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AUG 15 2012

August 10, 2012

Joe Stanhope, President
Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities
525 Government Street
Victoria BC V8V 0A8

Reference: 204695

Dear Chair Stanhope:

Re: Bamfield Road and the BC Transit Act

Thank you for your letters of June 20, 2012, regarding Bamfield Road and the BC Transit Act. Please accept my apologies for the lateness of this reply.

I am pleased to advise you that the ministry has been working very closely with the Bamfield Road Safety Association, local governments, the Huu-ay-aht First Nation and the two forest companies operating Bamfield Road, Western Forest Products and Island Timberlands, to enhance the safety and reliability of the road. I was glad to hear that the ministry's local Operations Manager, Johnathan Tillie, was able to contact you to discuss the issues raised in your letter in detail.

As you are aware, Bamfield Road is an industrial road used by Western Forest Products and Island Timberlands to transport logs from their logging operations in the area. The road is also available for public use by local residents and seasonal tourists to access the Town of Bamfield through an agreement with these companies. The ministry continues to provide funding towards enhanced maintenance activities on Bamfield Road, ensuring the road remains open and safe year-round for the travelling public.

A number of safety improvements were carried out on the road in 2011/12, based on input and consultation from the Bamfield Road Safety Association, including brushing, road resurfacing, improving site distances and installing roadside barriers in key locations. In addition, work was recently completed in an area near the Town of Bamfield to stabilize and raise a section of the road prone to flooding; this work included the installation of new culverts and ditching to improve drainage. This spring, the ministry began work on resurfacing five kilometres of the road at the western end leading into the Town of Bamfield, and this work is expected to be complete by the middle of this October. Many other roads within Bamfield will also be resurfaced including Frigate Road, Rocky Lane, Pachena Road and Nuthatch Road.

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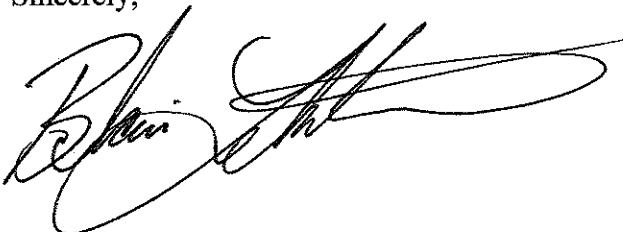
The ministry will continue to work with all parties to identify further priority safety projects for this road in the coming year. If you have further questions or concerns about Bamfield Road or other transportation issues in the area, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Tillie directly. He can be reached by telephone at 250 751-3287 or by e-mail at Johnathan.Tillie@gov.bc.ca, and would be pleased to assist you.

With respect to BC Transit, our government is committed to listening to the needs of British Columbia's communities and local governments, and working together to address them. Like the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities, some mayors have expressed that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission, as defined in the BC Transit Act, does not adequately represent all municipalities in the region. As you know, an independent review of BC Transit is currently underway to examine transit system operations and performance, governance, funding, and local government consultation and communication processes.

As a preliminary part of this review, the independent review panel prepared a document outlining the issues raised by local governments and stakeholders. This document includes concerns related to the representation on the BC Transit Board and Victoria Regional Transit Commission and is available online at http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/BC_Transit_Review/documents/What_We_Heard.pdf. The input collected by the panel will be used to prepare recommendations for their final report. You might be interested to know the panel will also be examining the possibility of the Capital Regional District replacing the Victoria Regional Transit Commission. I look forward to the release of their final report at the end of August.

Thank you again for taking the time to write.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blair Lekstrom", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Blair Lekstrom
Minister