

CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT
Regional Planning Services Department

Staff Report to the Regional Planning Committee
Meeting of Wednesday, January 21, 2004

SUBJECT:

Ministry of Transportation Infrastructure Investment Plan titled "Opening Up B.C.

BACKGROUND:

On November 21, 2003, the CRD received a report from the Ministry of Transportation (MOT) titled "Opening Up B.C. (Attachment A).

DISCUSSION:

In the Minister's letter, MOT indicates they are working to revitalize and expand transportation infrastructure in every region of the province. They also indicate that they have established regional transportation advisory committees to work with stakeholders in each area.

After a closer review of this report, it is clear the Capital Region will receive no significant investment in infrastructure over the life of this investment plan (3 years).

The province has established the following regions and outlined the following investments:

1. Peace River Region - \$153 million
2. Prince George Central Region - \$114 million
3. Northwest Region (Prince Rupert) - \$135 million
4. Kamloops Region - \$182 million
5. Kootenay Region - \$243 million
6. Okanagan Region - \$153 million
7. Frazer Valley region - \$135 million
8. GVRD via TransLink – over \$1.2 billion
9. Vancouver Island Region - \$71 million (of which \$3 to \$5 million will be spent in the CRD)

The plan offers over \$800 million to the BC Heartlands (northern sectors) with a potential of another \$700 million in future years. The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) will also receive significant benefits from this plan. The Ministry plan outlines 27 projects in the GVRD that included 2 new river crossings, major increases in road capacity and significant investment in transit systems. Provincial investment in the GVRD infrastructure will exceed \$1.2 billion.

Vancouver Island Region will receive \$71 million of which the Capital Region will only receive minimal dollars (\$3-5 million). The works proposed in the Capital Region includes coordinating a few signals for part of Highway 17 and Highway 1 (from Tolmie to Admirals/Saanich Roads), adding a left turn signal at two intersections, and resurfacing part of Highway 17 near Mt. Newton Crossroads..

The CRD and its member municipalities need to understand the key issue related to the Ministry's plan and lack of investment in this region. The issue of this report is not so much the allocation of

infrastructure dollars but the lack of an adopted Regional Transportation Strategy for the CRD to promote. The CRD lacks an adopted transportation plan and lacks a governance and funding model and mandate to outline any need for infrastructure investment in this region. For example, the GVRD through TransLink have been working with the province for the last 5 years to establish its infrastructure needs.

The TravelChoices final consultant report is out for municipal review and comment. The Regional Planning Services budget plan for 2004 also includes funding to undertake additional work to define a workable governance and funding model for the Capital Region. The time for establishing these policies is important if the region hopes to benefit from future provincial infrastructure plans.

The current Ministry plan lasts until 2006. If this region hopes to be a partner in any future Ministry plans, it must be able to work with the province well before they release their next plan. To do this, the Capital Region needs to reach an agreement on a long-term transportation strategy and governance and funding model and be ready to effectively promote capital Regional transportation priorities with the province.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Regional Planning Committee receive this report as information.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION:

N/A

Mark Hornell, MCIP
Director of Regional Planning Services

Larry Roberts, Manager
Regional Transportation Planning

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

W.M. Jordan, Executive Director