

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Sea-to-Sky Highway links communities from West Vancouver to Whistler. With its spectacular mountain landscape, the highway presents complex engineering and construction challenges.

British Columbia's Ministry of Transportation is undertaking improvements to the highway between West Vancouver and Whistler to improve its safety and reliability. By 2009 extensive improvements will make travel along the corridor safer for residents, commuters and tourists. To be completed before the Olympics, over the long term, the highway improvements will serve population growth and economic development in the corridor as demand increases for resident and visitor travel and goods movement.

Improvements will include highway widening and straightening, improved sightlines, passing lanes and other design innovations to reduce hazards, shorten travel times and increase capacity of the Sea-to Sky Highway.

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project will result in the following:

- 4 lanes Horseshoe Bay to Lions Bay
- 2 lanes Lions Bay to Porteau Cove (3rd lane on rail bed for Olympics)
- 3 lanes from Porteau Cove to Squamish
- 4 lanes within urban Squamish
- 3 lanes from Squamish to Whistler

The estimated capital project cost for the improvement project is \$600-million and will be completed by 2009 to meet population growth and travel demands until 2020, with additional improvements phased in as required over approximately 20 years. The project will create 6,000 new jobs throughout the province as a result of economic activity generated along the corridor, and will increase provincial GDP by \$300 million over the period of 2010 to 2025.

The primary goals for the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project include:

- Safety improvements;
- Reliability improvements;
- Capacity improvements;
- Project completion by 2009;
- Manage traffic flows during construction to minimize disruption and maximize predictability; and
- Complete the project on time and on budget.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Corridor-wide Consultation

The Ministry of Transportation (MoT) has consulted about the scope of highway improvements over the last two years with communities, businesses and residents along the corridor. The MoT project team has attended more than 400 meetings. Much of the consultation has complemented various technical studies

undertaken by the MoT on tolling, other route options, and transportation alternatives.

Community Advisory Groups (CAG) have been established along the corridor, including within the Furry Creek area. The groups are composed of individuals nominated by their organization who participate in the design review process. The objectives of the work of the CAGs are to identify and compare provincial and community needs, issues goals and objectives.

In addition to these working groups, the MoT conducted a broader-based public consultation including public open houses and town hall meetings between October 9 – 31, 2002. Further consultation took place in August 2003 as part of the environmental assessment process. Open houses provided information about the project and offered conceptual drawings.

As the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement project proceeds through various design stages and ultimately into construction, communities and key stakeholders will be consulted. The design stages include:

1. Project Definition Consultation
2. Pre-Design Consultation (CURRENT)
3. Preliminary Design Consultation
4. Detailed Design Consultation

PRE-DESIGN OPTIONS PROPOSED FOR THE FURRY CREEK AREA.

Pre-Design Consultation

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project Team is currently undertaking Pre-Design Consultation. In the overall context of project scope, schedule and budget, communities along the Sea-to-Sky corridor are involved in pre-design consultations to ensure that community objectives are considered as appropriate highway improvements are designed to meet the primary safety, reliability and capacity goals.

The purpose of the Pre-Design consultation is to:

- A. **Inform the community and stakeholders about the design options** for improvements to the Sea-to-Sky Highway within Furry Creek;
- B. **Gather input and feedback** regarding the design options for the highway improvements from the community and stakeholders; and to
- C. **Summarize community and stakeholders** input for consideration by the Ministry of Transportation. The Consultation Summary Report will be posted on the project website for consultation participants, Community Advisory Group, stakeholders and the public.

Safety/Access

> Community Issues

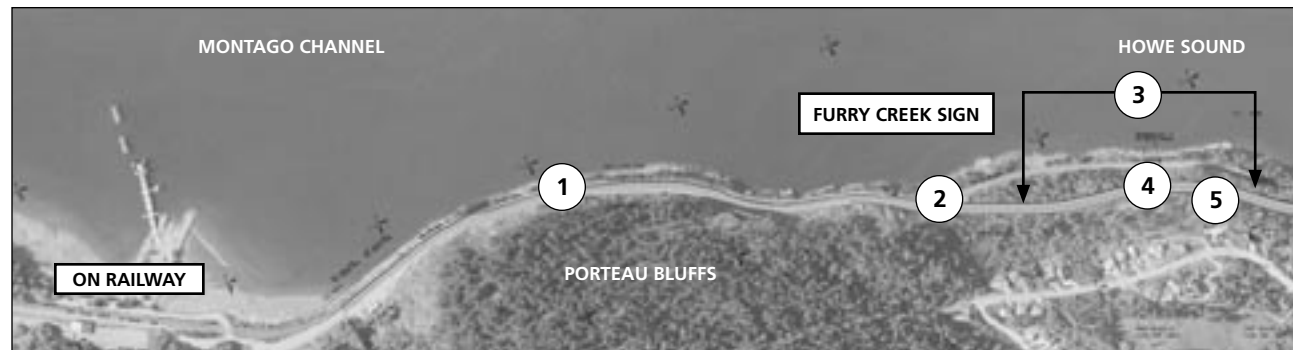
- Safer entry and exits with improving sightlines
- Safe pedestrian crossing of highway
- Lengthy delay entering highway during heavy traffic
- Facilitate enforcement to encourage speed reduction
- Improve gateway/amenity signage to improve driver decision making and traffic calming
- Safe location for bus stop and provide bus shelter

> Benefits/Results

- Improved deceleration/acceleration lanes and alignment to encourage safer vehicle movements.
- Available through existing highway underpass with sidewalk.
- Northbound access lane improvements will improve merge lane into highway. No change to southbound access.
- Enforcement pullout locations will be co-ordinated with the RCMP.
- Corridor signage and gateway requirements will be undertaken with community input.
- Several locations available for transit stops which will be incorporated into the highway. Safe pedestrian access is important criteria when selecting the location.

Key Characteristics of Design Improvements in Furry Creek:

- (1) Use CN Rail line for a temporary third lane between Porteau Bluffs and Furry Creek sign
- (2, 6, 15, 17 and 20) Implement improvements such as gateway treatments at the north and south to support traffic calming objectives and create a sense of arrival;
- (3, 7, and 19) Implement landscape treatments at north and south gateways and at Furry Creek centre (northbound entrance) to calm traffic
- (4) Highway improvements include 2-lane highway plus new alternating passing lane with wider shoulders for cyclists and disabled vehicles between the Furry Creek sign and Furry Creek centre
- (5) Reduce highway noise through the use of quiet pavement, and speed management by traffic calming and police enforcement areas



Noise

> Community Issues

- Increased noise from heavy traffic

> Benefits/Results

- New pavement surface will reduce noise. Current and projected noise levels are within MoT policy limits.
- Traffic calming measures and police enforcement will reduce speed and associated noise.
- Improved passing opportunities north and south of the community should reduce driver frustration, speed and noise through the community.

Environmental

> Community Issues

- Protection of natural environment
- Enhanced highway landscaping
- Eliminate pull-out at south end of community to prohibit access to private property

> Benefits/Results

- Minimize fisheries impact at Furry Creek bridge. Use existing highway and retaining walls to limit extent of disturbance.
- Corridor wide landscaping design criteria developed, specific community requirements to be reviewed during preliminary design consultation.
- No parking permitted on the highway. Existing pullout to be landscaped or used as a southbound bus stop.

- (8 and 11) Improve safety and reliability including improved deceleration/acceleration lanes at Furry Creek south access
- (9 and 16) Provide bus stops off highway at northbound and southbound entrances to Furry Creek
- (10) Possible alternative southbound bus stop location on west side of highway at Furry Creek centre
- (12) Consider pedestrian underpass and connecting trails (possible cost share item)
- (13 and 18) Construct speed enforcement locations for northbound and southbound traffic
- (14) Construct new 2-lane bridge over Furry Creek to the east of the existing highway for northbound lanes; utilize the existing bridge for 2 southbound lanes

sea-TO-SKY HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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