
BACKGROUND

2006TRAN0001-000051
Jan. 31, 2006

Ministry of Transportation
Office of the Premier

GATEWAY PROGRAM KEY PROJECTS

Significant economic and population growth and changing regional travel patterns have placed considerable strain on the reliability and safety of British Columbia's biggest trade routes. The Gateway Program aims to improve the movement of people, goods and transit across the Lower Mainland. The Gateway Program definition report provides a thorough investigation of current transportation conditions in Greater Vancouver, clearly defining the challenges and proposing needed solutions.

There are three Gateway Program projects:

North Fraser Perimeter Road (NFPR):

A series of upgraded roads and bridges forming a continuous route across the Pitt River and along the north side of the Fraser River from Maple Ridge to New Westminster. The provincial component of the NFPR includes a new seven-lane high level bridge across the Pitt River, replacing the two existing swing bridges and a new interchange at the Lougheed Highway and the Mary Hill Bypass. The design includes bike lanes across the bridge, and the bridge will be engineered to accept mass transit at a later date.

- The project began its environmental assessment in August 2005 and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency will issue a project screening report this year.
- The federal Pacific Gateway Strategy has committed up to \$90 million for the construction of the Pitt River Bridge/Mary Hill Interchange.

South Fraser Perimeter Road (SFPR):

The SFPR is a new four-lane, 80 km/h route along the south side of the Fraser River extending from Deltaport Way in southwest Delta to the Golden Ears Bridge and Highway 1 on the Surrey/Langley border. The SFPR will provide a needed, continuous and efficient route to serve the important freight and service industry along this key economic corridor.

- The project is currently in the pre-application phase of its environmental assessment.
- The federal Pacific Gateway Strategy has committed up to \$2 million for the environmental assessment of the SFPR.

Port Mann/Highway 1 (PMH1):

The project includes widening Highway 1 to four lanes in either direction from Vancouver to Langley, upgrading interchanges, improving access and safety, twinning the Port Mann Bridge and extending HOV lanes to Langley. The pre-design concept proposes bike lanes on all new bridges; congestion reductions allowing TransLink to re-introduce transit over the Port Mann Bridge and engineering the new bridge to accommodate future mass transit. Additional congestion-reduction measures include HOV lanes and commercial vehicle priority access to Highway 1. Bridge tolling is considered an option to reduce congestion, limit growth in traffic demand and generate revenue to fund the improvements.

- Pre-design consultations on the project will commence in February and the project will enter the pre-application of its environmental assessment later this year.
- The PMH1 project is eligible for federal Pacific Gateway Strategy funding; however, no funding commitment to project has yet been announced.

More information on the Gateway Program, downloadable copies of the program definition report, a schedule of public consultations, artist renderings, graphics and maps are available online at www.gatewayprogram.bc.ca.

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GATEWAY PROGRAM TIMELINES

Consultation

The Gateway Program is committed to comprehensive community and public consultation, ensuring that the project designs consider community objectives as well as the primary project goals of addressing congestion, movement and access needs.

Public consultation, including community meetings, open houses and web-based consultation will take place at each of the three key design stages:

2006: Pre-design Consultation

Pre-design consultation gathers community feedback on conceptual proposals for new or improved roads and bridges designed to reduce congestion, improve goods movement and improve safety and reliability. Consultation topics may include lane use, HOV priority, commercial lanes, commercial priority access to highway on-ramps, and the cycling network.

2007: Preliminary Design Consultation

With basic pre-design components determined, consultation on preliminary design discusses refinements to interchange and access improvements as well as cycling features. A key outcome is community feedback on preliminary designs for consideration by the project team in developing detailed designs.

2008: Detailed Design Consultation

Detailed design consultation generally focuses on fewer but more detailed treatments, such as specific interchange and access features, lighting and landscaping. This stage also involves more financial and technical analysis to ensure designs are financially and technically feasible.

Public input from consultations will be considered along with technical and financial inputs as the Gateway Program refines each component and moves into the next design stage. As part of the environmental assessment process, there will be further opportunity for public input.

Schedule of Open Houses:

CITY	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Langley	Saturday, Feb. 18 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Walnut Grove Community Centre 8889 Walnut Grove Drive Langley
New Westminster	Saturday, Feb. 25 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Centennial Community Centre 65 East 6 th Avenue New Westminster
Burnaby	Saturday, March 4 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Eight Rinks 6501 Sprott Street Burnaby

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CITY	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Burnaby	Wednesday, March 8 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Bonsor Recreation Centre 6550 Bonsor Avenue Burnaby
Vancouver	Saturday, March 25 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Hastings Community Centre, Auditorium 3096 East Hastings Street Vancouver
Vancouver	Wednesday, March 29 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Roundhouse Community Centre, Great Hall 181 Roundhouse Mews Vancouver
Surrey	Saturday, April 8 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Guildford Recreation Centre 15105 – 105 th Avenue Surrey
Surrey	Tuesday, April 11 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	North Surrey Arena 10275 – 135 th Street Surrey
Coquitlam	Saturday, April 22 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Coquitlam Library, Poirier Branch 575 Poirier Street Coquitlam
Coquitlam	Tuesday, April 25 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Planet Ice 2300 Rocket Way Coquitlam
Abbotsford	Saturday, April 29 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Abbotsford Recreation Centre 34690 Old Yale Road Abbotsford

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FACTSHEET

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GATEWAY PROGRAM: FAST FACTS

Congestion:

- Transport Canada estimates the economic impact of congestion on all traffic in the region is up to \$1.5 billion per year, with the rising costs of delivering goods and services eventually passed on to consumers.
- Commuting times have increased by 30 per cent in the past 10 years.
- The BC Trucking Association estimates that goods movers are stopped or slowed in Lower Mainland traffic 75 per cent of the time, and approximates the current cost of congestion to goods movers at \$500 million per year.
- TransLink studies indicate that transportation is the top concern for Lower Mainland residents.
- The Port Mann Bridge is now congested for 13 hours a day. During extremely congested driving conditions, when there are vehicle stalls or crashes, it can take over two hours to travel the 29-km stretch between 200th Street in Langley and Willingdon Avenue in Burnaby.
- The combination of increased population and employment, with more dispersed commuting patterns, has contributed to an increase in road congestion.
- There has been no significant increase in major road capacity in the region since the completion of the Alex Fraser Bridge in 1986.

Growth:

- Population has grown by 750,000 people in the Lower Mainland over the past 20 years, greater than the population of New Brunswick. The current population of 2.1 million is anticipated to grow to 3 million by 2031.
- The Port Mann Bridge has the highest daily traffic volumes per lane among all the major water crossings in the Lower Mainland, carrying more than 120,000 vehicles a day, including 10,000 transport trucks.
- The Port Mann Bridge's daily traffic volume is higher than that of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge.
- Traffic volume on the Pitt River Bridge has nearly tripled since 1985, and this bridge is congested for most of the day.
- In the past five years, the number of registered vehicles in the GVRD grew by 12.5 per cent. This growth is greater than population growth during the same time period, and represents an increase of approximately 3.25 vehicles every hour.

Changing Travel Patterns:

- The growth in Vancouver residents working in other Greater Vancouver municipalities exceeded the growth in other GVRD residents working in Vancouver by a factor of nine to one.
- Job creation has become more dispersed than anticipated. In the last 10 years, only seven per cent of new office jobs have been based in regional town centers efficiently served by transit, while almost 50 per cent have gone into suburban office parks, located primarily in Burnaby, New Westminster and Richmond.
- 82,000 to 115,000 additional vehicle trips will have to be accommodated in the morning peak hour by 2031. By comparison, the Port Mann Bridge currently carries approximately 127,000 vehicles in an entire 24-hour day.
- By 2011, the average morning peak period queue to access the Port Mann Bridge westbound could extend 12 km to 200th Street, and by 2021, it could extend 17 km to 216th Street.
- Over the long term, the greatest projected population growth is expected in Richmond, the Northeast Sector, Surrey, Northwest Langley and Abbotsford.

Economy:

- Gateway facilities now account for 75,000 jobs and \$10 billion in business output annually in Greater Vancouver alone.
- Approximately 50 per cent of containerized goods are currently transported to and from Greater Vancouver's terminals by truck; the other 50 per cent move by rail.
- Greater Vancouver has become Canada's highest volume container shipping location, with over 1.6 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) handled in 2004, transporting goods from all over the world.
- Employment in Greater Vancouver is expected to increase by about 500,000 jobs by 2031.

Benefits of the Gateway Program:

- The Gateway Program will result in travel time (and operating cost) savings at a present value of \$8 billion (based on a real discount rate of 4.5 per cent).
- The Gateway Program has a benefit cost ratio of 3 to 1.
- Proposed cycling investment represents the largest single investment in cycling infrastructure in the region.
- Depending on their origin and destination, travellers could see time saving of between five and 30 per cent over 2003 travel times, significantly more over projected 2031 travel times.
- Construction of Gateway Program facilities will generate approximately 17,000 person-years of direct employment and will contribute \$1.7 billion to British Columbia's gross domestic product.
- Combined with other transit and transportation projects planned or underway, the Gateway Program will create a comprehensive, effective, safe and reliable transportation system that addresses congestion, supports economic activity, increases transportation choice and provides better municipal connections.
- Preliminary analysis suggests that implementation of the Gateway Program would result in 0.1 per cent more vehicle emissions in 2021 than if the program did not proceed.

Consultation:

- The Gateway Program recognizes the importance of consultation and ongoing communication with interested parties and is committed to a comprehensive consultation program as well as an ongoing community relations program to ensure that community and public input is considered in the development of the Program.
- Consultation with municipalities, TransLink and the public is ongoing and has been underway for more than two years.
- Public consultation takes place at three key design stages: pre-design, preliminary design and detailed design.
- Input will be considered with financial and technical information as projects proceed.
- Key elements of the consultation program include small group meetings, open houses and web-based consultation.
- Aspects of the project being discussed will be presented through discussion guides, display boards and staff presentations, with community and stakeholder input
- Input will be gathered through meeting notes, feedback forms, fax, e-mail, phone and correspondence.
- Input received during each phase of consultation will be summarized in a Consultation Summary Report. These reports will be available for public review on www.gatewayprogram.bc.ca.
- Pre-design consultations on the Pitt River Bridge and Mary Hill Interchange Project, as well as the SFPR Project from Deltaport Way to Nordel, are complete.
- Port Mann Highway 1 pre-design consultation will begin soon and will be the largest consultation program in the history of the region.
- The preliminary schedule for the Gateway Program calls for pre-design consultation to be complete in 2006, followed by environmental assessment reviews and the procurement and construction phases.

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