
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

New Port Mann Bridge opens to eight lanes of traffic

COQUITLAM - Premier Christy Clark today officially opened the new Port Mann Bridge to eight lanes of traffic, which cuts commute times and allows for the first regular transit service across the bridge in 25 years.

“As we officially open the Port Mann Bridge we are eliminating one of the worst traffic bottlenecks in British Columbia,” said Premier Clark. “After years of waiting, drivers get to enjoy a faster, more efficient commute and will have more time to spend with their family instead of sitting in an idling car.”

Three years ago, the government of B.C. set a target of opening the Port Mann Bridge in December 2012, and today, on December 1, 2012, the bridge was opened and drivers started enjoying the benefits of nearly four years of bridge and Highway 1 construction.

“This is the day we’ve been waiting for, as the new Port Mann Bridge officially opens to eight lanes of traffic and motorists can start to save some valuable time on their commutes,” said Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Mary Polak. “It’s a day almost a decade in the making, from the first consultation to the final line painting, and I want to thank everyone who has laboured on this project.”

Some drivers can expect to cut their commutes in half, and save as much as an hour per day. Car-poolers and HOV users will enjoy the benefits of new on and off ramps and dedicated HOV lanes from Langley to Vancouver. For the first time in 25 years, reliable bus service will be able to cross the Port Mann Bridge, with ExpressBus connecting the new Carvolth Exchange in Langley to Braid Station in New Westminster in about 20 minutes.

The on-time and on-budget opening of the new Port Mann Bridge is a major milestone for the Port Mann / Highway 1 Improvement Project, and the centrepiece of 37 kilometres of upgrades to one of British Columbia’s most important economic corridors.

Construction will continue on the Port Mann Bridge and along the Highway 1 corridor through 2013. Crews will keep working to complete the bridge to its full 10-lane capacity and continue highway widening and interchange improvements through Coquitlam, Burnaby and Vancouver.

A backgrounder follows.

Media Contact:

Mike Morton
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier
250 661-1015

Kate Trotter
Government Communications and Public Engagement
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
250 356-8241

Greg Johnson
Manager, Communications
Transportation Investment Corporation
778-783-1220

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BACKGROUND

The New Port Mann Bridge: By the Numbers

Port Mann / Highway 1 Improvement Project:

Opening the new bridge to eight lanes of traffic completes the first and largest phase of the Port Mann / Highway 1 Improvement Project, which includes highway widening from 202 Street in Langley to Brunette Avenue in Coquitlam, opening eight lanes on the new bridge, and rebuilding interchanges from 176 Street in Surrey to Cape Horn in Coquitlam.

This is the largest transportation project in B.C. history and government is delivering on its commitment to reduce congestion along the province's busiest transportation corridor. These improvements will remove the traffic bottleneck and eliminate the 14 hours a day of congestion currently plaguing bridge users.

Key Facts:

- The new bridge is an iconic structure – the widest bridge in the world; the largest and longest main span river crossing in Western Canada; the second longest (by mere metres) in North America and the 29th longest in the world.
- The new bridge has three main components:
 - the cable-stayed main bridge (between the end of the cables) across the Fraser river is 850 metres long (470 metres long between the two towers), and has 288 cables
 - the south approach (Surrey side), is 360 metres long
 - the north approach (Coquitlam side), is 820 metres long
- The towers stand approximately 75 metres above deck level, with a total height of about 163 metres from the top of their footing - that's taller than the Sheraton Wall Centre Hotel.
- The bridge has 42 metres of navigational clearance above high water level (the same length and clearance as the old bridge).
- The bridge will have 10 lanes (five in each direction). Initially opening with eight lanes (four in each direction), the additional two lanes will be completed once portions of the old bridge have been removed.
- The main span is supported by 288 cables, which if stretched end to end, would cover about 45 kilometres.
- Foundations for the new bridge required use of the largest capacity piles (up to 5000 tonnes capacity) in Canada.

- The new Port Mann Bridge is five metres longer than the Alex Fraser Bridge and 25 feet taller.

Resources Needed to Complete the New Port Mann Bridge

- 1,158 pre-cast segments in the approach spans
- 25,000 tonnes of asphalt used for new bridge deck
- 116 steel composite segments in the cable-stay span
- 45 kilometres of cable
- 157,000 m3 of concrete
- 16 kilometres of pile and 5 kilometres of drilled shafts.
- 28,000 tonnes of rebar and 13,000 tonnes of structural steel
- 288 cables, 251 piles, 108 caissons
- 2 pylon towers, each 158 metres high

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