

CARD #03

PRESENT SITUATION

- Safety, Economic, Environmental
- Dedicated Efforts 2013 to 2020
- Perspective on Political Support
- Next Step: Alignment Study completion

DETAIL SCRIPT FOR #03

PRESENT SITUATION

- Safety concerns on this particular BNSF rail line have been building and magnifying over the years and are now reaching critical levels. These include: multiple undesired emergencies [UDE's], multiple soil slope slides, rising ocean overlap, mechanical issues and disrupted emergency access. Liability may well fall on the Government if one of the above disasters occurs prior to political action being taken. It is imperative to note the potential risk and impact to the human lives in the surrounding area. Please reference cards #4,#5 and #6 for additional information regarding these concerns and impacts to human life.
- Economic concerns are centralized around the following: disruption to the essential BC-WA route and the possibility of closure for the Abbotsford-Sumas route. Economic opportunities include completion of the 'Gateway initiative', capital funding from several sources including BNSF, as well as the merging of the rail relocation alignment [feasibility] study with the present study for a Hi-Speed passenger route from Portland to Vancouver.
- Environmental concerns resonate around climate change and resulting ocean level rise [City Surrey CPAC studies], shoreline degradation, and habitat disruption.
- Numerous citizens over the years of 2013 to 2020 have acted as dedicated advocates to raise awareness of emerging issues regarding the present BNSF rail route. These efforts are characterized by 'top-down' interactions with politicians of municipal, provincial, and federal jurisdictions. A 'bottom-up' public forum called for by Mayor Wayne Baldwin of White Rock was held in October of 2018. This public forum not only generated a high yield of citizen attendance on short notice, but also welcomed a large amount of positive energy in support of rail relocation. The combination of media coverage and the information presented through this website support and highlight the efforts to date through both top-down and bottom-up methods.
- Our next key step is the completion of the feasibility study for the preferred alignment, to be carried out under the sponsors expected to be a partnership of the Cities of Surrey and White Rock, and the Semiahmoo First Nation. Depending on what process alternate is ultimately chosen in forwarding work on this feasibility study, it is expected the following will be included; engineering work on exact alignment including depth and grade, and including extent of tunnel, trench, or surface portions; urban and transportation plans in immediate areas; estimates of capital costs; life cycle economic analyses; integration with hi-speed rail; a multi-criteria business case analysis. Please refer to card #12 for a more complete outline of these requirements, and a review of the process alternates leading to successful approval and implementation of this RR initiative.