



GATEWAY PROGRAM

*Improving roads & bridges for people, goods and transit throughout
Greater Vancouver*

Pitt River Bridge & Mary Hill Interchange Project

Backgrounder

December 2005

The Gateway Program

The Gateway Program was established by the Province of British Columbia in response to the impact of growing regional congestion, and to improve the movement of people, goods and transit throughout Greater Vancouver. Gateway roads and bridge improvements are proposed to complement other regional road and transit improvements already planned or underway. These proposed improvements will help create a comprehensive, effective transportation network that supports improved movement of people and goods, facilitates economic growth, increases transportation choice and provides better connections to designated population growth areas.

The goals for the Gateway Program are to:

- Address congestion,
- Improve the movement of people and goods in and through the region,
- Improve access to key economic gateways through improved links between ports, industrial areas, railways, the airport and border crossings,
- Improve the regional road network,
- Improve safety and reliability,
- Improve quality of life in communities by keeping regional traffic on regional roads instead of local streets,
- Reduce vehicle emissions by reducing congestion-related idling,
- Facilitate better connections to buses and SkyTrain, cycling and pedestrian networks, and;
- Reduce travel times along and across the Fraser River during peak periods.

Gateway road and bridge improvements are in addition to regional road and transit improvements over the next 10 years, which include:

- **\$3.9 billion in transit and roads** to maintain or improve travel times for commuters, goods and service providers, cyclists and other users.
- **Rapid Transit** – Expand the reach of the rapid transit network by 40 per cent with the construction of the Richmond/Airport/Vancouver (RAV) and Northeast Sector lines (to Coquitlam).
- **Bus Service** – Expand the fleet by one-third with the addition of 400 new buses, and upgrade the existing 1300 vehicle transit fleet, including expanding HandyDART service.
- **Roads and Bridges** – Improve the major road network through eight new road projects, plus a new crossing of the Fraser River, the Golden Ears Bridge.
- **SeaBus** – Add a third vessel to serve the North Shore.
- **U-Pass** – Expand this VanCity sponsored program to additional post-secondary institutions.
- **Bikes** – Improve bike access and programs.

The Gateway Program includes three components:

The Pitt River Bridge and Mary Hill Interchange Project is one component of the proposed North Fraser Perimeter Road Project (NFPR), which extends from King Edward Street in Coquitlam to Maple Meadows Way in Maple Ridge.

- The proposed **Port Mann /Highway 1 Project**, includes twinning the Port Mann Bridge, upgrading interchanges and improving access and safety on Highway 1 from Vancouver to Langley. The project provides for extending HOV lanes to Langley, allows for transit over the Port Mann Bridge and includes cyclist facilities across the new structure. It will relieve severe congestion impacting commuters and the large numbers of commercial vehicles that rely on this route – the Lower Mainland’s primary truck route.
- The **North Fraser Perimeter Road Project** is a proposed set of improvements to existing roads to provide an efficient, continuous route from New Westminster to Maple Ridge. TransLink is responsible for the section through New Westminster, while the Ministry is responsible for the segments from King Edward Street (Coquitlam) to Maple Ridge, including a new Pitt River Bridge to replace the aging swing bridges. Proposed upgrades will improve safety and reliability along this important corridor, serving goods movement, commuters and growing communities.
- The **South Fraser Perimeter Road Project** is proposed as a primarily new four-lane 80 km/h route along the south side of the Fraser River extending from Deltaport Way in southwest Delta to 176th Street and the Golden Ears Bridge connector road in Surrey/Langley. It will provide a continuous and efficient route to serve the port facilities, rail yards and industrial areas along this key economic corridor, and will also benefit commuters.

Community Consultation

Since 2003, the Gateway Program has been conducting technical analysis and holding discussions with local governments, TransLink, Transport Canada’s Navigable Waters Protection Division, and the Fraser River Port Authority to define the scope of the project. Preliminary discussions have also been held with First Nations with an interest in the project area.

In May/June 2005, the project team consulted on community objectives for the Pitt River Bridge & Mary Hill Interchange Project related to such things as pedestrian and cyclist access, HOV lanes and environmental considerations. The input from this consultation will be considered with technical and financial input when considering which options to further refine in the preliminary design stage.

Environmental Assessment Process

The Pitt River Bridge and Mary Hill Interchange Project is subject to a screening level assessment under the Canadian *Environmental Assessment Act*. Key federal departments responsible for the review of the project include Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and Transport Canada (Navigable Waters Protection Division). The project team submitted the screening level environmental assessment report in July 2005.

For Further Information:

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