

# Preliminary Design Consultation Summary Report

**West Vancouver**

**February 28, 2006**

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# Executive Summary

## 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** – two, three and 4-lane sections; about half of this section includes improved two lanes, and the remaining sections include additional passing opportunities with 3 and 4 lanes. Those sections that are four 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 three 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 two-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 is expected to 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.

## Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project

### 1.2 PROJECT SCOPE

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 more than 500 meetings with communities and regional councils. Much of the consultation has complemented various technical studies undertaken by the MoT on tolling, other route options, and transportation alternatives.

**When 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 to minimize disruption and maximize predictability for travelers. Highway closures are implemented at set times, and publicized well in advance.

## **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 West Vancouver 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 and other stakeholders.

### **2.3 PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION TOPICS**

The Ministry of Transportation selected the overland route as the preferred option for the alignment of the highway in the West Vancouver segment. The preliminary design consultation focused on the improvements associated with this choice.

The following are the consultation topics discussed in the preliminary design consultation for the approved highway corridor:

- a. Eagleridge Interchange
- b. Landscape Options for Eagleridge Parking
- c. Landscape Options for the Eagleridge Traffic Circle
- d. North Junction
- e. Bus Stops
- f. Landscape Options for the New Pullout
- g. Gateway Features for West Vancouver (Southbound)
- h. Northbound Sea-to-Sky Highway Gateway Feature
- i. Rock Fill Slope Landscape Treatment

## 2.4 PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION METHODS

### a. Discussion Guide and Feedback Form

A consultation discussion guide explained 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 pre-design consultation input
- Graphics illustrating the Eagleridge Interchange, North Junction and gateway feature options
- Descriptions of the landscape treatments and options

Feedback was gathered at small group meetings, open houses, 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. 68 people sent in feedback forms through e-mail, fax or web.

### c. Small Group Meetings

**Twelve small group meetings** were held with key stakeholder groups on the following dates:

November 22, 2005	BC Ferry Services Corporation
November 28, 2005	BC Trucking Association
January 9, 2006	Tourism Industry
January 9, 2006	First Responders (fire, police, ambulance)
January 9, 2006	Horseshoe Bay Merchants
January 10, 2006	West Vancouver School Board
January 11, 2006	Coalition to Save Eagleridge Bluffs
January 16, 2006	Recreation Groups
January 17, 2006	Westport Residents
January 24, 2006	Pasco Road Residents
January 25, 2006	Environmental Groups
January 26, 2006	Western Residents Association

A facilitator, recorder and Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project staff attended the small group meetings. At each meeting, Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project staff did a short presentation on the consultation options including a virtual tour of the overland route alignment. A discussion guide was available including a feedback form.

## Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project

Participants provided their comments on the project and other matters and were able to ask questions of project staff. Key themes from the meetings are summarized below.

86 people attended the small group meetings

### d. Open Houses

**Three open houses** included:

- January 12 at the Gleneagles Elementary School
- January 14 at St. David's United Church
- January 18 at the Masonic Lodge.

Display boards provided background on the West Vancouver segment of the project and on the specific consultation topics. Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project staff was available to answer questions.

642 people registered at the Open Houses.

### e. Information on Opportunities to Participate

#### Small Group Meetings

Community and stakeholder organizations were notified of small group meetings through e-mail and phone calls.

#### Open Houses

##### Advertisements

Six advertisements for the open houses were placed in the *Vancouver Sun* and the *North Shore News* on:

December 30, *Vancouver Sun*  
December 28, *North Shore News*  
January 4, *North Shore News*  
January 4, *North Shore News*  
January 6, *Vancouver Sun*  
January 11, *North Shore News*

##### E-mail notice

An e-mail notice was sent to previous consultation participants in the West Vancouver area notifying them of the open houses.

### 3. KEY THEME SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION INPUT

#### 3.1 KEY THEME SUMMARIES OF SMALL GROUP MEETINGS

The following summarizes the key themes that arose out of discussion at each of the 12 small group meetings.

##### **BC Ferry Services Corporation**

**November 22, 2005**

Representatives of the BC Ferries Services Corporation support the highway improvements for the West Vancouver segment. They suggested a separate dedicated lane for Horseshoe Bay-bound drivers. They asked the project to be certain that signage was located well back from the exit to BC Ferries so that drivers had the ability to make lane decisions as early as possible.

##### **BC Trucking Association**

**November 28, 2005**

The preliminary design for the improvements through West Vancouver was supported; however, several participants commented that the proposed 2 lanes through Britannia Beach would create a 'choke point'. Participants requested a separate session on the traffic management regime for the entire Sea-to-Sky corridor.

##### **Tourism Industry**

**January 9, 2006**

Representatives of the tourism industry generally supported the preliminary design for the highway improvements to the West Vancouver segment. The tourism representatives focused their discussion on questions such as speed along the highway, the ability to pick up and drop off bus passengers and phasing of construction throughout the corridor.

##### **First Responders (fire, police, ambulance)**

**January 9, 2006**

Representatives of the fire, police, ambulance, and other emergency services focused their discussion on how to ensure the design of the highway improvements best met their needs. They asked for critical access points across the highway, to allow for a change of direction by emergency vehicles. They want the contractor to focus on safety during the construction period, especially the security of explosive materials and traffic speeds in construction areas. In addition, they want the Ministry of Transportation to assist them with safety and security issues such as vandalism, protesters and graffiti, during the 2010 Olympic Games period.

##### **Horseshoe Bay Merchants**

**January 9, 2006**

Comments from Horseshoe Bay merchants focused on creating awareness about the Village of Horseshoe Bay through signage to let motorists know they have the opportunity to go to the Village of Horseshoe Bay. They said that service and attraction signs would be important to businesses in the Horseshoe Bay community. In addition, they asked the project to work closely with BC Ferries to ensure that the ferry traffic doesn't block traffic access to Horseshoe Bay Village.

### **West Vancouver School Board**

**January 10, 2006**

Comments from participants at the West Vancouver School Board meeting focused on traffic movements and the Eagleridge Interchange, most particularly the number of driver-decisions. As well, they asked questions about traffic movements at the North Junction with Pasco Road, particularly for school buses. They also expressed concern regarding traffic movement out of Horseshoe Bay and the Ferry Terminal.

### **Coalition to Save Eagleridge Bluffs**

**January 11, 2006**

Members of the Coalition to Save Eagleridge Bluffs do not support the selected alignment. They supported the tunnel option or an upgrading of the existing highway. Their specific concerns about the overland route included:

- The impacts of traffic back-ups at the entrance to BC Ferries' terminal and congestion as cars leave the ferries.
- Overall safety of the project resulting from, for example, the highway being in the mountains, congestion from ferries and tight turns on the highway.
- General concern about potential light and noise pollution especially from Nelson Creek Bridge to Eagleridge interchange.

This group asked to see the technical analysis<sup>1</sup> that led to the decisions on the highway improvements; for example, the preference of the overland route over upgrading the existing route, grade analysis, etc.

### **Recreation Groups**

**January 16, 2006**

Representatives of recreation groups focused their input on three main areas:

- Cycling lanes: Concern about width of the cycling lane, when you consider that the Rainline and rumble strips seem to be included in the allocation for cycling lanes. They noted that rumble strips could cause problems for cyclists. They asked that the rumble strips be kept on the roadway side of the fog line.
- Parking: They suggested that the parking lot at Sunset Beach needed to be completed. They expressed concern about BC Ferries allowing cars to park on the shoulder as this might block the cycling lane.
- Baden-Powell Trail: They asked that the project show Baden-Powell Trail where it currently exists and where it might go. They also requested a graphic be added to the web site showing the boundaries of Cypress Park.

### **Westport Residents**

**January 17, 2006**

Participants said that the highway improvements would work quite well. Representatives of Westport residents identified noise as a key issue and were particularly interested in measurements and mitigation. Participants asked questions about staging and whether cars would divert onto Westport Road. *The participants agreed to nominate a representative and alternate from the Westport Road area to sit on the Community Liaison Committee which was formed by the MoT to keep residents involved in construction notification and related matters.*

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<sup>1</sup> To access this information please go to [www.seatoskyimprovements.ca](http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca)

## Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project

### **Pasco Road Residents**

**January 24, 2006**

Representatives of Pasco Road residents said they support the proposed highway improvements. Participants asked questions about the movements and operation of the Eagleridge interchange, particularly with respect to BC Ferries and Horseshoe Bay traffic. A variety of questions were asked regarding how the new and old Pasco Road would interact with the highway, including left turn lane access from the new Pasco Road.

### **Environmental Groups**

**January 25, 2006**

Representatives of environmental groups asked for environmental management plans including storm water management, fire and egress management, habitat protection and wildlife management plans, particularly for the red-legged frog. This group questioned habitat loss and habitat protection and requested compensation. Species identification and the processes around the environmental assessment were questioned. In addition, compensation for hiking trail loss was requested.

### **Western Residents Association**

**January 26, 2006**

Although this phase of consultation did not ask for feedback on the overland route versus a tunnel route, representatives of the Western Residents Association said that they do not support the selected alignment. They supported the tunnel option or an upgrading of the existing highway. Participants said they would have liked the opportunity to discuss the need for the project and options to the selected alignment. This group requested a chance to review the environmental mitigation plans. Participants expressed concern about the complexity of the Eagleridge Interchange, particularly the number of decisions to be made by motorists. Signage and speed were also noted as concerns.

### 3.2 KEY THEME SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FORM QUESTIONS

The following provides a summary of input provided through the consultation feedback form. The **quantitative results** are presented and these are followed by a key theme summary of **qualitative results** provided at the end of each question.

#### 1. EAGLERIDGE INTERCHANGE

The Eagleridge Interchange will be upgraded to include a new southbound on-ramp to Highway 1 for Marine Drive and Eagleridge residents, as well as a new traffic circle to allow the smooth flow of traffic from the area.

*There was no quantitative question.*

##### **Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Many participants indicated a preference for the tunnel option or an upgrade of the existing highway.
- Some participants noted that the overland route might impact on the local environment including increased noise levels, the dry arbutus trees, the Larsen Creek wetlands and the experience of wilderness currently enjoyed by local residents.
- Some participants indicated that they thought the overland route was a good idea.
- Some participants indicated that they had concerns about the design of the highway improvements from a safety perspective.
- A few participants noted that they would have preferred the consultation to have discussed the selection of the overland route, rather than landscaping options and other consultation topics.

#### 2. LANDSCAPE OPTIONS FOR EAGLERIDGE PARKING

A new parking lot will be constructed to accommodate up to 20 cars at the east end of Eagleridge Drive. Which of the two landscape options for the Eagleridge parking area do you prefer? Please choose only one.

##### **Quantitative Summary**

15% Option 1 – Hedge       85% Option 2 – Clusters of trees and shrubs

##### **Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

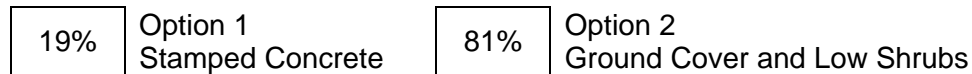
Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for the use of native trees and other plants.
- Participants indicated that they did not want the local landscape changed and would prefer an alternative to the overland route.

**3. LANDSCAPE OPTIONS FOR EAGLERIDGE TRAFFIC CIRCLE**

To facilitate traffic flow, a new traffic circle will be built at the end of Eagleridge Drive. Which of the two landscape options for the Eagleridge Traffic Circle do you prefer? Please choose only one.

**Quantitative Summary**



**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for the use of ground cover and low shrubs for the landscape treatment for the Eagleridge traffic circle.
- Participants noted that the landscaping should be kept simple, easily maintained and should use native or natural plants.
- Participants indicated that they would prefer to discuss a tunnel or upgraded existing highway rather than discuss the landscape options for the traffic circle.

**4. NORTH JUNCTION**

The North Junction refers to the junction of the old highway and Highway 99 (the new highway) near Pasco Road. It is at this junction that local traffic accesses the northbound overpass to Highway 99 from the old highway, and southbound traffic accesses the off-ramp from (the new) Highway 99 toward Horseshoe Bay and Eagleridge.

***There was no quantitative question.***

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for the preliminary design concept for the North Junction as described in the Discussion Guide.
- Participants indicated that they would like the North Junction landscaped with natural vegetation.
- Participants noted that signage would be important in this area so that people would be aware of cyclists and pedestrians using the road.
- Participants indicated that they would like to have discussed the government's decision on the overland route rather than discuss the details presented in the Discussion Guide.

**5. BUS STOPS**

The southbound bus stop will be relocated to connect with the new Pasco Road access. A new northbound bus stop will be built across from the southbound bus stop. Do you agree that these are the suitable locations for the bus stops?

**Quantitative Summary**

Yes  No

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for the bus stops as described in the Discussion Guide, with some suggesting some modification to the location such as closer to the highway.
- Participants noted that consideration must be given to how people will safely cross the highway to access the bus stops.
- Participants suggested that the bus companies should be consulted on how buses will access this area.
- Participants indicated that they would have preferred a discussion of the selection of the overland route.

**6. LANDSCAPE OPTIONS – NEW PULLOUT**

A new pullout will be built on the east side of the old highway, south of the new North Junction. Which of the two landscape options for the new pullout do you prefer? Please choose only one.

**Quantitative Summary**

Option 1 - Grass  Option 2 - Trees and Shrubs

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants noted that low-growing native species would be better in this area, suggesting that low-growing species would enhance safety and security in the area.
- Participants suggested that the project should ensure users had a view of the water, if possible.
- Participants suggested that the ability to maintain the landscaping was an important consideration.

**7. GATEWAY FEATURES – WEST VANCOUVER (SOUTHBOUND)**

Four options are proposed. 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 identifies those that chose each option as their “very appealing” choice. Please note that some individuals chose more than one “very appealing” choice so that the numbers do not total 100%)

**Quantitative Summary**

55%	Community Rocks
48%	Community Links
34%	Community Rings
23%	Community Blades

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated they would like to have Horseshoe Bay added to the gateway sign.
- Participants suggested that the Ministry should take into account the ease with which drivers can read the signs when making the final choice.

**8. NORTHBOUND SEA-TO-SKY HIGHWAY GATEWAY FEATURE**

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project plans to implement a gateway strategy that includes indicating to travelers when they have entered the Sea-to-Sky Highway. Four options have been proposed. 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 identifies those that chose each option as their “very appealing” choice. Please note that some individuals chose more than one as “very appealing” so that the numbers do not total 100%)

**Quantitative Summary**

52%	Community Rocks
45%	Community Links
32%	Community Rings
23%	Community Blades

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants recognized the necessity of continuity in gateway signage along the corridor.

**9. ROCK FILL SLOPE LANDSCAPE TREATMENT**

Viewscapes of key rock fill slopes are shown in the Discussion Guide. Trees and shrubs will be planted, concentrated in the most visible areas. Where topsoil is added, it is intended to fill most of the spaces in the rock. Over time, native trees and shrubs will become established in these soil pockets.

**Viewscape from Gleneagles**

Which of the two landscape options for the Gleneagles viewscape do you prefer? Please select only one.

**Quantitative Summary**

14% Option 1 - Hedge       86% Option 2 - Clusters of trees and shrubs

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for trees, saying they would grow faster and higher to cover the rock-fill slopes.
- Participants indicated a preference for natural (native) vegetation.

**Viewscape from Bay Street in Horseshoe Bay Village**

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated a preference for native trees in this area.

**Viewscape from BC Ferry**

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

Do you have any comments or suggestions?

- Participants indicated support for using native coastal vegetation, such as local tree species, to address the rock-fill slopes in this area.

**Other comments?**

**Qualitative – Key Theme Summary**

The following summarizes the key themes from the last question on the feedback form asking participants for any other comments.

- a. Participants identified the following topics for further consideration by the Ministry during detailed design:
  - Participants noted that managing traffic would be important during construction to ensure people could get to work and were not redirected to Marine Drive, Caufeild and other local streets.
  - Participants noted that noise during construction needed to be considered.
  - Participants noted the project needed to consider safety during construction blasting.
  - Participants noted that they would like to be advised as soon as possible about the construction schedule.

## Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project

- b.** Participants noted concerns about the overland route including:
  - Climate conditions on the overland route, such as fog and icing conditions
  - Possible increased noise and lighting impacts
- c.** Participants indicated a preference for this consultation to have considered the selected overland route rather than on the pre-design topics presented in the consultation.
- d.** Participants indicated a preference for the tunnel option or an upgraded existing highway.

### 3.3 FORM LETTERS AND PETITIONS<sup>2</sup>

#### a. Letters

The Coalition to Save Eagleridge Bluffs submitted 300 letters as part of the consultation process. Although some of these letters varied in specific content, the main letter, provided below, summarizes the sentiment of each letter.

*Dear Premier Campbell,*

*I am opposed to the British Columbia government's plan for an overland highway for the first section of the Sea-to-Sky highway improvement project. I am writing to request that your government reconsider this decision and instead widen and straighten the existing 2.5 km highway from Horseshoe Bay to Pasco Road. This solution would preserve priceless ecosystems, recreational hiking trails, and community values while saving taxpayer dollars.*

*A 4-lane highway would devastate Eagleridge Bluffs, the Larson Creek Wetlands and portions of the Baden Powell Trail. This is an area that your government has identified as the most sensitive ecosystem in the entire Sea-to-Sky corridor. It is the gateway to Vancouver Island, Howe Sound and the Olympics. The destruction of our environment is not an acceptable way to advertise a "Sustainable Olympic Games".*

*Widening the existing highway bed is a viable alternative to destroying the wetlands and bluffs. Several sections of the existing Sea-to-Sky have already been successfully widened and straightened. The Ministry of Transportation has said construction costs for the 2.5km overland route will be million [sic]. In comparison, the successful widening and straightening of a 1km highway test-section north of Pasco Road cost only million [sic]. The same technology could be used for the stretch of highway above Horseshoe Bay, saving taxpayers millions of dollars and preventing the destruction and permanent loss of a highly valuable ecological and recreational treasure that thousands from the Lower Mainland and beyond come to visit and enjoy every year.*

*Considering the cost savings in construction and land expropriation, combined with the environmental value of the bluffs and wetlands, it is astounding that the government insists on the overland route. If short-term inconvenience during the construction period is valued above long-term loss of wildlife habitat in our society, I have some rethinking to do with regard to my values and how the government I elect reflects them. It is also incredibly frustrating that despite the opposition of the Mayors and Councils of North and West Vancouver, the Greater Vancouver Regional District and thousands of residents, the government continues to stand by this ill-conceived decision.*

*I implore you again to reconsider! Widening and straightening the existing highway is a viable option that is both economically and environmentally sound.*

*Sincerely,*

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project accepted these petitions without verifying names, addresses and phone numbers.

**b. Petition**

The Coalition to Save Eagleridge Bluffs submitted a petition with an estimated 600 signatures. The petition said:

*I do not support the provincial government's plan to build a 4-lane highway through Eagleridge Bluffs and the Larsen Creek Wetlands, the most ecologically sensitive area in the Sea-to-Sky corridor. There are better options. Premier Campbell, keep your promise to deliver a "Sustainable Olympic Games". Eagleridge Bluffs is an ecological and recreational treasure that must be preserved for future generations.*

