

HIGHWAY 3 – SENTINEL TO PINCHER STATION FUNCTIONAL PLANNING STUDY – UPGRADING AND TWINNING STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK STAKEHOLDER SESSIONS NOV. 28, 29 & 30, 2017

Alberta Transportation and ISL Engineering and Land Services held Stakeholder Sessions from November 28-30, 2017 at the Bellevue MDM Community Centre. Approximately 300 people attended one or more of the three landowner sessions, two Councillor sessions and 2 public open houses.

Participants were asked to review the information about the project options presented for Highway 3X (south of Coleman) and ultimate interchange options at Allison Creek Road and Blairmore. They were also asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of each of the options and fill out a feedback form for the project and the session.

Below is the feedback summary of the comments received at the stakeholder sessions held November 28-30, 2017.

Stage 1A (east of Sentinel to Blairmore) Options

After reviewing the options for each area, participants were asked to let us know if it was clear how considerations were used to develop the options. If not, explain why.

Overall, participants felt that the information provided at the sessions clearly demonstrated how considerations and feedback collected from previous sessions were used to develop the options. Several participants indicated that they appreciated that the information presented clearly what was heard and how it was taken into account to develop the options. Some participants noted that larger maps with more three-dimensional detail would have helped them better understand how each of the options would look and feel in the community.

Highway 3X Truck Route

Highway 3X West Connections

Strengths:

- Participants indicated that option W3 was preferred over W1 and W2 because it has the least community impacts (direct and indirect property impacts, visual, noise, etc.). Participants also noted that W3 had the least impacts to nearby creeks / rivers and wildlife in the area.

Weaknesses:

- Participants felt that options W1 and W2 have too many impacts to the adjacent residential areas. They also indicated that each option should consider wildlife mitigation, potential noise impacts in nearby communities and emergency access.

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Highway 3X Middle Options

Strengths:

- Most participants said they preferred options that are further south because they are further away from the residences in Coleman, in particular on Willow Dr.; therefore had the least property impacts. Participants also felt that it is important for the options to have minimal noise impacts and minimal impacts to Star Creek.

Weaknesses:

- Participants indicated concerns about noise levels for each of the options. They also indicated there is a lot of wildlife in the area; therefore, many wildlife crossings are required but not shown adequately on the options. Some participants suggested implementing wildlife detection devices along Highway 3X to help prevent animal-vehicle collisions.

Highway 3X East Options

Strengths:

- Participants preferred options that avoided the wetlands and had the least amount of residential property impacts. They also indicated preference for options that connect communities, have adequate emergency access and options that allow wildlife to continue to move and access the river.

Weaknesses:

- Participants indicated concern about impacts to tourist destinations in the area, in particular the campground and how that could also affect businesses in the area. Participants also showed concern about increased noise levels with the high elevations of the options and prefer that the options do not cross over the wetlands.

Participants were asked to provide any additional feedback about the Highway 3X truck route options on the comment form.

- Participants felt that it was important to consider options for the area that had minimal community impacts. Of particular note and most important to participants were how the options could affect tourism and businesses along the existing highway and in the communities along the corridor.
- Participants indicated that the campground in Blairmore is important to tourism and businesses in the area and impacts to this campground should be minimized.
- Access to and from communities is also important to participants and they indicated that maintaining or improving emergency access should be considered for all the options.
- Participants felt there will be noise impacts to the surrounding communities and that increased noise levels would negatively impact the quality of life of the residents in the area. Some participants were concerned about an increase in noise from trucks braking on the highway.

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Allison Creek Road Ultimate Interchange Options

Allison Creek Road Option A1

Strengths:

- Some participants felt that this option provides good access to Allison Creek, Crowsnest Mountain Resort and Wolfstone.

Weaknesses:

- Participants indicated that this option creates safety concerns for vehicles, pedestrian and wildlife by creating too much traffic on Wolfstone Drive, and could potentially increase noise impacts for the residents in the Wolfstone divisions.

Allison Creek Road Option A2

Strengths:

- Several participants felt that A2 was the preferred option for the Allison Creek Road ultimate interchange because it provides the best vehicle access to and between communities, has the least community impacts and provides the most direct route of each of the options.

Weaknesses:

- Some participants indicated that the community cannot grow until a decision is made and that highway signage is an important consideration to advertise services in the community.

Allison Creek Road Option A3

Strengths:

- Some participants felt that this option provides the most direct route into Coleman and is the easiest option to exit off or continue on the new highway.

Weaknesses:

- Several participants indicated that this option is the least preferred because it does not include east bound access for the Sentinel industrial park which is concerning for emergency access and connectivity between communities and there is also a safety concern about the sight distance issue on the west end of Sentinel Road at Highway 3.
- Some participants also noted that the Sentinel Road bridge over Girardi Creek is vulnerable to flooding and flood mitigation should be reflected in this area.

Participants were asked to provide any additional feedback about the Allison Creek Road ultimate interchange options on the comment form.

- Participants showed a preference for A2 as it is the option that best addresses safety for vehicles, animals and pedestrians in the area and it provides the best access to and between communities.
- Some participants expressed concerns about the cost to construct over the pipelines.
- Some participants expressed concern about snow and wind conditions and how it may affect conditions on roads and bridges.

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Blairmore Ultimate Interchange Options

Blairmore Interchange Option B1

Strengths:

- Participants indicated that this option maintains access to downtown Blairmore and provides adequate access to areas on the north side of the highway.

Weaknesses:

- Participants felt that this option reduces east access to Blairmore and does not offer adequate access for emergency vehicles to and from the community and the hospital. Some participants indicated that options with access in all directions would be preferred to accommodate emergency access and increases in traffic volumes.

Blairmore Interchange Option B2

Strengths:

- Participants felt that this interchange option was the least confusing and had the most simplified access to the communities in the area.

Weaknesses:

- Participants felt that by reducing access points into downtown Blairmore, many businesses in the community would be negatively impacted.

Blairmore Interchange Option B3

Strengths:

- Some participants indicated that they like that this ultimate interchange option maintains the connection to 129 Street and avoids the wetlands area.

Weaknesses:

- Participants indicated that this ultimate interchange is complicated and also provides no access to downtown for those vehicles traveling westbound on the highway. Participants also felt that it is important for there to be direct emergency access to and from the highway and surrounding communities.

Blairmore Interchange Option B4

Strengths:

- Participants felt this was the preferred ultimate interchange option due to the least amount of community and direct property impacts. Participants also liked that this option maintains emergency access to and from the hospital and the surrounding communities.

Weaknesses:

- Participants indicated that they were concerned about the impacts to the wetlands in the area and felt that limited access to downtown and 129 Street is problematic for local businesses and communities.

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Participants were asked to provide any additional feedback about the Blairmore ultimate interchange options on the comment form.

- Participants indicated that it is important to have easy access to and from the highway and communities in order to for visitors and residents from surrounding communities to access downtown and get back to the highway.
- Participants also indicated that emergency access is important to the residents of the surrounding communities and it should be considered in all the options.
- Participants would like to have the interchange avoid the wetlands between Blairmore and Coleman to protect the wildlife in the area and the drinking water for the residents.

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Stage 1B Summary

- Participants indicated that maintaining or improving access to and from the surrounding communities and tourist destinations is important for the residents and to the economic integrity of the area.
- Some participants were concerned about the impacts that twinning the highway through the area could potentially have on the communities along the corridor and in particular to the historical and cultural sites throughout the area (e.g. Frank Slide, Mohawk Tipple, etc.).
- Participants felt that access to existing and future tourism and recreational sites should be improved or maintained in this area. Some participants specifically requested to maintain access to the dog park and cemetery at the Bellevue interchange area.

Highway 3 Community Integration Summary

- Participants suggested that free-flow traffic and minimal impacts to wetlands and wildlife in the corridor should be the most important factors concerning upgrading and twinning Highway 3. Participants felt that a truck stop along the proposed Highway 3X truck route would be a benefit. It was also suggested that there is an opportunity during construction to add more campgrounds in and around the area to help enhance tourism and increase the number of visitors to the area.

Highway 3 (Sentinel to Pincher Station) Functional Planning Study

Participants were asked to provide any additional comments or concerns regarding the Highway 3 (Sentinel to Pincher Station) Functional Planning Study.

- Participants felt that it is important to maintain or enhance access and connectivity to and from communities, local businesses and tourist/recreational sites.
- Participants had concerns about the proximity of the proposed options to the residential areas and how that may impact property values. Participants also expressed concerns for the need to have timely one-on-one meetings with landowners where options directly impact their properties (i.e. property would need to be acquired).
- Participants indicated that it is important to consider alternative options to twinning through important historical and cultural areas along Highway 3 (e.g. Frank Slide, local cemeteries, etc.).
- Some participants felt that the province should consider an alternative option, such as a four-lane highway with a concrete median barrier where required, more, longer passing lanes and proper turning lanes to handle the present and future requirements of the transportation corridor, as there would be lower social, environmental, and financial impacts.
- Participants indicated that there is concern that the plans for Highway 3 from Sentinel to Pincher Station do not align with the plans for Highway 3 in BC.
- Some participants would like to have driver information systems, signage and gateway treatments implemented along Highway 3 and Highway 3X: truck route.
- Participants would like to have more opportunities to attend public open houses and provide further feedback on the project and, more specifically, the highway from Blairmore to Pincher Station.
- Participants expressed concerns that the options for Highway 3X: truck route could have high impacts to the community look and feel, the economy (i.e. local businesses in the communities around the highway and those directly located on the existing Highway 3) and will disrupt the natural, pristine beauty of the area and its historical resources and sites.

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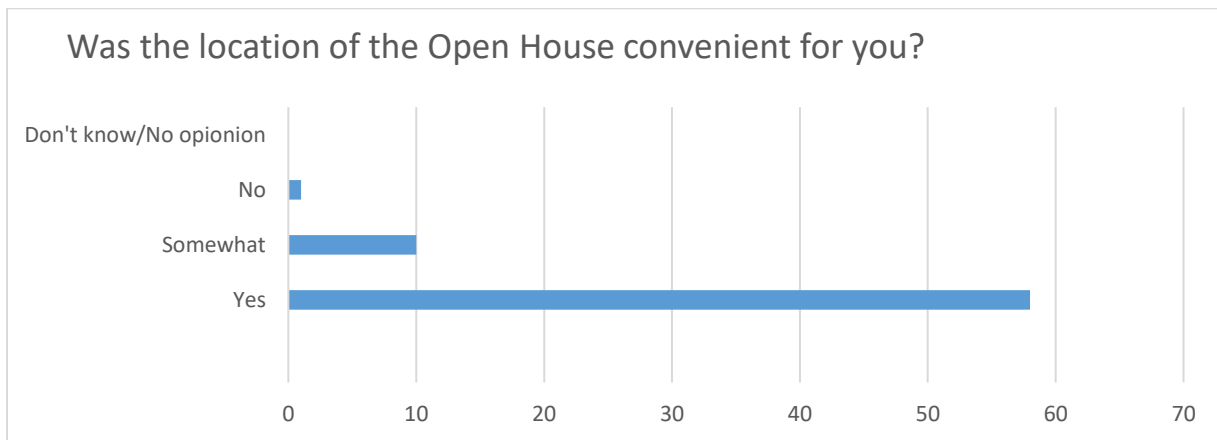
About the Stakeholder Session

Participants were asked to fill out a comment form and take a moment and to provide their thoughts on the session(s) that they attended. Below is a summary of feedback collected from the comment form.

1. Which session did you attend?

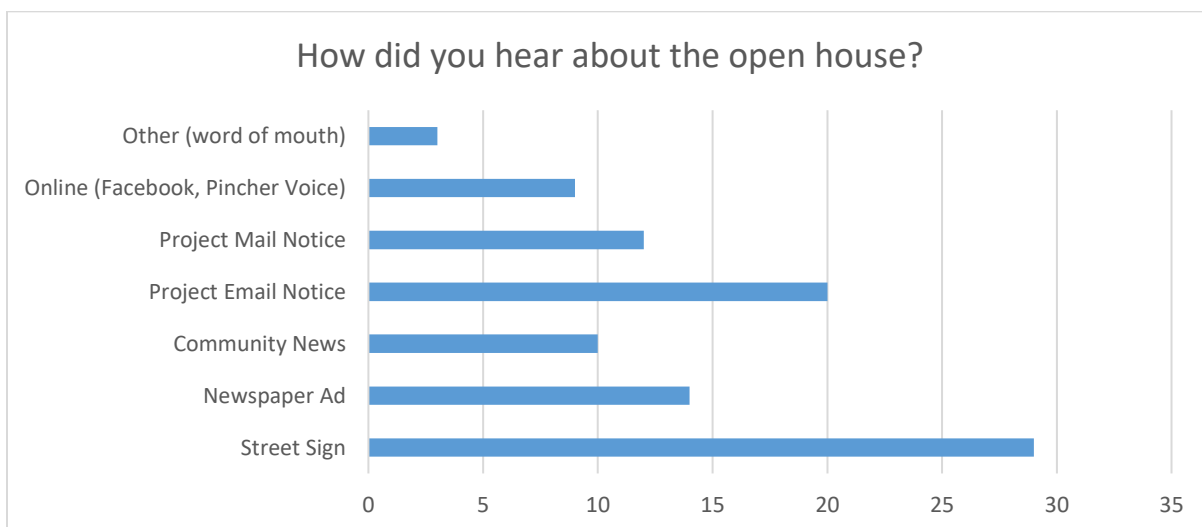
- (x4) Tuesday, November 28, 2017 (x47) Wednesday, November 29, 2017
- (x27) Thursday, November 30, 2017
- (x12) Landowner Session (x56) Public Open House

2. Was the location and time of the session convenient for you?



Some participants suggested that a weekend session may help to reach more members of the area.

3. How did you hear about the session?



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4. What did you like about today's session and activities
 - Most participants felt that the session was informative and there was plenty of staff that were all friendly, attentive and helpful.
 - Participants felt that the staff took the time to answer most, if not all of their questions and were open and willing to listen and collect their feedback about the project.
 - Participants indicated the materials and information provided was thorough, informative and easy to understand.
5. Was there anything you didn't like about today's session and activities?
 - Some participants would have appreciated more information about options from Blairmore to Pincher Station.
 - Participants were concerned about the lack of information about upcoming sessions.
6. Is there anything we could do to make future meetings better?
 - Participants suggested that larger maps and larger sticky notes be made available in order to more easily view the options and to provide more sufficient input on the options.
 - Participants also expressed the need to continue to have future sessions like this one and to provide a weekend alternative to attend in person.
7. Do you have any further comments about the session format, the information and content that was provided or the staff in attendance at this event?
 - Participants felt that staff were attentive and helpful and there were a lot of informative displays and materials available.
 - Some participants indicated that having the information available online at the same time as the sessions would allow people to take more time looking over the information and would be helpful for those who were not able to attend in person.