

# HIGHWAY 3 – SENTINEL TO PINCHER STATION FUNCTIONAL PLANNING STUDY – UPGRADING AND TWINNING INFORMATION SHEET

JUNE 2018

## 1. Why is Alberta Transportation doing a study on Highway 3?

Alberta Transportation is undertaking a Functional Planning Study (FPS) for the upgrading and twinning of Highway 3 from Sentinel to Pincher Station. This study builds on earlier planning studies to address numerous safety and capacity issues that have been identified along the corridor and will address local road networks and new environmental policies now in effect. Alberta Transportation aims to protect the provincial highways so they can function as high-speed, uninterrupted-flow routes to support efficient movement of people and goods.

## 2. What is the current status?

The project team has developed the following:

- draft recommended plan for Stage 1A (Sentinel to Blairmore)
- functional planning options for Stages 1B and 2 (Blairmore to Pincher Station)

The current plans and options will be shared with the public at stakeholder sessions June 7 to 9, 2018. The project team will continue to engage with local municipalities and stakeholders to finalize the recommended plan for the entire project area.

## 3. When will upgrading and twinning take place?

Approved functional plans are required to move a project forward to detailed design and construction. Functional plans identify the highway right-of-way, alignment, interchange locations, access management, interim and ultimate plan for staging the improvements and estimated costs. This Highway 3 functional plan is expected to be complete in early 2019.

Twinning of this or other sections of Highway 3 are not currently on the provincial construction program. Once the functional plan is complete and approved, the upgrading and twinning of Highway 3 is expected to be constructed in stages, and will be considered for construction based on provincial priorities and provincial funding plans.

Staging examples:

- Not all of the ultimate lanes for the highway upgrading and twinning will be built at once and the Highway 3X truck route could initially be constructed with one lane in each direction.
- Some interchange locations could remain at-grade intersections (i.e.: stop controlled, roundabouts or traffic signals) or may be built with a reduced footprint until traffic volumes reach a level that warrants upgrading to a full interchange.

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## 4. Will the study include an Environmental Evaluation?

Yes, an environmental evaluation is taking place along the corridor to consider valued ecosystem components (VEC's) to evaluate potential project impacts. All applicable provincial and federal regulatory requirements will be observed throughout the project and Alberta Transportation is engaging with the public, local communities, First Nations and environmental stakeholders. The project team is working to avoid impacts while developing options and, if that's not possible, to mitigate impacts where necessary.

Established environmental and geotechnical constraints within the project area include:

- Wetlands including the important Blairmore wetland complex
- Historical and cultural resources at former coal mine operations and Frank Slide
- Westslope Cutthroat Trout fishery and habitat nearby proposed watercourse crossing locations
- Areas of high collision rates between motorists and wildlife along the highway
- Contaminated sites including coal waste at the former Riverrun development and the Luscar Lands and past operations at the former Devon Plant site
- Slope instability near Highway 22
- Proximity to urban areas for traffic noise and air quality

## 5. What other factors have been considered?

- Safety
- Community connections and access
- Direct property impacts
- Current and future land uses
- Local economic context
- Recreation areas and access
- Existing utilities and expansion plans
- Emergency access

**For more information about the project, please:**

- Visit <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/6087.htm>
- Email [hwy3fps@islengineering.com](mailto:hwy3fps@islengineering.com)
- Call the ISL Engineering Project Manager, Alana Getty Somers (403-254-0544)
- Call the Alberta Transportation Project Administrator, Firoz Kara (403-592-8170)