deborah Bowman

- Important to recognize some of the work that has been done, but there is much more to be done with this collaboration piece.
- Reg Faubert and Cam Filmer are tasked with working with INAC regarding funding to assist us and make sure that we are reaching out to as much of the First Nations communities as possible (i.e. via FNHA)
- Ongoing discussions have been occurring between FNHA and NHA, however now is the time to broaden and include BC Transit since new services will be coming on line and integration with Northern Health Connections is an integral part of the Action Plan

- Working group with FNHA, NHA, BC Transit and MOTI needs to be established to further initial work undertaken earlier this year. Terms of Reference to be established, Cam Filmer to Chair– ACTION ITEM

Next Steps & Review Action Items – Deborah Bowman

- Discussed logistics for next meeting:
 - By phone – teleconference call rather than in person
 - Condense meeting to one hour if possible
 - Meetings to be held every couple of months
 - Next meeting in November and then again in January – and then review
- Draft agenda discussed
 - Formal report out from NHA/FNHA and BC Transit working group/review Terms of Reference
 - Community Grants update
 - Driver Education update
 - BC Transit update
 - VIA Rail report
 - Community outreach sessions report

Meeting adjourned: 3:58 pm

Next Meeting: To be determined- November 8 or November 22, 2016

Highway 16 Action Plan Advisory Group Action Items from September 15, 2016 Meeting

Transit Expansion – Update/Next Steps – Silas Brownsey & Chris Fudge

ACTION #1 – Online survey is open until September 16th, please share with any contacts you have and we would appreciate any support we could have.

ACTION #2 – Chris Fudge to enquire as to whether feedback received by BC Transit about the Community Vehicle Grant Program will be included in the Final Engagement Report. *NOTE: BC Transit has since confirmed that this was not within the scope of the public engagement activities.*

Transportation Shelters – Update – Scott Maxwell

ACTION #3 – Ministry is asking BC Transit, local governments and communities to provide information back to MOTI for suggestions for locations for new shelters.

Community Vehicle Grant Program/Driver’s Education RFP/VIA Rail Discussion – Update – Cam Filmer

ACTION #4 – Advisory members to provide dates of any stakeholder meetings in October, as well as any advice on non-profit organizations that already provide a service to Cam Filmer

ACTION #5 –Michael Woelcke (VIA), Wanda Good, Mary Teegee, Reg Mueller, Bob Marcellin, and Cam Filmer have committed to the working group and are seeking two more local government representatives.

Collaboration – First Nations Engagement - TBC

ACTION #6 – Cam Filmer will schedule a meeting with FNHA, Northern Health and BC Transit (Chris to determine who would be best to attend) to continue the working group.