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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Transportation

### **IMPROVED SEA-TO-SKY SECTION OPENS EARLY**

LIONS BAY – A new four-lane section of the Sea-to-Sky Highway is open more than a year-and-a-half ahead of schedule, Transportation Minister Kevin Falcon and West Vancouver-Garibaldi MLA Joan McIntyre announced today.

“This remarkable achievement means vastly improved highway safety for residents and visitors,” said Falcon. “Innovative construction moved the project forward quickly, delivering a safe and modern highway in very challenging terrain.”

The \$39-million section of the highway, from Ansell Place north of Horseshoe Bay to the Village of Lions Bay, was originally scheduled for completion in August 2007.

“Any initiative to increase safety on the Sea-to-Sky Highway is very welcome,” said McIntyre. “I would like to thank everyone involved for moving this project along rapidly, ahead of schedule, and for making our corridor safer for both residents and visitors. I would also like to specifically thank the public for their patience and support of the project while the work was being conducted.”

“Lions Bay residents use this section of road frequently, for commuting to the city and for school and shopping in West Vancouver,” said Lions Bay Mayor Max Wyman. “With these impressive improvements, we look forward to an era of safer travel, as well as to improved links with communities up and down the Sea-to-Sky corridor.”

The improved highway includes a concrete barrier, separating north and southbound traffic along the seven-km section. Several construction innovations have also been applied to the section:

- Cantilevered structures, partial bridges, and composite retaining walls on the down-slope side of the highway to minimize traffic disruptions that would result from large rock excavation on the up-slope side;
- Use of modular bridge and retaining wall structures that allow for quicker installation;
- Multi-stage construction allowing traffic to be managed through work sites, thus minimizing delays.

The innovations will continue to be applied on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project where appropriate, and may be applied on challenging highway projects in other jurisdictions worldwide.

From Horseshoe Bay to Squamish, the Sea-to-Sky Highway carries an average of 13,700 vehicles per day. From Squamish to Whistler, it averages 7,700 vehicles per day. There are 300 crashes on the highway each year, substantially higher than the provincial average for comparable roads. Safety improvements are expected to result in 30 per cent fewer collisions.

The Province is investing \$600 million to improve the highway and meet population growth and increasing travel demands. The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project includes widening, straightening, passing lanes, improving sightlines, and other measures to improve the highway's safety, capacity and reliability. The project will be completed by fall of 2009.

A downloadable map of the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project is available online at [www.seatoskyimprovements.ca](http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca).

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