



Presentation to
Municipality of the Crowsnest Pass

HIGHWAY 3, CROWSNEST PASS
Functional Planning Study

June 14, 2005



McElhanney

Purpose of Presentation

To Review:

- Recurring Questions
- Results of Open House #3
- New Southwest Option
- Environmental Study Component
- Next Steps



Recurring Question

Why Was Study Commissioned?

1. In response to the Municipality's request.
2. Province agreed to conduct study in light of existing & future regulatory requirements.
 - A South Route was already gazetted by the Province in 1979.
3. Study was to examine all feasible (not equally desirable) options.

Recurring Question

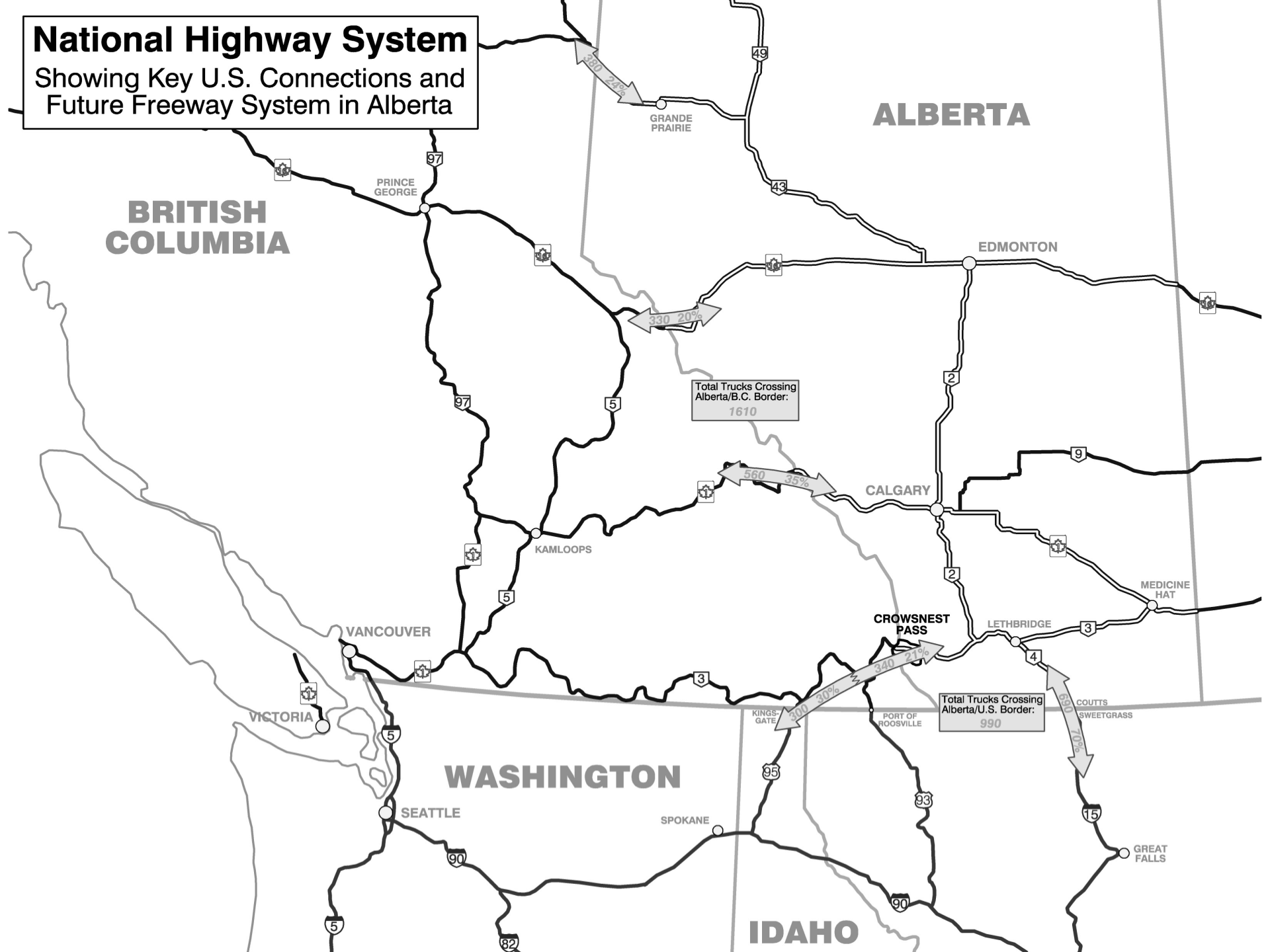
Why a National Highway?

1. Designation by Federal Government & Council of Ministers in 1992.
2. Connects Alberta with Southeast B.C. and U.S. Pacific Northwest.
3. Carries 30% of U.S. Bound Truck Traffic
 - 86% Tractor Trailers and 14% Single Unit
4. Comparable to U.S. interstate system.



National Highway System

Showing Key U.S. Connections and Future Freeway System in Alberta





Recurring Question

Why Freeway Standards?

1. Ultimately freeway standards along all of Highways 1, 2, 3, 4, 16 and 43.
2. Similar corridor management studies are being conducted across the province.
3. These plans will support legislation to designate future interchange locations.



Recurring Question

Why Freeway Standards?

4. Safety - Design consistency is important safety attribute for long-distance routes.
5. Economic - Improves mobility and access across the province.

Comment: Improved province-wide travel times may improve access to, and opportunities in, the Pass.



Recurring Question

Why Freeway Standards?

Alberta's Highway Service Classification:

1. 1A – Major – Inter-National & Inter-Provincial
 - National designation warrants freeway standards.
2. 1B – Minor – Provincial & Inter-Regional Travel.
3. 2A – Collector – Regional Travel
 - Lower-speed & signalized standards are permissible.
4. 2B – Resource Roads
5. 3 – Local Road (usually municipal)





Recurring Question

What About BC Highway 3?

1. Current residents more aware of today's snapshot in Alberta, BC and US.
2. Over the years Alberta's major highway system has been (is being) upgraded.
3. The higher standards and design consistency evolve slowly.
4. U.S. is upgrading Hwy 95.



Recurring Question

What About BC Highway 3?

5. Primarily it is the first 200 km section of BC Hwy 3, to the Kingsgate border crossing, that are of economic importance to Alberta.
6. Both approaches to the BC section of Highway 3 will eventually be upgraded.
7. BC may prioritize improvements in response to growing capacity and safety issues.
8. Highways 1 and 16 were twinned to the Saskatchewan border long before Saskatchewan followed suit.
9. These are very long-term considerations.



Recurring Question

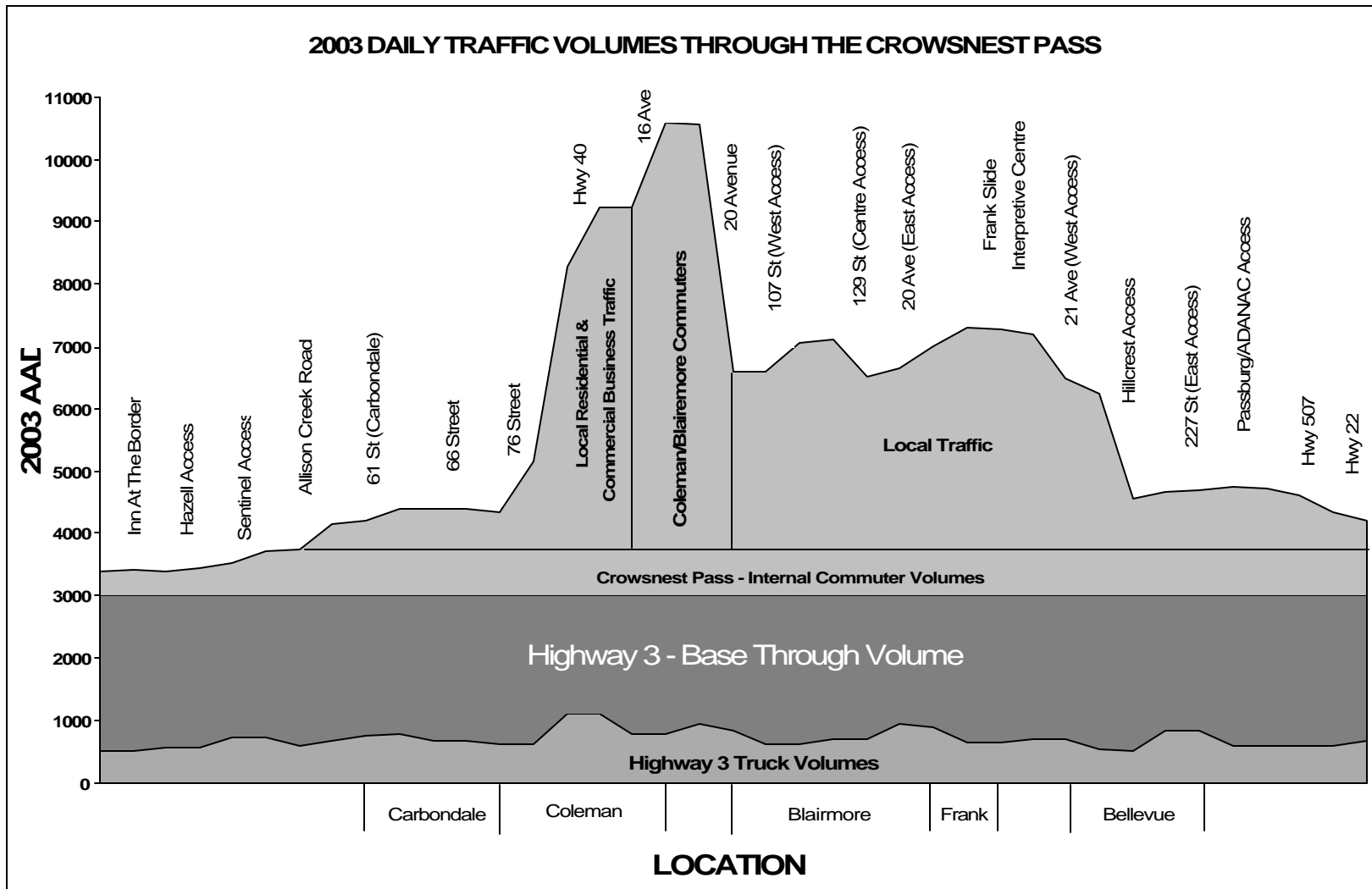
When Will Upgrading Happen?

1. Short-Term (1 to 5 years)
 - Study will recommend operational & safety upgrades along existing highway.
2. Medium Term (5 to 20 years)
 - Some expansion to four lanes through urban areas
 - If applicable, first-stage two-lane truck bypass
3. Long Term (20 to 30 years)
 - Ultimate highway routing and twinning
 - Full access management, separate local and through traffic, best overall safety



When will Upgrading Happen?

2003 Average Daily Traffic Volumes



Recurring Question

When Will Upgrading Happen?

Two-Lane Truck Route Stage:

1. Pull truck/dangerous goods traffic out of Coleman.
2. Highway continuity & numbering would remain through Coleman.
3. Current downtown could become more pedestrian friendly, more of a destination.
4. Community could adjust to new travel patterns; development opportunities.



Recurring Question

When Will Upgrading Happen?

Long-Term Investment:

1. Provincial infrastructure investments are long-term.
2. Payback is over 50 to 100 years.
3. Many stakeholders focus on the status quo, on the conditions existing today.

Comment: Long-term improvement in provincial accessibility will develop gradually and may bring positive economic change.



Recurring Question

When Will Upgrading Happen?

Provincial highway improvements are
programmed based on:

1. Warrants for improvement being met.
2. Annual transportation funding levels.
3. Province wide transportation priorities.

Results of Open House #3 Attendance Summary

Open House	Attendees	Questionnaires/Responses	
		Total Received	With Comments
#1	249	101 (41%)	82 (81%)
#2	177	73 (41%)	44 (60%)
#3	387	208 (54%)*	161 (77%)

*Totals include responses received after the open houses.

Results of Open House #3

Comment/Concern Summary

Type of Concern	Attendees Identifying Concern					
	At Open House #3		At Open House #2		At Open House #1	
	Number of Responses	% of Total Attendance	Number of Responses	% of Total Attendance	Number of Responses	% of Total Attendance
Route Preference	70	18%	30	17%	29	12%
Environmental	38	10%	10	6%	26	10%
Property / Business Impact	50	13%	9	5%	10	4%
Time Frame Too Long	30	8%	-	-	-	-
High Speed Limit & Hwy Standards	24	6%	-	-	-	-
Other	35	9%	5	3%	34	14%



Results of Open House #3

Identified Route Preference

Route or Option	Attendees Identifying Route Preference		
	At Open House #3	At Open House #2	At Open House #1
	Number (% of Total Preference)		
South Route or Options	39 (56%)	21 (70%)	23 (80%)
North Route	3 (4%)	0 (0%)	3 (10%)
Central Route	4 (6%)	1 (3%)	2 (7%)
Urban Four-Lane	4 (6%)	5 (17%)	n/a
Urban Couplet	5 (7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Do Minimum/Keep Existing	15 (21%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)
TOTAL:	70 (100%)	30 (100%)	29 (100%)



Results of Open House #3

Identified South Route Preference

At Open House #3

Route or Option	Number (% of South Route Preference)
South-Southeast Route	9 (23%)
Central–Southeast Route	4 (18%)
South-Southeast or Central-Southeast Route*	18 (38%)
South Base	4 (8%)
1979 Gazetted Route	4 (10%)
TOTAL:	39 (100%)

*9 of the 18 requested that route be moved between Coleman & Blairmore.



Results of Open House #3

Environmental Concerns

Type of Concern	Open House #3	Open House #2	Open House #1
Wildlife	20 (5%)	6	17
Water Quality (rivers, aquifers, wetlands)	15 (4%)	5	6
Other	3 (1%)	2	3
TOTAL:	38 (10%)	13	26



Results of Open House #3

Other Concerns & Comments

Concerns and Comments	Number of Responses
BC Not Twinning Highway 3. Why are we?	13
Access to Communities Too Far Apart	10
Noise From New Highway	12
TOTAL:	35



New Southwest Option

Why Was it Developed?

- First suggested at last Council Presentation in January 2005.
- Suggestion heard again at Open House #3.
- We prefer to explore potentially feasible options before a final recommendation is made to Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation.



New Southwest Option

Design Attributes

- Places a new interchange closer to Coleman.
- Reduces length of Coleman bypass.
- Reduces conflicts with NOVA Gas Trans. Line.
- Replaces adjacent Blairmore interchange.
- Smaller footprint through Riverside Estates ASP.
- Separate Crowsnest River and CPR crossings.
- Crosses edge of Blairmore wetland.
- Crosses south half of Bushtown, affecting area of affordable housing.



New Southwest Option

Status

- Southwest and Southeast options are comparable from evaluation perspective.
- Southeast Option has more technical challenges.
- Southwest Option has more development impacts.
- Considering the significant local concern expressed by residents, the Southeast Option should remain preferred.



Environmental Study Component Approved Study Process

Highway Activity	Years Before Implementation	Environmental Activity	Environmental Outcome
System Planning	30 – 40	Broad Overview	Identify Broad Issues
Corridor and Network Planning	20 – 30	Constraint Mapping	Impact Avoidance
Functional Planning (Current stage)	5 - 30	Site Screening and Overview	Mitigation Methods & Options
Project Planning and Property Acquisition	2 – 5	Impact Assessment (EIA)	Mitigation and Compensation Plans
Detail Design	1 – 2	Detail Design	Approvals and Permitting



Environmental Study Component

Functional Plan Approvals

- Planning studies conducted for A.I.T. must meet all applicable federal and provincial regulatory requirements.
- A.I.T. constantly updates its policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all provincial and federal regulatory requirements affecting highway construction.
- Study team consults with representatives of Alberta Environment, Alberta Sustainable Resources Development, Alberta Community Development and the Federal DFO.



Environmental Study Component

Status of Wetland Areas

- Outline of wetland areas mapped from 1953 air photos.
- Identification of wetland areas still existing today taken from 1981 Flood Plain Study.
- Approximately 13 of 32 km have been removed (40%) since 1953.



Environmental Study Component

Status of Wetland Areas

Perspective for Potential Highway Footprint:

- The valley includes a wood preservative plant and gas plant (sulphur pile); yet still the best water in Alberta.
- Highway crossing might affect 1 to 2% of the wetland area.
- Current designs require stormwater management & spill containment systems that were not considered when existing highway was constructed.
- Risks from highway traffic would actually diminish.



Environmental Study Component

Aquifer & Recharge Areas

- Mapping prepared from hydrological study of the Lethbridge-Fernie Area (Alberta Geological Survey, 1974) and other sources.
- Two cross-sections through the valley are shown, East and West.
- The existing highway is located on the broad recharge plains.



Environmental Study Component

Aquifer & Recharge Areas

- A South Route near Coleman would be located above (not on) the recharge area.
- A South Route west of Carbondale would be located on the edge of the recharge area.
- Implications for a South Route are similar to expanding existing highway; however, stormwater runoff will be better controlled.

Next Steps

Current Evaluation

Alternative	Open House 2 (w/o risk)	Open House 3	Current Evaluation
North	52	46	44
Central	58	49	47
South (3)	78	53	53
Central/CPR	n/a	42	41
Central/South	67	38	37
South/Southeast (1)	70	60	60
Central/Southeast (2)	64	52	48
South/Southwest (1)	n/a	n/a	61
Central/Southwest (2)	n/a	n/a	49
Urban Four-Lane	49	40	38



Next Steps

Study Process

1. Project Appraisal
2. Develop Preliminary Alternatives
3. Open House #1 – Show General Route Options
4. Preliminary Evaluation of Route Alternatives
5. Open House #2 – Show Study Progress
6. Identify Preferred Route Alternatives
7. Open House #3 – Present Preferred Routes
8. **Presentation to Municipal Council**
9. Presentation to Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation for Approval
10. Open House #4 – Show Approved Plan





Highway 3, Crowsnest Pass Functional Planning Study

**End of Presentation
Thank You**

QUESTIONS?

