

## McTavish Road Interchange Project Frequently Asked Questions

**Q: What is the purpose of the project?**

A: The purpose of the project is to improve safety, enhance transit and improve access to the Victoria International Airport at Highway 17 (Patricia Bay Highway) and McTavish Road.

**Q: When will it be built?**

A: Construction is anticipated to begin in November 2009 with the placement of preload materials to compress soft soils. Major construction contracts will be tendered and awarded in early 2010. The interchange is expected to be completed and open to traffic by March 2011.

**Q: How will traffic be handled during construction?**

A: The temporary closure of two local roads will be necessary for the duration of construction, but all other movements will be maintained with only minor interruptions. Airport access will be maintained; a temporary signal at McTavish and East Saanich Road will help regulate the higher intersection volumes during interchange construction. The Ministry is working with local agencies in North Saanich and Sidney to maintain emergency access and minimize inconvenience.

**Q: One year seems like a long time to close off access to Lochside Road on the east side of Highway 17 (Patricia Bay Highway) – is this really necessary?**

A: The geotechnical conditions at this location dictate how long the road must be closed. Analysis indicates that road-building fill materials will require up to a year to allow sufficient time for settlement. This will ensure a firm foundation for construction of the structure.

During this time, travellers on Highway 17 will need to use alternate routes that will include Mt. Newton Cross Road, Amity Road or the Beacon Avenue Exits. Appropriate signage will be installed. Canora Road will also need to be closed for up to a year between McTavish Road and Rideau Avenue, but we will make every effort to reduce the time needed for this closure.

**Q: How will you ensure construction does not damage any adjacent properties?**

A: The Ministry of Transportation's will be completing pre-condition surveys to specific properties to protect homeowners, in the unlikely event of damage.

**Q: How much opportunity is being provided for public input?**

A: Consultations have been undertaken with local municipalities at both the staff and Council level and with other stakeholders, including area residents and the public at open houses in June and October. In addition, the Ministry is continuing to work with a community liaison task force for ongoing dialogue during design and construction.

**Q: Do you plan to allow access to emergency vehicles during this closure?**

A: The Ministry is working with local agencies in North Saanich and Sidney to maintain emergency access and minimize inconvenience as much as possible during construction.

**Q: Will I still be able to catch the bus during this closure?**

A: BC Transit will continue to operate as will Park and Ride. The Ministry will work with BC Transit to ensure transit riders experience as little inconvenience as possible.

**Q: Will there be an opportunity for the public to view plans before construction?**

A: Updated plans will be posted on the project website at [http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/highwayprojects/Hwy\\_17\\_McTavish\\_Interchange](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/highwayprojects/Hwy_17_McTavish_Interchange).

**Q: Do we really need an interchange? Isn't ferry traffic/commuter peak times causing the problem?**

A: This project builds on the recommendations from the Highway 17 Corridor Study, and the existing interchange footprint that has been reserved at the site. Recently, increased congestion has made safe turning maneuvers at McTavish Road, Lochside Drive and Canora Road more difficult.

**Q: Doesn't this encourage more traffic/single-occupant vehicles when we're supposed to be 'going green'?**

A: The interchange will enhance opportunities for improved transit service, including access for RapidBus and expansion of the park-and-ride. It will also better accommodate cyclists and pedestrians, as well as improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and result in more efficient energy use due to a reduction of idling / stop-and-go traffic and enhanced transit use. There will also be a reduction in the noise caused by stop-and-go traffic.

**Q: What is going to happen to the Park and Ride?**

A: The project will expand transit services, including a larger Park and Ride service area (for a total of about 200 spaces) along with a transit exchange and RapidBus accommodation.

**Q: How will private property be affected?**

A: One property purchase transaction will be required. Efforts are being made to avoid and mitigate other local property impacts. Existing noise levels will be measured, future noise levels resulting from the new design will be assessed, and noise reduction strategies will be applied where warranted by the Ministry's noise policy. The local community is also being consulted on visual aspects of the interchange.

**Q: What is the cost of the project?**

A: Approximately \$24 million. The project will be cost-shared between the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (\$10.5 million), the federal government (\$10.5 million) and the Victoria Airport Authority (\$3 million).

**Q: Why isn't something being done at Sayward first? It has the worst safety record on Highway 17.**

A: Congestion has recently increased due to the growing success of the Victoria International Airport and residential developments, making safe turning maneuvers at McTavish Road, Lochside Drive and Canora Road more difficult. Implementing improvements at this time is possible because of the participation of funding partners, including the federal government and the Victoria Airport Authority, which has shown leadership in championing the project.

**Q: Can future LRT or other rapid transit modes be accommodated?**

A: The Ministry recognizes that BC Transit and the Victoria Airport Authority are identifying future rapid transit corridors. To encourage alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle, the primary emphasis is on Rapid Bus, park-and-ride and active modes such as cycling, while retaining flexibility to accommodate other forms of rapid transit, such as LRT, in the future.

**Q: Why does the design contain roundabouts? They are uncommon in British Columbia.**

A: Roundabouts give better continuous traffic flow than signals do, thereby reducing idling and lowering emissions. They also experience a lower frequency and severity of collisions. Because of these advantages, they are becoming more common in British Columbia and elsewhere in North America.