



OKANAGAN VALLEY TRANSPORTATION SYMPOSIUM

Executive Summary Report

DECEMBER 19, 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction.....	1
2.0	Symposium Process Development.....	1
3.0	Introductory Meetings.....	2
4.0	Workshop #1.....	3
5.0	Workshop #2.....	4
6.0	Conclusion	5

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Introductory Meetings and Documentation
Appendix B	Workshop #1 Documentation
Appendix C	Workshop #2 Documentation

1.0 Introduction

The Okanagan Valley Transportation Symposium (OVTS) was designed to facilitate the development of a shared vision for transportation by First Nations and local governments in the Okanagan Valley. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (BC MoT) sponsored the OVTS in order to better understand key transportation issues and priorities in the Okanagan Valley.

This report provides a compendium of all the processes and documentation developed for the Okanagan Valley Transportation Symposium. The documents include:

- A brief description of the Symposium process and the thought process behind it;
- A summary of the introductory meetings held with each First Nation, local government and other stakeholders. **Appendix A** contains copies of all details associated with these introductory meetings;
- A summary of the processes and outcomes associated with Workshop #1. **Appendix B** contains copies of all documents associated with Workshop #1;
- A summary of the processes and outcomes associated with Workshop #2. **Appendix C** contains copies of all documents associated with Workshop #2;

In addition a CD with all the documentation is included with a file structure that mirrors the appendices.

2.0 Symposium Process Development

The Okanagan Transportation Symposium process was developed through an iterative and consultative process involving the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure Southern Interior Region staff and the consultant team. Initial discussions on how to proceed began in December 2010 and accelerated in early February 2011. During this time, an overall process was developed and initial plans were made for introductory meetings to commence in early May with targets for Workshop #1 in early summer. Workshop #2 was planned for late summer or early fall 2011. **Figure 1** illustrates the process.

Planning for introductory meetings with First Nations, local government and other stakeholders commenced in early May 2011 with invitations to participate in the process being issued by e-mail on May 14, 2011. Meetings with potential participants began May 19, 2011 with a meeting at the City of Kelowna. Meetings with other participants continued in rapid succession and were largely completed by early June 2011. However, some meetings with First Nations were not completed until early July. As part of the introductory meetings, participants were invited to complete a questionnaire concerning their transportation related issues.

A detailed list of transportation related needs was developed based the introductory meetings and questionnaire responses received from the First Nations, local governments and other stakeholders. This list of needs formed the basis of the inputs to Workshops #1 and #2. Participants were given the opportunity to comment on and adjust the needs listings prior to starting Workshop #1.

Workshop #1 was subdivided into three separate events for the north, south and central Okanagan participants. This division was implemented for the following reasons:

- Transportation needs and issues in each of the north, south and central Okanagan Valley regions have significant differences. Separate workshops for each sub-region would allow the participants to focus on the key issues relevant to their area; and
- To manage the size and scope of the initial workshops.

It should be noted that the project team decided to include Vernon in the central Okanagan Workshop #1 given that the attributes of the Vernon community appeared to align more closely with the other central Okanagan communities. Vernon has a reasonably large urban population and is well within the Kelowna commuter shed. This caused some initial concerns with City of Vernon staff and as a result Vernon was included in both the north Okanagan workshop (so it could interact with its north Okanagan neighbours) and the central Okanagan workshop (so it could interact with its larger more similar neighbours to the south).

Workshop(s) #1 were organized so that all the outputs were developed by the participants. Participants of Workshop #1 generally consisted of senior staff representatives from the First Nations and local governments. It should be noted that some elected officials also participated in Workshop #1. The Okanagan Valley Chambers of Commerce and BC Transit also participated. Ministry staff participated as observers and occasionally, as needs arose, they helped to facilitate discussions at each table. It was the Ministry's desire not to direct the outcomes of the workshop(s) and that the outcomes would be entirely generated by the First Nations, local governments and other stakeholders. One of the key objectives of the process was to obtain the unencumbered opinion of the First Nations and local governments with respect to transportation issues, and in particular, the direction for future transportation related infrastructure investment in the Okanagan Valley. This objective was achieved.

Between Workshop(s) #1 and Workshop #2, the project team and Ministry personnel met again with most First Nations and key local governments to gauge their reactions to Workshop(s) #1 and to seek their input on how Workshop #2 might be conducted. The response from all these meetings was positive. Some First Nations and local governments expressed concern that their community specific issues were being "watered down" through the coalition of ideas with other Okanagan Valley communities. This concern led, in part, to a process where the participants selected segment specific strategic priorities in Workshop #2. These segment specific strategic priorities will help the Ministry to understand which specific initiatives have the most support from the First Nations and local governments who are directly associated with each highway segment. Workshop #2 participants generally consisted of an elected official and a senior staff member from the First Nation and local governments with the identified study area.

The Workshop #2 process is described below. The Workshop #2 objectives were achieved.

3.0 Introductory Meetings

In the run-up to Workshop #1 the project team met with each First Nation, local government and other stakeholders between late May and early July 2011, in order to:

- Introduce the Okanagan Valley Transportation Symposium process to the participants;
- Listen to concerns and issues about transportation in the Okanagan Valley from the perspective of the First Nations and local governments;

- Encourage each First Nation and local government to complete a questionnaire about transportation concerns and issues; and
- Encourage each First Nation and local government to participate in Workshop #1.

Appendix A provides all the summary documents associated with Workshop #1 including:

- A introductory e-mail sent to each First Nation, local government, Chamber of Commerce and BC Transit in the Okanagan Valley explaining the context and objectives of the Okanagan Valley Transportation Symposium;
- An introductory letter to each First Nation, local government Chamber of Commerce and BC Transit confirming meeting arrangements and providing a backgrounder and questionnaire;
- Minutes of each meeting held with First Nations, local governments, Chambers of Commerce and BC Transit. [Note that the minutes are held in confidence and are not included in this report];
- Questionnaire responses received from First Nations, local governments and other stakeholders. [Note that the questionnaire responses are held in confidence and are not included in this report]; and
- Detailed needs listings that describe key transportation related issues as determined from the meetings and questionnaire responses described above.

The detailed needs listings were used as the key input to Workshop #1. Each First Nation, local government and other stakeholders was provided with the detailed needs listings in advance of Workshop #1 and were encouraged to comment on the list. Detailed needs listings were then adjusted based on comments received in advance of Workshop #1.

4.0 Workshop #1

A series of three workshops (called Workshop #1) were held in July 2011 to address the northern, southern and central Okanagan Valley corridor needs. Workshop(s) #1 were held as follows:

- For North Okanagan First Nations and local governments on Tuesday July 19, 2011 in Vernon attended by 34 people including observers and facilitators;
- For South Okanagan First Nations and local governments on Wednesday July 20, 2011 in Penticton attended by 26 people including observers and facilitators; and
- For Central Okanagan First Nations and local governments on Friday July 22, 2011 in Kelowna attended by 42 people including observers and facilitators.

The goal of Workshop #1 was to: develop a consensus on the transportation needs, at a technical level; and develop a draft vision statement for the corridor.

The Workshop #1 participants achieved the following objectives for north, south and central sectors of the Okanagan Valley respectively:

- Selected the most important needs from detailed needs listings prepared from questionnaire responses and meetings with participant organizations;
- Restated the most important needs as strategic priorities;

- Ranked the strategic priorities and selected the top five strategic priorities; and
- Restated the top five strategic priorities as vision statements.

Appendix B provides all the summary documents associated with Workshop #1 including:

- Invitation letters sent by e-mail to each First Nation and local government in the Okanagan Valley;
- Materials sent to the invited participants in advance of Workshop #1;
- A facilitator's guide prepared by the project team in advance of Workshop #1;
- The agenda for Workshop #1;
- Needs rating sheets provided to each group (table) at each of the Workshop #1 venues;
- Wall graphics prepared to illustrate key transportation issues along the numbered highways in the Okanagan Valley;
- Storyboards in PowerPoint format reflecting the presentation and process used to achieve the Workshop #1 objectives; and
- Workshop #1 proceedings as published on August 19, 2011 and distributed to all invited participants.

5.0 Workshop #2

Workshop #2 was held in Penticton on Friday September 16, 2011. Invitations were sent out to each First Nation and local government by e-mail on August 2, 2011. Invitations asked that one elected official and one senior staff member participate. The senior staff member should have attended Workshop #1 if at all possible to promote continuity. The list of elected officials and senior staff invited is included in **Appendix C**. In addition, the Okanagan Caucus MLAs were also invited to attend the event.

65 people, including observers and facilitators, attended Workshop #2. Workshop #2 participants achieved the following:

- Selected the most important strategic priorities for each highway segment;
- Selected and ranked the top five strategic priorities for the entire Okanagan Valley (USA border to Highway 1 at Sicamous and Salmon Arm); and
- Developed a valley-wide vision statement for transportation in the Okanagan Valley.

Appendix C provides all the summary documents associated with Workshop #2 including:

- Invitation e-mail to participants complete with a list of those invited. Note that MLAs were invited separately;
- Handout package provided to each participant at the start of Workshop #2;
- Storyboards in PowerPoint format reflecting the presentation and process used to achieve the Workshop #2 objectives; and
- Workshop #2 proceedings as published on December 9, 2011 and distributed to all invited participants.

6.0 Conclusion

Consensus among those First Nations and local governments that participated in the Okanagan Valley Transportation Symposium process was achieved with respect to identifying a long-range vision and strategic priorities for transportation in the Okanagan Valley:

The long-range vision for the Okanagan Valley transportation system will:

- *Be a safe, functional and efficient network;*
- *Include fully accessible public and active transportation options within and between communities;*
- *Be a coordinated approach to multi-modal and sustainable transportation;*
- *Protect and preserve rail and other rights of way for the future; and*
- *Plan network improvements, assisting in community revitalization and provision of alternate routes.*

The top five strategic priorities for transportation in the Okanagan Valley include:

1. *Intersection safety and congestion; passing opportunities & alignment improvements;*
2. *Intra & inter-city transit; active transportation;*
3. *A coordinated regional approach to multi-modal & sustainable transportation planning;*
4. *Protect rail rights-of-ways; goods movement; and*
5. *Network improvements.*