

# **Appendix C**

## **Phase 1 Consultation Findings**

# Trans-Canada Highway 1 - Malahat Route Study Ministry of Transportation Consultation Report

October 2006



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## Executive Summary

In July 2005, a comprehensive study began to identify and assess all options for enhancing safety, reliability and capacity through the Highway 1/Malahat/Goldstream Park corridor, north of Victoria. A community consultation program included two workshops, three open houses and a project website to allow for consultation with local governments, stakeholders, First Nations and the general public. About 900 people attended the open houses.

Feedback forms were available at the public meetings and through the website. 617 feedback forms were tallied for the various groups of options as shown in the following summary chart.

Options preferences were rated as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> preference: 3 points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> preference: 2 points
- 3<sup>rd</sup> preference: 1 point

Options	% of Points Awarded
Status quo	1.2%
Widen or Improve Existing	15.0%
New Alignments	40.4%
Bridges	16.8%
Transit & TDM	4.6%
Ferries	3.4%
Rail	10.9%
Combined Alternatives	5.4%
Rail & Transit	0.5%
Other	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Results indicated a stronger orientation to roadway and bridge solutions, with a preference for a new highway alignment. The favoured alignment was the Niagara Main.

A number of other options were suggested by respondents such as:

- Enhanced enforcement
- Safety improvements
- Growth management
- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) and transit lanes
- Different bridge options, etc.

Consultation with local governments revealed several key findings, including general support offered by some for comprehensive strategic planning at a regional level before selecting an option to improve the Malahat. Local governments also expressed varied opinions about the bridge and alternative transportation options, citing both support and opposition.

Consultation with some stakeholders revealed support for environmental protection, and associated with this support, a preference for transportation alternatives such as bus and rail.

Questions were raised that need to be addressed in Phase 2 of the Malahat Highway Corridor Study.

## 1. Introduction

In July 2005, a comprehensive study began to identify and assess options for enhancing safety, reliability and capacity through the Highway 1/Malahat/Goldstream Park corridor, north of Victoria.

A number of improvements have been made to the Malahat in recent years, however, the corridor is under increasing pressure as the economy and population of southern Vancouver Island continues to grow.

Improving the corridor is constrained by a number of factors such as difficult terrain, designated parkland, a sensitive environment and the watershed for Greater Victoria's water supply.

All options are being explored, ranging from highway realignments, to widening the existing route, to bridges, to increased rail and ferry service and transportation demand management (TDM). The recommended options may be a combination of improvements.

## 2. Consultation Program

Public consultation is an important part of the study. The consultation program involved several components, including workshops and open houses:

	Date	Time	Facility
Local Government Workshop	June 13, 2006	9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	City of Langford Municipal Hall (Langford)
Stakeholder Workshop	June 13, 2006	6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Ruth King Elementary School (Langford)
Open House	June 14, 2006	3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Cowichan Community Centre (Duncan)
Open House	June 15, 2006	3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Luxton Hall (Langford)
Open House	July 06, 2006	3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	District of North Saanich Municipal Hall (North Saanich)

### Workshops

- Two workshops were held in Langford to share information, discuss the study, and encourage the groups to evaluate the options and provide commentary.
- All regional districts, local governments, and First Nations in the area were invited to the local government workshop. Twelve people attended.
- Invitations for a stakeholder group workshop were sent to the Island Corridor Foundation, BC Parks (Goldstream), Council of Tourist Associations, BC Trucking Association, Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition, Island Transformations Organization, Habitat Acquisition Trust, Land Conservancy of BC, Western Canada Wilderness Committee, Saanich Inlet Protection Society, Transport 2000, Greyhound/Pacific Coach Lines, Rick Gill, Manager, Mainroad South Island Contracting, Chambers of Commerce (West Shore, South Cowichan, Duncan-Cowichan Lake, Saanich Peninsula), Shawnigan Lake Business

Association, Cowichan Bay Improvement Association, Mill Bay Merchants' Association, and Vancouver Island RTAC. Twenty people attended.

### **Open Houses**

- Open houses were advertised in newspapers from Ladysmith to Victoria to Sidney and on the project website. Open houses were held in Duncan, Langford and North Saanich.
- Approximately 900 people in attendance.
- Participants at the open houses were asked to complete a feedback form, including option preferences, suggestions for other alternatives, and other comments.

### **Website**

- A project website was online early in the process, with access through the Ministry's internet homepage. The website provides basic project information including a map of the study area.
- Copies of the open house materials and online feedback form were added just prior to the open houses.
- A contact email address, with enquires going to Stantec, has been maintained.
- About 160 emails were received and responded to before the public meetings were held.

### **Feedback Forms**

- Participants were given the option of submitting feedback forms by mail, email or fax after the events.

### **Email and Letter Responses**

- Numerous people wrote letters or sent emails to state their preferences and these have been tallied with the overall responses.

### **First Nations**

- All Malahat Corridor First Nations were invited to the workshops and the open houses. These included: Cowichan First Nation, Malahat First Nation, Pauquachin First Nation, Tsart;up First Nation, Tsawout First Nation, Tseycum First Nation, and the Hul'qumi'num Treaty and Te'mexw Treaty Associations.
- Ministry staff from the Properties and Business Management Branch responsible for coordinating with First Nations attended all workshops and open houses. Discussion with First Nations is ongoing.

### 3. Feedback Forms and Email/Letter Responses

#### Response

- Public preferences were expressed by completing feedback forms or other submissions.
  - 617 feedback forms were submitted.
  - Approximately 230 emails/letters/submissions were received after the public meetings, many through an organized campaign by the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC).
- Due to the nature of the consultation process, the findings cannot be considered scientifically accurate, however they are useful in providing an indication of public preferences.

#### Presentation Of Data

Respondents did not always indicate preferences for specific corridor alternatives. For example, rail, in general, was often selected as a preference rather than R1, R2, or R3 specifically. As a result, the tables are based on groups of options with similar general characteristics, as noted in the following chart:

Options	Description
Status quo	This is the do-nothing; leave it as it is option.
H1a	Existing alignment: Widen
H1b	Existing alignment: Improve the existing highway
H1a/H1b	Existing alignment: combination of H1a & H1b, or no distinction was made
H2	Existing alignment: Double-deck portions of the alignment
H3	Existing alignment: Counterflow (reversing third lane)
H4	New alignment – Near West
H5	New alignment – E&N Rail line
H6	New alignment – Niagara Main
H7	New alignment – Couplet
H Mixed	New alignment – Various combinations
H8	New alignment – Shownigan
H9	New alignment – Far West
B1	Bridge: North Peninsula
B2	Bridge: Highlands
B-Any	Bridge: Either or no distinction
T1	Transit & Transportation Demand Management
F1	Ferry: Passenger
F2	Ferry: Enhanced Vehicle
F-Any	Ferry: Either or no distinction
R1	Rail: Adapt existing
R2	Rail: Basic Commuter
R3	Rail: Enhanced Commuter
R-Any	Rail: Any rail or no distinction
C1	Combined: Transit, TDM, Ferry & Rail
R+T	Rail & Transit
Other	Various other alternative suggestions or combinations

The online feedback and responses from public meetings are presented in the following table. Options preferences were rated as following:

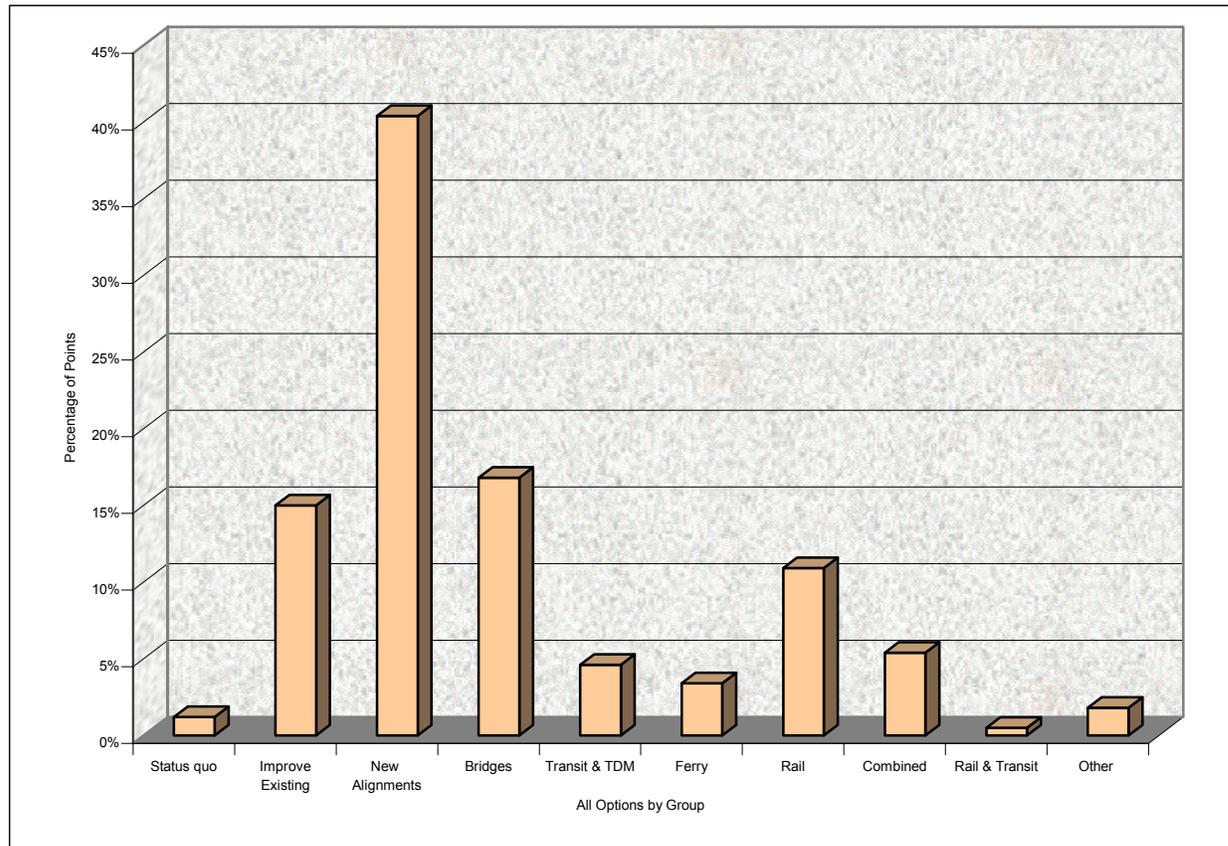
- 1<sup>st</sup> preference: 3 points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> preference: 2 points
- 3<sup>rd</sup> preference: 1 point

Each option was sub-totaled and totals for each group of options were also calculated.

### Preference Summary

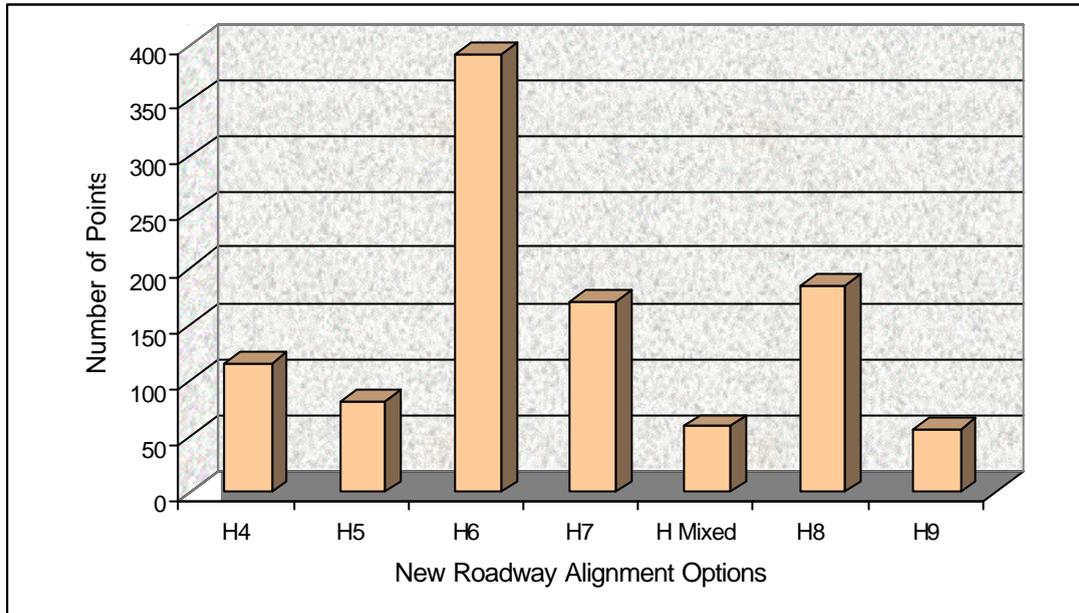
Options	Preferences			Points	Total
	First	Second	Third		
Status quo	6	3	7	31	31
H1a	34	19	8	148	
H1b	28	15	15	129	
H1a/H1b	6	2	1	23	
H2	8	8	17	57	
H3	4	8	6	34	391
H4	16	27	13	115	
H5	15	13	10	81	
H6	80	63	25	391	
H7	18	45	26	170	
H Mixed	14	6	4	58	
H8	35	28	24	185	
H9	10	6	14	56	1056
B1	60	17	10	224	
B2	36	26	16	176	
B-Any	9	5	1	38	438
T1	20	23	15	121	121
F1	0	10	4	24	
F2	3	9	8	35	
F-Any	4	5	8	30	89
R1	8	12	11	59	
R2	4	19	5	55	
R3	9	3	7	40	
R-Any	32	13	9	131	285
C1	40	8	5	141	141
R+T	4	0	0	12	12
Other	9	8	4	47	47
<b>Total</b>	512	401	273	273	2611

The following chart compares the various groups of options, as a percentage of points.



## Roadways

- About 72% of points went to an option that focused on roadways (including the 17% for bridge options discussed on the next page).
- New alignments were preferred over existing alignment options.
- The favoured new alignment option was H6 (Niagara Main). The H6 option received more than twice the number of points as compared to the next two most favoured options – H8 (Shawnigan) and H7 (Couplet), respectively. The chart on the next page compares the various new alignments by number of points.
- About 15% favoured one of the alternatives based on the existing alignment; of these, improvement and widening options were preferred over the double-decker or counterflow options.



### Bridges

- About 17% of points favoured a bridge option, with a slight preference shown for B1 (northern bridge).
- While the feedback form was designed for people to express preferences, there were many comments from residents on the peninsula who opposed a bridge option. The bridge options received the most negative commentary.

### Alternative Transportation Modes

- Alternative modes (including rail, transit, ferry separately or in some combination) received about 25% (rounded) of the points.
  - Transit – 4.6%
  - Ferry – 3.4%
  - Rail – 10.9%
  - Rail and Transit – 0.5%
  - Combined - 5.4%
- The 'other' option at 2% included new alignments such as a bridge to Saltspring Island, different combinations, and other approaches such as TDM, driver education, photo radar, or some site-specific improvements, etc.
- Status Quo was approximately 1%.

### Other Comments

The feedback forms and emails/letters included considerable comment on the rationale for or against various options. These comments have generally been captured through the option evaluation process.

Near the end of the consultation period, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC) organized an email campaign encouraging its members to comment. The result of these efforts was a significant volume of input skewed toward environmental protection and a preference for alternative modes of transportation. The option favoured in this campaign was a combination of rail and transit, without ferry improvement.

### **Other Options**

There was no shortage of suggestions, as identified below:

- More emphasis on telecommuting, subsidize van pools, tolling
- Different ferry routes, such as to the Mainland, Schwartz Bay to Nanaimo, truck ferry to Schwartz Bay, etc.
- Enforcement, driver education, photo radar, and/or regulatory changes like no-fault insurance, lower speed limits
- Use CN line
- Growth management: to the west not north, don't outstrip capacity; more comprehensive approach to land use and transportation
- Combine police and first responders
- Safety improvements, like British cat's eyes
- Bridge from Peninsula to Saltspring, then across
- Commuter rail from Langford to Victoria
- Mid-island route, or route further inland from Port Renfrew, etc.
- Tunnel instead of bridge
- Coordinate modes (transit to ferry, etc.)
- Existing Shawnigan route as detour
- Double deck trains and buses
- Shorter routes for twinning
- High occupancy vehicle (HOV) and transit lanes
- Park and ride
- High speed rail
- Eliminate trucks in rush hours, or put on trains
- Build through watersheds with better technology

### **Questions for Phase 2**

Guidance for considerations to be addressed in Phase 2 of the study was included in responses as well, either suggesting areas to be examined or raising questions. The following are some of the comments submitted:

- There is the need to consider downstream implications or improvements required, such as traffic at the south end of the Malahat route as it extends into the developed communities and routes as well as upgrading for the Pat Bay highway if bridge options are selected. Are you just relocating the congestion?
- There is a need to ensure integration with regional settlement planning – how will improvements impact growth rates in different locations, etc.? This addresses concerns people raised about settlement patterns 'based on sprawl' not being sustainable, especially considering gas prices, more pollution, etc.
- It should be considered in a bigger transportation view – for example, an integrated transportation plan for the south island.
- More detail is needed in areas like environmental evaluation and First Nations impacts.
- How would possible tolling affect demand, capacity, and financing, etc?

- Need to have some sensitivity analysis on the modal split to each of rail and transit (how do they compete and interact?), especially considering subsidization rates and TDM (tolling, limit on capacity, HOV lanes, car pooling, etc.), etc.
- How do other actions like photo radar, driver education, enforcement, etc. impact the options – reliability and safety?
- Further detail/justification, etc. on rail costs, etc., is needed.
- Will higher fuel costs dampen demand?
- Feasibility of a route through the CRD water lands – is this an option?
- Better definition of ‘improving’ existing alignment. How much would this increase reliability without an alternative route - and how to measure?
- What happens to the existing route if there is a new route?
- What other advantages of rail – moving freight, etc?
- What is the impact of further highway stages – e.g., extension of ‘Shawnigan Route’ later?
- Duncan bypass – part of the bigger picture?
- Timing and staging of improvements?
- Bang for buck? How does funding work – less road costs, subsidize rail?
- Any earthquake implications?
- How does this integrate with transit study? And, work of Island Foundation on rail?
- Confirm origin and destination of Malahat users.
- Is there any differential impact from weather on the different alignments?
- Results of phase 1 public consultation – is it going to be made public? Need consultation in Phase 2.

#### **4. Feedback from Local Governments and Stakeholders**

##### **Response**

The workshop invitation letters invited local government and stakeholder representatives to provide written comments on the options. Follow-up calls/emails were made to the representatives to encourage input. To date, 12 local governments have submitted comments and two have indicated that they will not be submitting comments. A total of four local governments have comments pending or are not sure whether they will be submitting comments.

In terms of feedback from stakeholder groups, eight groups submitted comments, eight groups indicated that they have no comments and seven groups have comments pending or are uncertain whether they will comment.

##### **Local Government Comments**

##### **Comprehensive Strategic Planning**

There was support by some local governments for comprehensive regional planning prior to determining a preferred corridor option.

- Capital Regional District (CRD) recommended deferring any decision until the Travel Choices Strategy Implementation Agreement is executed and a South Island Transportation System Plan is completed. This plan should consider growth

management objectives, all travel modes, and (TDM). District of Sooke and City of Victoria indicated their support for the CRD comments.

- City of Duncan prefers a Trans Canada Highway network that is developed to address all areas of congestion, capacity, safety and reliability – not just the Malahat portion.
- District of Highlands urged establishing an umbrella group/organization, in cooperation with CRD and CVRD, to oversee all South Island transportation plans and initiatives, and create a long-range south Vancouver Island transportation plan.
- City of Colwood also called for a broader long-term view that looks at transportation on the south island, taking into account all transportation modes based on the build-out plans of all the communities, and with input from all agencies involved in planning or managing traffic.
- District of Saanich noted that the provincially mandated regional growth management approach requires a holistic approach to land-use/transportation planning. Saanich also identified that the impact of access improvements on growth in commuter traffic from Cowichan Valley needs further study. It also commented that prior to making decisions about the Malahat, a “South Island Network Study” (including the Saanich Peninsula) should be completed. The study should include clarification about long-range assumptions relative to future land use and address all transportation modes.

### **Bridge Options**

- District of North Saanich indicated a strong opposition to the B1 option (North Peninsula Bridge), citing impact on rural character and lack of consistency with the Official Community Plan (OCP).
- City of Langford did not support the B1 option but indicated the B2 option was its first preference.
- Town of Sidney acknowledged the benefits of the B1 option but noted the controversy, cost and environmental issues, as well as the need for construction of Pat Bay interchanges in conjunction with B1. It was further noted that the southern bridge option would be useful for residents and relieve congestion. A southern connection to Route 1 was suggested.
- District of Highlands noted that the B2 option (Highlands Bridge) is not supported by their community plans and would result in adverse environmental and social impacts. Concerns were also expressed about safety, expropriation, increased traffic problems for Langford and recreational impacts.
- District of Saanich identified that any of the bridge options would appear to have a significant and negative impact on the Peninsula road networks and through Saanich into Victoria. Concerns were expressed about congestion, access to downtown and impact on lands outside the Urban Containment Boundary in Rural Saanich.
- Town of View Royal indicated that the B2 option was the best.
- City of Colwood offered support for B1 (North Peninsula) option (with connections south and east into the existing road network), as it would improve overall network connectivity with multiple benefits.

### **Alternative Transportation Modes**

- Town of View Royal offered support for the rail option.
- City of Langford also supported rail (i.e. commuter rail option), suggesting that it be given a full-market feasibility study. Langford also expressed support for transit and TDM as well as the ferry option as its most preferred options.

- District of Saanich indicated support for integration of transit improvements, TDM improvements, future rail opportunities and any other alternative transportation initiatives, with proposals to improve the road network.
- City of Colwood indicated a preference for consideration of alternative transportation modes. Colwood suggested some experiments with improved public transportation or vehicle sharing over the Malahat as part of the data gathering process for the plan, noting that trials would settle questions about the effectiveness of these measures.
- Town of Sidney indicated that it did not support ferry improvement at Bamberton.

### **Other**

Cowichan Valley Regional District (CVRD) advised that it would be in a position to comment on the Malahat Corridor Study once additional information has been provided on the impacts of the various options.

City of Langford indicated that it supports upgrade options to the Malahat Corridor.

## **Stakeholder Comments**

### **Environmental Protection and Transportation Alternatives**

The majority of stakeholders provided comments in support of environmental protection, and associated with this support, a preference for transportation alternatives.

- The Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) expressed support for an increase in alternative modes to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs); conservation of and connectivity between natural areas, as well as the conservation of regionally significant ecosystems; and the protection of freshwater ecosystems.
- The Saanich Inlet Protection Society (SIPS) also expressed concern for the environment and noted the difficulty in making decisions about options without knowledge of the natural and societal impacts. Support was identified for putting a toll on the highway, subsidizing rail and greater enforcement.
- The Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition (GVCC)'s position was based on environmental concerns (e.g. greenhouse gases, growth). The GVCC expressed support for rail, train and bus transit options versus highway expansion. It identified that TDM should be a first solution. The GVCC only supported expansion for safety reasons and HOV or bicycle lanes.
- The Island Corridor Foundation identified that the expansion of commuter rail service might help resolve capacity for the Malahat and would improve safety, but it would not be able to provide an alternative for vehicles currently using the Malahat. Improved rail service was seen as one component in a 'basket' of options.
- The WCWC expressed support for enhanced rail and enhanced transit options, underscoring its opposition to any additional highway, bridge and ferry expansions given environmental impacts.

### **Other**

- Mainroad South Island Contracting stated a preference for the H8 option (Shawnigan).
- Transport 2000 supported a new, enhanced C1 option that would include highway safety and reliability improvements, enforcement, car ferry improvements, TDM options (e.g. satellite and teleworking), passenger ferry service fed by connecting buses and diesel light rail commuter rail/rapid transit.

- The Mill Bay Merchants Association did not specify a preference, but indicated that the options were comprehensive and that the financial costs will ultimately dictate the final direction.

## **5. Next Steps**

- Continue to follow up with local government and stakeholders who have comments pending.
- Continuing discussion with First Nations.
- Phase 2 is moving forward in the fall of 2006 and will include a consultation program.