

## SEA-TO-SKY HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT 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.

The highway improvements, to be completed before the Olympics, 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:

- **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 two-lane sections and alternating passing opportunities provided by alternating the third lane.

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

## S2S TRANSPORTATION GROUP

The S2S Transportation Group (S2S) was the firm selected in March 2005 to design, build, operate and maintain the Sea-to-Sky

Highway. S2S is accountable for delivering a safe and reliable highway through a 25-year performance-based contract. The Ministry of Transportation will oversee the project, ensuring that all specifications are appropriately met, such as highway width, number of lanes, safety requirements, sightline requirements, signage, traffic management and commitments to communities.

## 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](http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca):

- **Weekly Schedule** Weekly update on confirmed highway closures and delays.
- **Seasonal Travel Planner** A list of the available closure-delay windows to November 30.
- **Closure & Delay Projections to 2009** The maximum closure and 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.

## COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT DESIGN

### CORRIDOR-WIDE 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.

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
- 3. Preliminary Design Consultation (CURRENT STAGE)**
4. Detailed Design Consultation

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.

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. The detailed design stage involves relatively more financial and technical analysis than preliminary consultation to ensure that designs are financially and technically feasible.

### BRANDYWINE TO FUNCTION JUNCTION CONSULTATION ON PRELIMINARY DESIGN

The Brandywine to Function Junction Preliminary Design consultation includes gathering community feedback and input regarding refinements to gateways, landscaping, the northbound viewpoint, and the additional chain-up area.

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.

Consultation on preliminary design will include meetings with residents, businesses and stakeholders in the Whistler community. An open house will be held to provide residents, community organizations and businesses with an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the preliminary design options. Community members can provide feedback by attending the open house listed below, or by accessing consultation materials and an on-line feedback form at [www.seatoskyimprovements.ca](http://www.seatoskyimprovements.ca).

#### WHISTLER OPEN HOUSE

An Open House will be held on:  
**Thursday, Nov. 3, 2005**  
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
The Westin Resort and Spa  
4090 Whistler Way, Whistler

## **RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY INPUT FROM THE PRE-DESIGN CONSULTATION WITH WHISTLER**

A pre-design consultation program was conducted with the community of Whistler in March and April 2005. Community input was provided to the S2S Transportation Group for consideration when developing preliminary designs. The following summarizes the pre-design input received during the consultation:

### **Whistler Gateway**

Pre-Design consultation participants favoured a gateway just south of the Function Junction intersection. In response to this community input, the highway design will include a gateway before the Function Junction intersection. Preliminary design options for the gateway design are being presented to the community for consideration. Please refer to pages 7 and 8 of this discussion guide for preliminary design options.

### **Miller Creek Rail Crossing**

During the pre-design phase, the Ministry looked at the possibility that the Waste Water Treatment Plant may be visible from the improved highway. The review concluded that the treatment plant would not be visible after the highway improvements were completed. The Ministry has agreed that, should there be a visual impact, and in response to community input, a natural treatment such as a landscaped berm and planting of appropriate trees and/or shrubs will be used to shield the sewage treatment facility from view.

### **Brandywine Forest Service Road (FSR)**

During the Pre-Design Consultation, the community was consulted about the proposed relocation of the Brandywine FSR. In response to community input and consultation with VANOC, the Brandywine Forest Service Road will be relocated approximately 500 metres north of the existing location to provide a more efficient connection to the Whistler Nordic Centre and the Callaghan Valley. This will provide safe access for recreational users to hiking trails east of the Callaghan Creek and on the west side of the highway.

### **Northbound Viewpoint**

Community input received during the pre-design consultation supports the addition of a northbound viewpoint just north of Callaghan Creek. In response to this community input, the highway design will include the addition of a northbound viewpoint just south of Powerline Hill. Please refer to page 10 of this discussion guide to see the preliminary design for the northbound viewpoint.

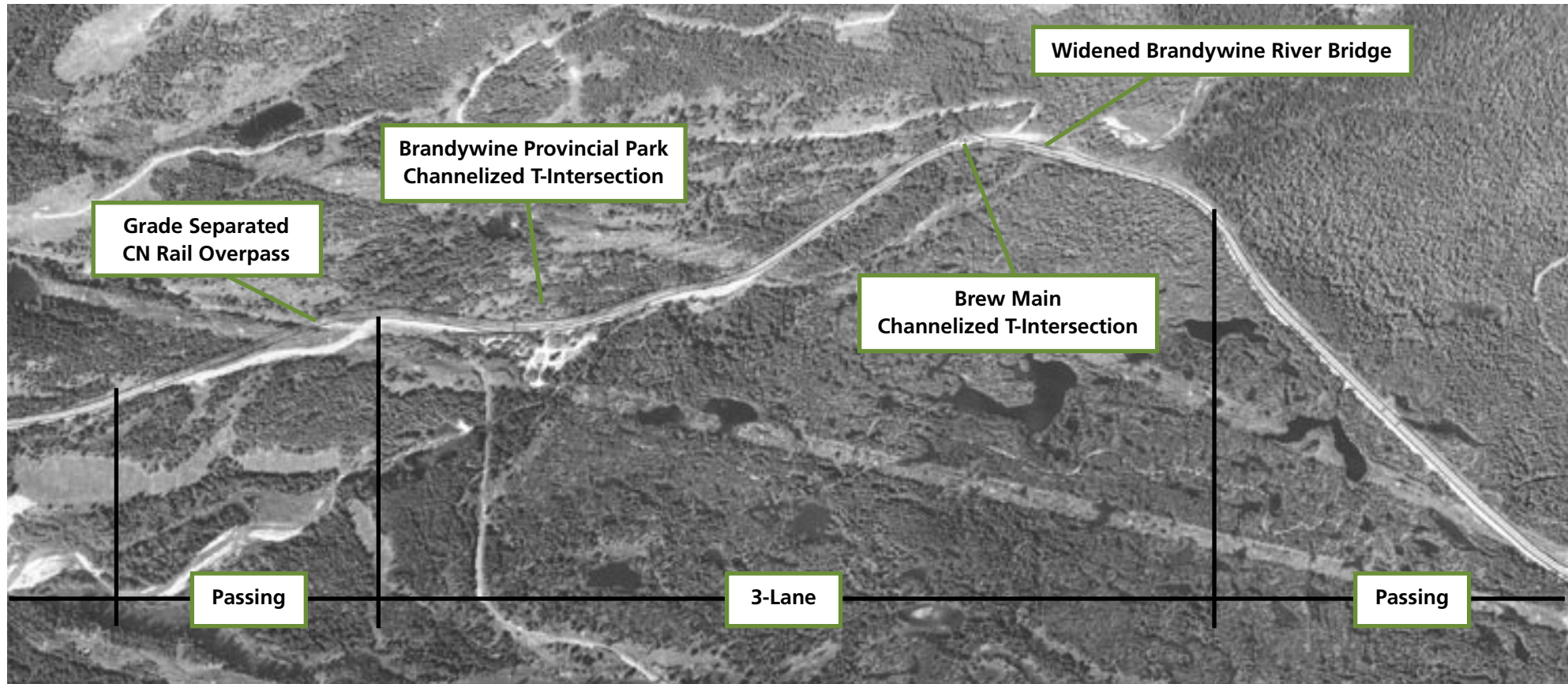
### **Chain-up Area**

The importance of adding a chain-up area in the Whistler section was noted by many participants during the pre-design consultation. In response to this community input, the highway design will include an additional chain-up area located between the Brandywine FSR and the Callaghan Creek Bridge. The exact location of the chain-up area is yet to be determined. Please refer to the map on page 5 of this discussion guide, which shows the proposed area for the additional chain-up area.

### **Rumble Strips**

In response to community input, roadway safety features will include the provision of roadside and centre-line rumble strips. In addition, all pavement markings will be done using a Highly Reflective Pavement Marking (Rainline), which provides improved visibility of the road lines during night time and poor weather conditions. The rumble strip improvements will be completed in 2010.

## BRANDYWINE TO CALLAGHAN SECTION OF THE SEA-TO-SKY HIGHWAY



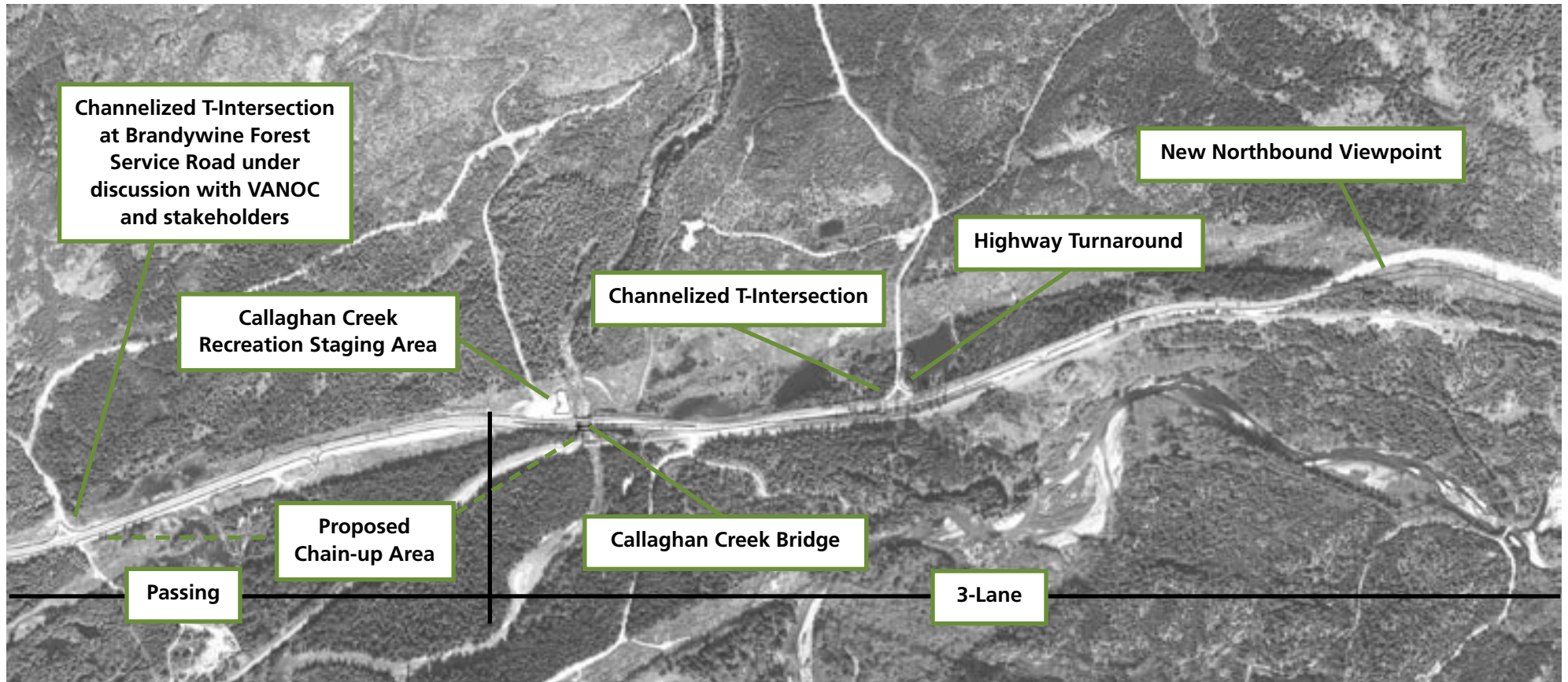
The highway design through Brandywine and Function Junction provides improved safety, reliability and capacity by:

- Providing a 3-lane highway
- Providing new passing lanes at strategic locations
- Providing grade-separated crossings at the Brandywine Park and Millar Creek CN Rail crossings

In addition, highway improvements will:

- Improve sightlines
- Provide smoother transitions into curves
- Generally improve the consistency and standards of driving
- Provide improved acceleration and deceleration lanes for entrance and exits to the highway

## CALLAGHAN TO POWERLINE HILL SECTION OF THE SEA-TO-SKY HIGHWAY



### Additional highway safety features

- Highly Reflective Pavement Marking (Rainline)
- Roadside and centre-line rumble strips
- Roadside delineators to assist in keeping drivers alert and driving safely

### Additional Chain-up area

- Will provide a safe area where drivers can chain-up/inspect vehicles
- Exact location to be determined

### Northbound Viewpoint

- Right-in/Right-out for safe access
- Capacity for 6 vehicles
- Unobstructed views to the north, south and west
- Interpretive signs to orient visitors to surrounding views

## POWERLINE HILL TO FUNCTION JUNCTION SECTION OF THE SEA-TO-SKY HIGHWAY



### Gateway

Gateways support traffic calming objectives and create a sense of arrival. The Whistler Gateway is located just south of Function Junction.

## BRANDYWINE TO FUCTION JUNCTION PRELIMINARY DESIGN CONSULTATION TOPICS

The following preliminary design features are the focus of this consultation:

### 1. COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project is developing a community gateway concept for the Sea-to-Sky corridor.

Consistent with community input, a new gateway is proposed to be located just south of the Function Junction intersection. This location would define the entry into the Resort Municipality of Whistler in a manner similar to other communities on the corridor, but with distinctive elements unique to Whistler.

#### GATEWAY FEATURE OPTIONS FOR WHISTLER

The goal of each of the following options is to acknowledge the Sea-to-Sky highway as a whole with *Elements of Continuity*, while also recognizing individual communities through *Elements of Distinction*.

*Elements of Continuity* are consistent aspects that recognize the Sea-to-Sky highway corridor as a system from West Vancouver to Whistler.

*Elements of Distinction* will be developed in consultation with each community at the detailed design phase. These components will represent each community as a unique place and destination.

#### Community Rocks Option

A boulder or rock (real or 'faux') would be located at each community gateway, with the opportunity to carve both the community name and a selected image for local identity. The use of rock as a theme is naturally tied to the surrounding natural landscape.

Alternately, this rock feature could be used as a consistent base that is adorned with the community name and a symbol or sculpture chosen after considering input from the community during the detailed design stage. In each case the boulder would be approximately eight feet high, and could be illuminated.



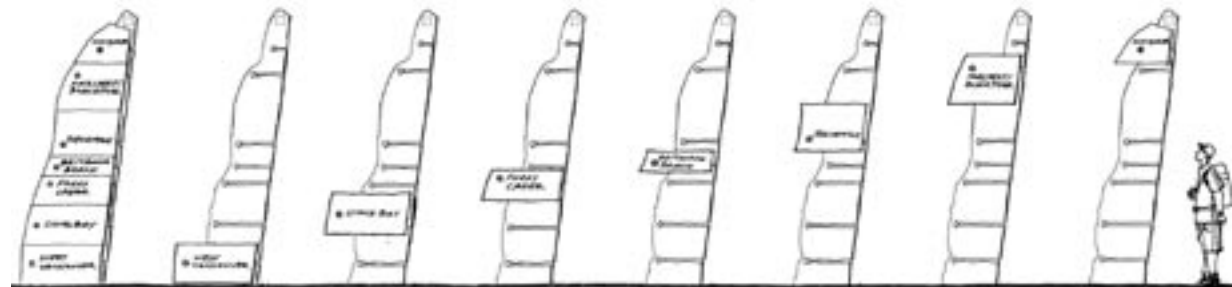
#### Community Links Option

The Community Links option would provide both elements of continuity – a vertical face (wood or metal) – and elements of distinction – in this case, a unique glass-like, metal or wooden band designed after considering input from the community during the detailed design stage.

The vertical face would have one edge carved to represent the curve of the Sea-to-Sky highway. The locations of other corridor communities would be indicated by a line;

as one progresses along the corridor the appropriate community name would be highlighted and written on a coloured sleeve or band that is attached to the slab.

The Community Links option emphasizes the linking of communities from West Vancouver to Whistler along the Sea-to-Sky highway corridor. The slab would be approximately 14 feet high in order to be adequately visible to passing motorists and could be illuminated.

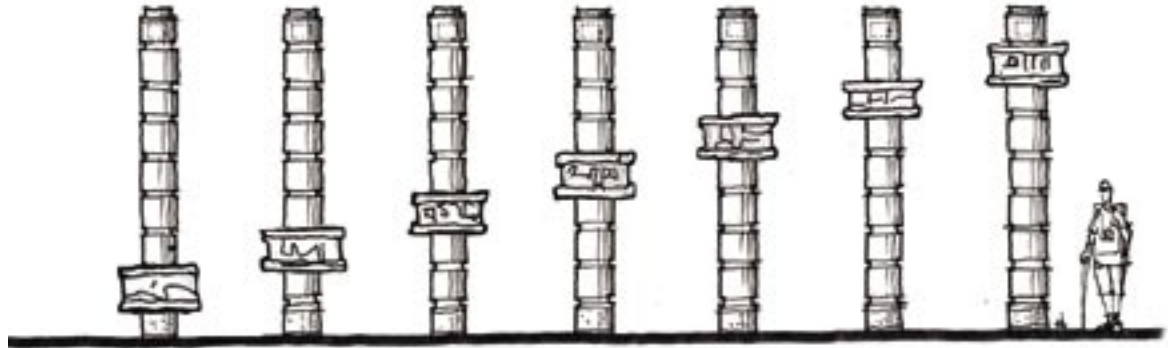


### Community Rings Option

The Community Rings option would provide vertical poles of wood or metal as an element of continuity, with a unique wood, metal or glass-like ring as its element of distinction, designed after considering input from the community during the detailed design stage.

Throughout the corridor, the appropriate community name would be highlighted and written on a coloured 'ring' that wraps around the pole. This solution emphasizes the location of each community along the corridor while highlighting the idea of belonging to a network of corridor communities.

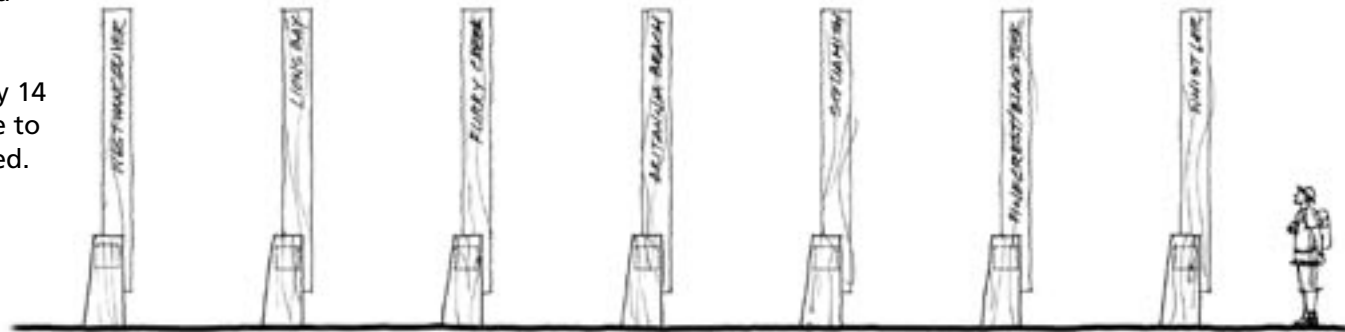
The pole would be approximately 14 feet high in order to be adequately visible to passing motorists, and could be illuminated.



### Community Blades Option

In the Community Blades option, each corridor community would be recognized with equal prominence by the use of sign poles. The element of continuity is a base fabricated from a solid wood beam. This theme integrates with the surrounding environment and history of the area, while its simple geometric form is contemporary and highly adaptable to other signage uses of different scales.

The element of distinction would be the metal or wooden blade with the community name that fits into the base, with the colour and imagery designed after considering input from the community during the detailed design stage. The feature is approximately 14 feet high in order to be adequately visible to passing motorists, and could be illuminated.



## 2. LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The Brandywine to Function Junction (Whistler) portion of the Sea-to-Sky corridor is defined as a 'rural' section of the highway, with the exception of the section immediately south of Function Junction, which is designated as a 'community' section. The intent is to highlight communities along the Sea-to-Sky Highway through some tree or shrub plantings, banners, or other landscape features.

With respect to landscape opportunities for the 'community' section of the Brandywine to Function Junction (Whistler) portion of the Sea-to-Sky corridor consideration was given to safety on the highway. This limits where trees can be planted, since safety considerations require significant setbacks from the edge of the road to trees and no trees where sightlines are needed, (e.g., at exits, along the inside of curves). Other conditions that limit tree planting opportunities include: steep rock slopes or rock cuts adjacent to the highway, overhead power lines, and existing forest in the area where trees might otherwise be planted.

In developing landscape options for the Whistler area, one of the main design considerations was the existing character of the area. The Sea-to-Sky Highway landscape is typically confined, with steep slopes and forest, especially on the east side of the highway. Plantings and other landscape features can be used to reinforce landscape character and to enhance gateways, contributing to the identification of communities. The landscape options explore some alternative methods for landscape treatment of community gateways and the roadside. During the detailed design phase

of community consultation, input from the community will be considered in the selection of specific plants and shrubs. The detailed design phase will be held prior to completion of the highway improvements.

*The landscape options that follow refer to the 'community' section of the highway just south of Function Junction.*

### Landscape Option A

*Refer to Landscape Display Board*

The approach to the gateway in Option A is to use banner poles to provide special identity to the Whistler area. The gateway would include closely-spaced banner poles beyond the gateway sign. One advantage to this approach would be that the banners would remain highly visible even with the growth of the adjacent forest.

The roadside and slope landscape treatment in Option A restores the native vegetation of the surrounding forest. Native trees and shrubs would be planted in clusters to encourage natural succession. Care would be taken in the selection of plants to **avoid** species that are attractive to bears.

### Landscape Option B

*Refer to Landscape Display Board*

The approach to the gateway in Option B is to plant 5 to 6 trees close together in rows along each side of the road just beyond the gateway sign. The trees would be at or near the top of steep slopes.

Option B would involve the planting of deciduous trees in lines along the roadside.

Other roadside and sloped areas would be hydroseeded.

### Landscape Option C

*Refer to Landscape Display Board*

The approach to the gateway in Option C is similar to Option B.

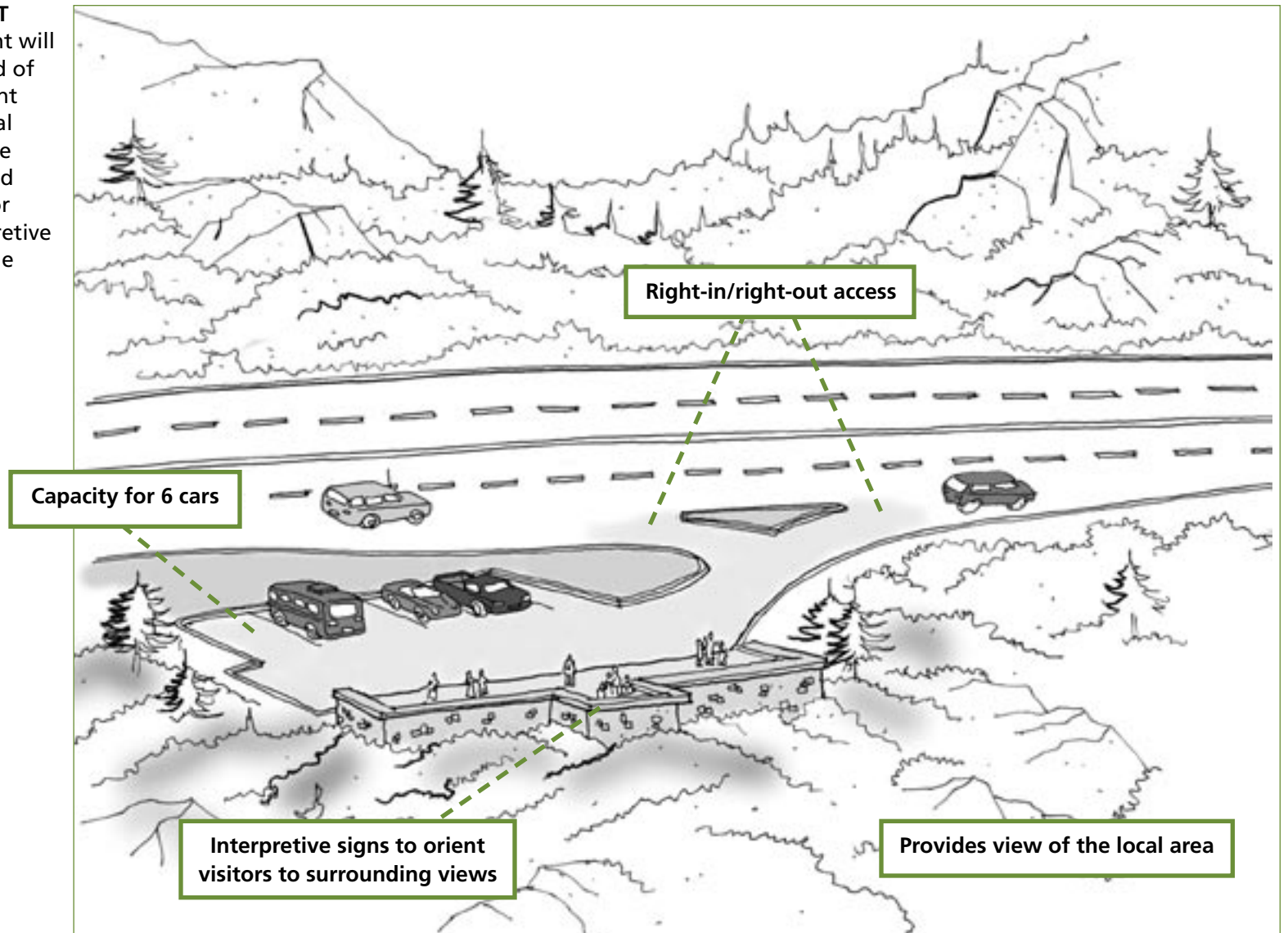
Option C would involve the planting of clusters of ornamental flowering trees along the roadside. Other roadside and sloped areas would be hydroseeded.

## 3. CHAIN-UP AREA

A chain-up area will be constructed between the Brandywine Forest Service Road and the Callaghan Creek Bridge for northbound traffic. This will provide a safe area where drivers can chain up for snow conditions or inspect their vehicles before proceeding further north. The exact location of the chain-up area is yet to be determined.

#### 4. NORTHBOUND VIEWPOINT

A new northbound viewpoint will be provided at the south end of Powerline Hill. This viewpoint will provide views of the local area. This viewpoint will have a right-in/right-out access and will have parking capacity for approximately 6 cars. Interpretive signs will orient visitors to the surrounding sights.



*This feedback form gives you an opportunity to provide your comments on the Brandywine to Function Junction portion of the Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project. Please complete the feedback form by indicating your choice in the box for each question and also provide your comments.*

**1. COMMUNITY GATEWAY FEATURE OPTIONS**

The Sea-to-Sky Highway Improvement Project plans to implement a gateway strategy throughout the highway corridor. Four options have been proposed. Please indicate your preference: **1** (your most favorite); **2** (your second favorite); **3** (your third favorite); and **4** (your least favorite).

Which of the proposed Gateway Feature Options do you prefer?

- Community Rocks Option
- Community Links Option
- Community Rings Option
- Community Blades Option

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**2. LANDSCAPE**

The Sea-to Sky-Highway Improvement Project has developed landscape options for the Whistler area. Landscape options are being proposed for the area just south of Function Junction. Please indicate your preference: **1** (your most favorite); **2** (your second favorite); **3** (your least favorite).

Which of the proposed landscape options do you prefer?

- Landscape Option A
- Landscape Option B
- Landscape Option C

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**3. CHAIN-UP AREA**

A chain-up area for northbound traffic is proposed to be constructed between the Brandywine Forest Service Road and the Callaghan Creek Bridge. This area will provide a safe area where drivers can chain up for snow conditions or inspect their vehicles before proceeding further north.

Please provide comments regarding the additional chain-up area:

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please provide your contact information (optional)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. NORTHBOUND VIEWPOINT**

A new northbound viewpoint will be provided at the south end of Powerline Hill. This viewpoint will provide views of the local area. The viewpoint will have capacity for approximately 6 cars and will have interpretive signs to orient visitors to the sights.

Please provide comments regarding the northbound viewpoint:

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**sea-TO-SKY**  
HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

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