
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

WILLIAM R. BENNETT BRIDGE WORKERS HONOURED

KELOWNA – Premier Gordon Campbell and Transportation and Infrastructure Minister Shirley Bond today joined workers to recognize their contributions to the William R. Bennett Bridge project.

“Earlier this year we committed to recognize all workers who contributed to building major public infrastructure projects in British Columbia,” said Premier Campbell. “Today we’re following through on that commitment by honouring the dedicated people who helped make the William R. Bennett Bridge a reality. The people who worked on this project didn’t just build a bridge, they built a lasting legacy that will be enjoyed by British Columbians and help our economy grow for years to come.”

The commemorative plaque includes the names of 1,484 people who were involved in the planning, engineering, design and construction of the William R. Bennett Bridge.

“The workers on the Bennett Bridge can be exceedingly proud of what they have accomplished here,” said Bond. “This five-lane bridge is one of only 9 major floating bridges in the world and is an innovative public-private partnership. The bridge will improve safety, stimulate economic growth and reduce congestion in this busy corridor.”

“The Bennett Bridge is a testament to one of the great builders of our community and our province,” said Westside-Kelowna MLA Ben Stewart. “It must be a wonderful feeling to look at this incredible structure and say, ‘I helped to build that.’”

The \$144.5-million bridge opened to westbound traffic at midnight on May 25, 2008, 108 days ahead of the original scheduled opening in September 2008. In spring 2005, SNC-Lavalin Inc. was chosen to design, build, finance, and operate the bridge under a 30-year contract. During that period, government will save \$25 million more in construction, financing, maintenance and rehabilitation costs than if the bridge was built by traditional methods. The corridor is the busiest in B.C. outside the Lower Mainland, accommodating an average of over 50,000 vehicles per day, and that figure is predicted to grow to close to 70,000 by 2017.

“Nearly 1,500 people played a part in building this bridge,” said Kelowna-Lake Country MLA Norm Letnick. “They should all be very proud and it's great to see their hard work being recognized.”

“I want to congratulate all the men and women who built this outstanding bridge,” said Kelowna-Mission MLA Steve Thomson. “All of them have made a very significant contribution to our city, and I know that all Kelowna residents are grateful to them.”

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Some key features of the William R. Bennett Bridge include:

- Six floating pontoons, weighing 7,000 tonnes each.
- Three smaller pontoons, weighing 3,000 to 4,000 tonnes each.
- 2,200 tonnes of structural steelwork.
- 25,000 cubic metres of concrete.
- 24 anchors, weighing 75 tonnes, to hold pontoons in place.
- 15,000 cubic metres of Styrofoam fill at the west end of project.

Since 2001, more than \$900 million has been invested in upgrading roads, highways, bridges and transit in the Okanagan Valley.

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