

Preliminary Design Consultation Summary Report

Britannia Beach

March 29, 2006

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1.1 PROJECT SCOPE

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, reliability and capacity. By 2009, extensive improvements will make travel along the corridor safer for residents, commuters and tourists. To be completed before the Olympics, the highway improvements will serve population growth and economic development in the corridor as demand increases for resident and visitor travel, as well as 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:

- **West Vancouver to Lions Bay** - 4-lane sections with continuous median barrier including straightening, widening and improved sightlines (eliminating several sharp curves).
- **North of Lions Bay to Murrin Park** - 2, 3 and 4-lane sections; about half of this section includes improved 2-lanes, and the remaining sections include additional passing opportunities with 3 and 4 lanes. Those sections that are 4 lanes will include a median barrier to prevent crossover accidents. Sections adjacent to Murrin Park and within the community of Britannia will include improved 2 lane sections, which is consistent with community input from pre-design consultations. In Furry Creek, there will be 3 lanes moving to 4 lanes with a median barrier.
- **North of Murrin Park through Squamish** - 4-lane divided highway. This section will include median barriers throughout, including the addition of urban design features to the median within Squamish.
- **Squamish to Whistler** - 3 lanes throughout this section, including improved 2-lane sections and alternating passing opportunities provided by alternating the third lane.

Improvements will 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.

1.2 PROJECT GOALS

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

- Safety improvements
- Reliability improvements
- Capacity improvements
- Project completion by late 2009
- Management of traffic flows during construction in order to minimize disruption and maximize predictability
- Completion of the project on time and on budget

1.3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The Ministry of Transportation (MoT) has consulted about the scope of highway improvements over the last three years with communities, businesses and residents along the corridor. The MoT project team has attended approximately 400 meetings. Much of the consultation has complemented various technical studies undertaken by the MoT on tolling, other route options, and transportation alternatives.

Once consultation on preliminary design is complete, construction of the highway improvements will start. Community consultation on detailed design will be conducted prior to completion of the improvements.

The S2S Transportation Group is the contractor responsible for designing, building, operating and maintaining the Sea-to-Sky Highway. A key outcome of the preliminary design consultation is practical feedback on preliminary designs for consideration by the Ministry of Transportation and the S2S Transportation Group as they develop detailed and final designs.

The next stage of consultation, detailed design consultation, generally involves the discussion of fewer but very specific treatments related to the final design, including such things as specific traffic calming and noise reduction features, shape and colour of light fixtures, and detailed landscaping and other aesthetic treatments.

1.4 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

A key goal of the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project is to manage traffic flows during construction in order to minimize disruption and maximize predictability for travellers. Highway closures will be implemented at set times and publicized well in advance.

To plan ahead for a safe trip, the following travel planning tools are available on the project website (www.seatoskyimprovements.ca):

- **Weekly Schedule** – Weekly update on confirmed highway closures and delays
- **Travel Planner** – A list of the available closure/delay windows to November 30
- **Closure & Delay Windows** – The maximum closure/delay windows to 2009
- **Trip Calculator** – Use our interactive trip calculator for suggested departure times to reach your destination
- **Road Alerts Service** – Frequent Sea-to-Sky travellers can receive text message alerts about major or unscheduled events that affect highway travel

2. OVERVIEW OF PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION ON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

2.1 STAGES OF CONSULTATION

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

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

2.2 PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION GOALS

The purpose of the consultation is to:

- Inform the community and stakeholders about the draft preliminary design improvements to the Sea-to-Sky Highway within the Britannia Beach area as well as the corridor-wide features.
- Gather input and feedback regarding preliminary design features for highway improvements from the community and stakeholders.
- Summarize community and stakeholder input for consideration by the Ministry of Transportation and the S2S Transportation Group. Distribute the Consultation Summary Report to consultation participants, the community advisory group and other stakeholders.

2.3 PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION TOPICS

The following consultation topics are discussed in the Britannia Beach preliminary design community consultation:

Main Street Intersection and Pedestrian Crossing

Bus Stops

Gateways (north and south locations)

Gateway Feature Options

Landscape Feature Options

2.4 PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION METHODS

a. DISCUSSION GUIDE AND FEEDBACK FORM

A consultation discussion guide (see tab 4) was developed to explain the purpose of the preliminary design consultation and included a feedback form to assist in gathering community input.

The discussion guide also included:

- Maps showing the location of highway improvements and features,
- Background on the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project's response to community input from the pre-design consultation,
- Graphics illustrating the gateway feature options, and
- Descriptions of the landscape options and treatments.

Feedback was gathered at the CAG meeting, at the Open House, by e-mail, fax and mail.

b. WEB-BASED CONSULTATION

All consultation materials were available on the web, including the feedback form that could be e-mailed or faxed back to the project.

c. COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project team met with the Britannia Beach Community Advisory Group (CAG) on February 15, 2006. The consultation discussion guide and display boards were reviewed with the CAG and members provided comment on preliminary design features for the Britannia Beach community.

A facilitator, recorder, Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project staff and members of the S2S Transportation Group attended the CAG. The discussion guide was available at the CAG meeting.

d. OPEN HOUSE

An Open House held at the Britannia Beach Community Centre on Wednesday, March 1, 2006, 6:00pm - 9:00pm, gave residents, community organizations and businesses an opportunity to provide feedback on the preliminary design features. Display boards provided background on the improvements to the Main Street intersection, the new Britannia Creek Bridge, the gateway feature options as well as the landscape options. Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project staff and S2S Transportation Group team members were available to answer questions.

e. ADVERTISEMENTS

An advertisement for the Open House was placed in the Squamish Chief on Friday, February 18, 2006 (see tab 3). A notice was posted in the community post office on February 16, 2006.

E-MAIL NOTICE

An e-mail notice regarding the open house was distributed to the community e-mail list.

3. KEY THEME SUMMARY

The Britannia Beach Preliminary Design consultation included gathering community feedback and input regarding the Main Street intersection, location of bus stops, and refinements to traffic calming measures such as gateway locations, gateway features and landscape features.

Approximately 45 people participated in the Britannia Beach Preliminary Design consultation. Ten people attended the February 15, 2006 CAG. A total of 34 feedback forms were returned; ten feedback forms were submitted at the CAG meeting, 22 feedback forms were submitted at the Open House and two feedback forms were returned by fax.

3.1 KEY THEME SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Key Themes

The following are the key themes identified in the participant feedback.

3.1.1 Main Street Intersection

95% of respondents expressed their strong approval of a pedestrian-activated traffic signal at the Main Street intersection (62% strongly agree, 9% somewhat agree, 24% agree). Some participants were concerned about access to the business area while several participants wished to see the intersection expanded to provide access to the water.

3.1.2 Bus Stops

While 79% of the participants favoured the proposed location of the northbound bus stop between Main Street intersection and the new Britannia Creek bridge (41% strongly agree, 22% somewhat agree, 16% agree), some participants indicated that the bus stop should be located within the community to provide convenient and safe access for Britannia Beach residents.

76% of the feedback form respondents favoured the proposed location of the southbound bus stop immediately south of the Main Street intersection (38% strongly agree, 22% somewhat agree, 16% agree). Some participants indicated that the bus stop should be located off the highway and within the community for convenient and safe access.

3.1.3 Gateway Options

North Gateway

77% of feedback form respondents agreed (41% strongly agree, 21% somewhat agree, 26% agree) with the proposed location of the **north** gateway, 500 metres north of the Main Street intersection. Some respondents said they would like to see the north gateway located further north than shown in the discussion guide.

South Gateway

75% of feedback form respondents favoured the proposed **south** gateway location, approximately 1300 metres south of the Main Street intersection (32% strongly agree, 21% somewhat agree, 24% agree). Several participants indicated that the south gateway should be located closer to the entrance to Britannia Beach community.

Gateway Feature Options

62% of feedback form respondents chose community rocks as their first choice of gateway features.

3.1.4 Landscape Options

76% of participants (45% strongly agree, 17% somewhat agree, 14% agree) indicated a preference for Landscape Option C, using trees and native grasses, to provide special identity to the Britannia Beach community.

4. SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FORM QUESTIONS

The following provides a summary of input provided through the consultation feedback form. The quantitative results are presented below and these are followed by a qualitative summary of feedback form comments.

4.1 MAIN STREET INTERSECTION AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Participants were asked: *Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the proposed pedestrian and vehicle activated intersection.*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	62%
Somewhat agree	9%
Agree	24%
Somewhat disagree	3%
Strongly disagree	0%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Many participants indicated in their comments their strong approval of the pedestrian activated traffic light at the Main Street intersection.
- Some participants indicated their concern that the intersection did not provide access to the businesses.
- Some participants indicated their desire to see the intersection go to the waterfront.

4.2 BUS STOPS

Northbound Bus Stop

The proposed northbound bus stop location is between the Main Street Intersection and the new Britannia Creek Bridge.

Participants were asked: *Do you agree with the proposed location of the northbound bus stop?*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	41%
Somewhat agree	22%
Agree	16%
Somewhat disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	16%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Some participants expressed their concern that the bus stop should be located within the community for the safety of children and for the ease of use for elderly people.
- Participants were concerned that the bus stop will be located too close to the highway.
- Some participants expressed concern that the buses do not pull completely off the highway and buses will block traffic.

Southbound Bus Stop

The proposed southbound bus stop location is immediately south of the Main Street Intersection.

Participants were asked: *Do you agree with the proposed location of the southbound bus stop?*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	38%
Somewhat agree	22%
Agree	16%
Somewhat disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	19%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Participants expressed the view that the bus stop should be inside the community where it is currently located.
- Some participants were concerned about the buses pulling off the highway so traffic would not be blocked.

4.3 COMMUNITY GATEWAY FEATURES¹

North Gateway Location – The north gateway is proposed approximately 500 metres north of the Main Street intersection.

Participants were asked: *Do you agree with the proposed location of the north gateway?*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	41%
Somewhat agree	21%
Agree	26%
Somewhat disagree	0%
Strongly disagree	12%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Some participants thought the north gateway should be farther north (than shown in the discussion guide).
- Some participants mentioned extending the 50 km/h speed zone throughout the community.

South Gateway Location – The south gateway is proposed approximately 1300 metres south of the Main Street intersection.

Participants were asked: *Do you agree with the proposed location of the south gateway?*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	32%
Somewhat agree	21%
Agree	24%
Somewhat disagree	15%
Strongly disagree	6%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Several participants thought that the south gateway should be located closer to the entrance to Britannia Beach community.

¹ Please see Britannia Beach Discussion Guide for description of options.
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GATEWAY FEATURES

Participants were asked: **Please indicate your preference²**: On a scale of 1 (Not at all appealing) to 5 (Very appealing) indicate how appealing each of the following design options is to you by marking an “X” through the circle.

The following is the statistical summary for first choice preferences for each option:

Option 1: Community Rock	62%
Option 2: Community Links	12%
Option 3: Community Rings	6%
Option 4: Community Blades	0%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments.

- Participants thought the use of the community rock feature was a good choice because it was in keeping with the surrounding landscape.
- Some participants commented on the scale/size of the rock, indicating that it should be large so that it would be very visible to the highway travelers.
- Several participants indicated that would be important to have the rock feature lit for visibility.

4.4 LANDSCAPE FEATURES

Landscape Option A – Banner Poles and Ground Cover

Landscape Option A focuses on the use of banner poles and ground cover to provide special identity to the Britannia Beach community.

Participants were asked: *Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with Landscape Option A.*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	24%
Somewhat agree	17%
Agree	14%
Somewhat disagree	14%
Strongly disagree	31%

² Totals may not add up to 100% as some participants did not indicate a choice and other totals may exceed 100% as some participants indicated multiple first-choice preferences.

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments

- Some participants commented they would prefer flags rather than banners.
- Several participants noted that there were promotional possibilities with the use of banners.
- Some participants expressed concern for visibility if banners were used.

Landscape Option B – Mining Artifacts and Flowering Shrubs

Landscape Option B involves the installation of boulders and flowering shrubs and could include mining artifacts.

Participants were asked: *Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with Landscape Option B.*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	24%
Somewhat agree	34%
Agree	10%
Somewhat disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	21%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments

- Some participants agreed with the use of mining artifacts.

Landscape Option C – Trees and Shrubs

Landscape Option C focuses on the use of trees and native grasses.

Participants were asked: *Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with Landscape Option C.*

Quantitative Summary

Strongly agree	45%
Somewhat agree	17%
Agree	14%
Somewhat disagree	14%
Strongly disagree	10%

Summary of Comments

Please provide additional comments

- Participants agreed with the use of shrubs as long as they were low maintenance.
- Some participants expressed concern that trees would block the view from the highway.

Statistical Summary

The following is the statistical summary for first choice preferences for each option:

Landscape Option A – Banner Poles and Ground Cover	24%
Landscape Option B – Mining Artifacts and Flowering Shrubs	24%
Landscape Option C – Trees and Shrubs	45%