

A
STUDY OF THE
**COASTAL CONNECTOR
CORRIDOR**

FROM
HOUSTON, BC

TO
KITIMAT, BC

FEBRUARY, 2006

Presented by the

Harbour Group Committee, KT Industrial Development Society

Prepared by: V.N. Maskulak

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2005 an independent study was conducted by V.N. Maskulak, for the Kitimat Economic Development Commission, to determine the most desirable alternative Corridor route through the Coast Mountains. This initiative was a follow-up on a proposal by the governments of BC and Alberta to analyze the northern corridor. (Mr. Harb Sihota, Project Manager, Corporate Initiatives Branch Ministry of Small Business and Economic Development, March 2004). This study concluded that the Telkwa Pass route would best serve the northwest providing that the slope stability problem in the Copper River could be overcome and that until a west coast terminus of a contemplated utility pipeline route was determined, by the various proponents, no further work would be required.

In the fall of 2005, Enbridge Inc. announced they have concluded that Kitimat was to become their western terminus for pipelines and made a public presentation requesting public involvement in assessing the location of the route from Edmonton, Alberta, to Kitimat, BC. During that presentation they proposed to tunnel a distance of 9 to 12 km under Nimbus Mountain. This is very similar to the Kitimat Valley route studied in the spring. Further discussions revealed that other alternatives were being studied to determine the economics and environmental impacts for their Gateway Project. After considering the Enbridge potential, our Harbour Group has revisited the original study and concluded that with all the interest in a utility corridor through the Coast Mountains we should make a proposal that hopefully all proponents could consider.

Description of the Houston to Kitimat Corridor

This route location is plotted on a map with a scale 1: 50,000; elevations are in feet

1. Starting at Houston (elevation 1926) travel west on the gravel surfaced Morice Forest Road for 63 km. of which 27 km is two lanes. This will take you across the Morice River by the Forest Service Bridge (elevation. 2500).
2. Construct a road 43 km up the Gosnell Creek drainage to Morice Pass (elevation 3650). There is merchantable timber to elevation 3200.
3. Construct a road for 10 km, across the headwaters of Clore River and drop to elevation 3500.
4. Tunnel 8 km to the head waters of the Kitimat River to elevation 3000.
5. Construct a causeway, with material from the tunnel excavation, across the valley for 2 km. at elevation 3000.
6. Tunnel through the ridge for 3 km at zero grade to a logging road in the North Hirsch Creek Valley.
7. Follow this logging road 31 km. to Highway 37 at elevation 200.
8. Follow Highway 37 – 11 km to the second traffic light in Kitimat.

DISTANCES

Total Distance from Kitimat to Houston is 171 km

Distance from Houston to Prince George is 307 km

Distance from Prince George to Edmonton is 742 km

Total Distance from Kitimat to Edmonton is 1220 km

a savings of 164 km. one way

This route is shown on the enclosed large scale map showing Edmonton to Kitimat and on the smaller scale map showing Houston to Kitimat in more detail.

Also included is a chart comparing the various routes and the distances between communities.

Known Proponents for Utility Corridor

- Enbridge Inc. has proposed two (2) pipelines between Edmonton and Kitimat.
- Kinder Morgan has proposed two (2) pipelines between Kitimat and Prince George.
- Pacific Northern Gas has proposed a new gas line from Kitimat to Summit Lake.
- A power line will be required to service the pump stations on these lines.

OUR PROPOSAL

We propose a common corridor to be utilized by all of these projects and that a secondary road should be constructed to service this corridor and become the new coast connector.

Government Involvement

In November 2002, the four western Canadian provinces formed the Western Transportation Ministers Council, so that a common front would be presented to the federal government on inter-provincial matters. They produced a report in March 2005 entitled Western Canada Transportation Infrastructure Strategy for an Economic Network. This is the bases for the Asia Pacific Gateway Project funding proposals. This fund is at \$450M and will be controlled by the newly formed group called the Gateway Council. Northern BC does not have a representative yet.

The 2004 British Columbia Alberta Northern Corridor Analysis, referred to above, has not been made public. This may identify some of the potential goods and services to be transported to the coast.

The new Federal Government announced that they will provide up to \$1 Billion for communities affected by the pine beetle infestation. Maybe a shorter transportation route will be required to move these products to foreign markets. Justification could be made to utilize a portion for this route.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Determine if the BC government would co-ordinate the desires of all proponents to use a common corridor to the coast.
2. Determine if the public, private, partnership (the 3 P's) principle could applied to this corridor project.
3. Advise all the proponents of the potential of this route and the potential reduction of capital costs for road infrastructure.
4. Determine if a two lane gravel road can be justified to handle the transportation requirements.
5. Enbridge is looking at a 15 ft. tunnel which will contain their pipelines and service road. Maybe Kinder Morgan will build a similar tunnel and maybe they could become one way routes for a public road.
6. Conduct a study to determine if there are sufficient commercial general cargo volumes, and or sufficient bulk commodities from northern BC and northern Alberta for export, that will justify a new wharf and dock in Kitimat to enhance and maintain its private port status.
7. Determine if a toll road could be justified for this new coastal connector.

ACTION PLAN

1. Submit this study to the KTIDS Board for consideration to further analysis the potential and viability of a corridor project.
2. A distribution list will be compiled and the Corridor report distributed to various Government representatives and prospective stakeholders with the support and resources provided by KTIDS.

COASTAL CONNECTOR COMPARISON SUMMARY

(Shown in Kilometers)

Present Road		Kitimat	Terrace	Smithers	Telkwa	Houston	Pr. George	Pr. Rupert
	Kitimat	0	66	271	282	327	642	215
	Terrace	206	0	206	217	266	577	147
	Smithers	271	206	0	11	65	371	353
	Telkwa	282	217	11	0	54	360	364
	Houston	327	266	65	54	0	307	410
	Pr. George	642	577	371	360	307	0	724
	Pr. Rupert	215	147	353	364	410	724	0

Morice/Clore Pass		Kitimat	Terrace	Smithers	Telkwa	Houston	Pr. George	Pr. Rupert
	Kitimat	0	66	289	278	224	531	215
	Terrace	66	0	291	280	226	533	147
	Smithers	289	291	0	11	65	371	438
	Telkwa	278	280	11	0	54	360	427
	Houston	224	226	65	54	0	307	373
	Pr. George	531	533	371	360	307	0	670
	Pr. Rupert	215	147	438	427	373	670	0

Telkwa Pass		Kitimat	Terrace	Smithers	Telkwa	Houston	Pr. George	Pr. Rupert
	Kitimat	0	66	202	191	245	552	215
	Terrace	66	0	136	125	179	486	147
	Smithers	202	136	0	11	65	371	283
	Telkwa	191	125	11	0	54	360	272
	Houston	245	179	65	54	0	307	326
	Pr. George	562	485	371	360	307	0	632
	Pr. Rupert	215	147	283	272	326	632	0

North Hirsch		Kitimat	Terrace	Smithers	Telkwa	Houston	Pr. George	Pr. Rupert
	Kitimat	0	66	236	225	171	478	215
	Terrace	66	0	278	267	213	520	147
	Smithers	236	278	0	11	65	371	425
	Telkwa	225	267	11	0	54	360	414
	Houston	171	213	65	54	0	307	360
	Pr. George	478	520	371	360	307	0	667
	Pr. Rupert	215	147	425	414	360	667	0