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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

### **Province launches southern Vancouver Island transportation strategy**

VICTORIA – A complete, comprehensive and co-ordinated look into improving traffic flow on southern Vancouver Island is the focus of a new transportation strategy being launched by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

“We know that southern Vancouver Island is one of the fastest-growing regions in the province,” said Claire Trevena, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. “For too long, the infrastructure needs of the communities there have been ignored. It is time we start investing in long-term, innovative, multi-modal solutions to address congestion, while respecting and honouring the wishes and rights of local First Nations.”

The strategy will aim to move people more efficiently, so they can spend less time sitting in traffic and more time at home with their families. A request for qualifications has been posted on BC Bid to identify a short list of three qualified consultants to design a multi-modal transportation plan for the region. These three shortlisted consultants will then be sent a request for proposals in February 2019, with the successful proponent being identified by end of March 2019.

The area of focus will be existing and future multi-modal infrastructure projects on southern Vancouver Island, going as far north as the Duncan area and as far west as the Sooke area. It will look at current transportation demands and develop a roadmap for future investments across all modes of travel.

In relation to this work, the ministry is exploring potential emergency detour routes that could be activated in the event of a Malahat road closure. The ministry continues to work with stakeholders, including the Capital Regional District (CRD), to ensure all possible detour options are explored, while making sure that environmental, First Nations and local community interests are understood.

“The board appreciates the efforts to address transportation needs and assist people getting around faster on the South Island,” said Colin Plant, CRD board chair. “The CRD will want to ensure the protection of the integrity of the regional water supply lands, which provide drinking water for much of our region.”

A report on the feasibility of a temporary activated emergency detour route is expected to be ready by spring 2019. If a suitable detour alignment is identified, future engineering work could begin in summer 2019.

The ministry is also in the process of awarding a contract to begin the design phase of the Malahat Goldstream Park median barrier project. Design work is scheduled to start shortly and will explore building an additional 1.5 kilometres of median barrier north of the West Shore

Parkway to just north of Finlayson Arm Road.

**Quick Facts:**

- The scope of the project will include working with local First Nations and decision makers to study, plan and design transportation concepts involving:
  - transit
  - cycling
  - pedestrian movements
  - marine/ferry travel
  - rail
  - existing roads
- In October 2018, the ministry wrapped up the \$34-million Malahat Village Safety Improvement project, which included expanding five kilometres of the highway to four lanes and installing three kilometres of median barrier.
- The Highway 1/McKenzie Interchange project is anticipated to cut roughly 20 minutes off peak commute times and is on schedule to open up to free-flowing traffic by late summer 2019.

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