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## FACTSHEET

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Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

### **Planning chronology for Massey Tunnel replacement**

For decades, the need for added capacity at the George Massey Tunnel crossing has been clear.

As early as 1989, the Freedom to Move plan developed by the Greater Vancouver Transportation Task Force recommended that the tunnel be expanded by 2001. This was reinforced in Transport 2021 (1993), the long-range transportation plan in support of developing the Livable Region Strategic Plan (1999).

In 2006, the Gateway Program Definition Report identified additional capacity at the tunnel as a potential longer-term priority to meet transportation goals, while identifying potential concerns regarding increased traffic on the Oak Street Bridge. Since then, the Canada Line has been implemented and Richmond has become a major population and employment centre, which has changed traffic patterns significantly. Today, approximately 60% of the daily traffic through the tunnel is headed to or from Richmond. Planning for the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project reflects these new travel patterns.

Planning Chronology to August 2016:

March 21, 1991: [George Massey Tunnel Expansion Planning Study](#) (Ward Consulting for Ministry of Transportation) explores five options and recommends new tunnel capacity at the existing crossing for the short term, and a new 72nd Street/No. 8 Road crossing for the long term.

September 1993: [Transport 2021: A Long Range Transportation Plan for Greater Vancouver](#) is released. This report (p. 56) refers to the need for additional capacity across both the south and north arms of the Fraser River at some point in the future.

July 1995: [Fraser River North and South Arm Crossing Study](#) (Reid Crowther & Partners and Ward Consulting Group for Ministry of Transportation) considers 12 options and recommends expanding the Oak Street Bridge to five lanes, adding a new tube at the existing George Massey Tunnel, upgrading Highway 99 between Highway 17 and the Oak Street Bridge, and constructing a new crossing at Tree Island between Highway 91 in Richmond and Marine Way in Burnaby.

1997: Lower Mainland Highway Systems Report (BCTFA) – outlined a 10-year investment strategy based on Transport 2021. The report recommended low cost approach to investment in road infrastructure, including HOV priority on Highway 99 between the Oak Street Bridge and the Tunnel in the medium term as well as additional HOV priority south of the tunnel, interchange improvements on Highway 99 and a new Fraser River crossing between Tree Island and Marine Way in the long term.

1999: Ministry of Transportation retains Buckland & Taylor Ltd. (B&T) to develop a seismic retrofit strategy for the tunnel.

2000: B&T report complete; recommends a two-phase approach including structural realignment and geotechnical strengthening.

2001: B&T prepares a detailed design for the seismic retrofit.

April 2003: Planning for the Gateway Program begins. Considers six potential projects based on Transport 2021 and the combined MOT/TransLink major highway responsibilities in Metro Vancouver, including Highway 99 and the George Massey Tunnel.

July 15, 2004: Ministry of Transportation announces seismic upgrades to the tunnel, with a \$22.2-million project of structural work. The two-year project completes B&T's recommended Phase 1 improvements.

Jan. 31, 2006: Province announces launch of the Gateway Program, with release of the [Gateway Program Definition Report](#), which includes the Pitt River Bridge and Mary Hill Interchange, Port Mann/Highway 1 Improvements and the South Fraser Perimeter Road. PDR includes reference to longer-term plan for "twinning" the tunnel. As a planning document, this refers to twinning capacity, not the physical design and construction of a new tunnel.

February 2006: In response to queries from the Vancouver Sun and the Richmond Review regarding the Gateway Program Traffic and Revenue Study, the Minister of Transportation confirms that the longer-term plan for additional capacity at the tunnel is still in the early stages of development for possible future long-term implementation. The planning study looked at potential traffic demand and related toll revenues based on high-level estimates of capacity. It is important to note that when it comes to transportation, it is standard practice to focus on the capacity requirement before looking at design, so in the early stages of a project, "twinning" usually means "doubling capacity". Plans for specific designs (e.g., tunnel or bridge) come later in the process.

Jan. 14, 2008: B.C. government announces \$14-billion transit plan including completion of the Canada Line and Rapid Bus improvements on Highway 99, as well as priority corridors for the next phase of rapid transit in the region.

2008: Weir Jones Group completes installation of an early warning system at the tunnel to improve seismic safety after Ministry of Transportation determines not to proceed with geotechnical strengthening because of geotechnical and Tunnel damage risks. The early-warning system includes sensors and electronically activated gates that allow traffic to safely exit and prevent new traffic from entering in a significant seismic event.

Aug. 29, 2008: B.C. government announces start of a two-person HOV lane pilot project, to open up southbound Highway 99 HOV lane to more commuters.

Dec. 11, 2008: B.C. government announces new rapid bus lane providing point-to-point service between White Rock and Richmond, as part of continued implementation of the RapidBus BC Provincial Transit Plan.

January 2009: Highway 99 (King George Highway to Oak St. Bridge) Corridor Assessment (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure) final report on short-term options to improve

transit/HOV access and reliability on Highway 99.

2009: B&T study confirms that based on Phase 1 seismic work, the tunnel can withstand a one-in-275-year seismic event.

Jan. 5, 2011: B.C. government announces additional transit improvements on Highway 99, with construction of a six-kilometre northbound shoulder bus lane between King George and Highway 91.

Sept. 28, 2012: In her address to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), Premier Christy Clark announces that planning and consultation would begin immediately, to establish a concept and scope for replacement of the George Massey Tunnel.

October 2012: The ministry's South Coast Region commences development of the GMT Project with review of technical documents, preliminary stakeholder meetings and development of a consultation plan. As part of preliminary planning, Project Team meets with City of Richmond staff on Nov. 9 and Port Metro Vancouver staff on Nov. 15.

Nov. 20, 2012: During 2012, Fraser Surrey Docks was also proposing options to increase the water draft over the existing George Massey Tunnel. In follow up to meetings held in February and September 2012, and a Nov. 2, 2012, letter from Fraser Surrey Docks, the ministry responds indicating that there are no technical reasons why the navigation channel over the tunnel could not be increased to a 13.5-metre draft [by replacing the rock ballast with steel plate], and that with the recent announcement of the GMT Project, no provincial funds would be available for the additional dredging that would be required to support this increase.

Nov. 21, 2012: Province announces start of Phase 1 consultation for the GMT Project. Release quotes the Minister of Transportation and the mayors of Delta, Richmond and Surrey.

January 2013: The ministry engages technical specialists to undertake a detailed data collection program in support of GMT Project development.

February-August 2013: The ministry engages engineering and structural design specialists to review historic technical reports, and develop and analyze planning-level concepts for potential replacement scenarios. This work, combined with the Phase 1 and 2 consultation results, led to the recommendation of a new bridge within the existing corridor (subject to completion of the detailed technical work and a business case).

March 2013: The ministry releases Phase 1 consultation summary report, confirming strong support for the project, a sense of urgency in moving forward, support for transit and cycling improvements as part of the project, and desire for short-term improvements while planning continues.

March 6, 2013: Province announces start of Phase 2 consultation for the GMT Project. Consultation seeks input on five potential replacement scenarios.

January to August 2013: The ministry meets with various bridge and tunnel design consultants including TEC in April 2013 to discuss bridge and tunnel concepts and experience in other parts of the world.

August 2013: The ministry releases Phase 2 consultation summary report confirming support

for a new crossing along the Highway 99 corridor, with preference for a new bridge, as well as a strong desire for transit, cycling and pedestrian improvements, including protecting the Highway 99 corridor for future rapid transit.

Sept. 20, 2013: Province confirms plans to replace the tunnel with a new bridge on the existing Highway 99 corridor, with construction to begin in 2017. The next step is continued engineering and technical work to develop a detailed project scope and business case for additional consultation.

December 2013: The ministry establishes GMT Project office and retains additional technical, engineering and consultation firms to support ongoing Project planning and implementation.

March 2014: GMT Project completes detailed reports documenting the evaluation of replacement scenarios undertaken over the past year. The reports, [Evaluation of Crossing Scenarios](#) and [Conceptual Highway and Interchange Design](#) confirm that a new bridge would have fewer impacts to agricultural, other lands than a tunnel, offers more safety and environmental benefits, and would be easier and less disruptive to construct at this location.

June 12, 2014: The Mayors Council on Regional Transportation releases [Regional Transportation Investments: a Vision for Metro Vancouver](#). The plan for regional transportation improvements focuses on aspects of the transportation network for which TransLink has responsibility. Highway 99 and Highway 91, provincial and national routes under provincial jurisdiction are not included in the plan.

October 2014: GMT Project team undertakes detailed Fraser River hydrogeological surveys to confirm the river depth at/near the Tunnel; confirms that the Tunnel sits essentially flush with the riverbed.

Dec. 16, 2015: The ministry releases George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project Definition Report and business case and announces launch of Phase 3 consultation.

Dec. 16, 2015 – Jan. 24, 2016: Phase 3 public consultation, more than 1,000 people participated in two open houses and provided feedback in person and online.

Jan. 15 – Feb. 16, 2016: Public comment period conducted by the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) as part of a public and stakeholder review on the project prior to the formal application being submitted later in the spring of 2016.

June 23, 2016: The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure applied to the Agricultural Land Commission as part of the permitting process for the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project.

June 28, 2016: The Government of British Columbia issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for parties interested in delivering the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project. The RFQ is the first of a two phase procurement process. Following the RFQ, government will request proposals from a shortlist of the three best qualified teams in order to select a preferred proponent.

July 27, 2016: The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has submitted its application to the Provincial Environmental Assessment Office for an environmental certificate to construct the George Massey Tunnel Replacement Project. An Application Review period of up to 180

days follows.

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