

**Terms of Reference**  
**Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District and First Nation Partner(s)**  
**Island Rail Corridor Working Group**

## **Introduction**

The province has committed funding to support First Nations and the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) to facilitate development of a shared vision for the Island Rail Corridor. This ACRD based working group recognizes the jurisdiction of the lands in question to be that of the Tseshaht Nation and Hupacasath Nation and expresses gratitude for the opportunity to jointly vision and collaborate on options and opportunities for these lands.

The Island Rail Corridor Working Group (IRCWG) is a starting place for the exchange of ideas and for the exploration of various technical and theoretical approaches. It does not commit any group to a final outcome, and further recognizes that community dialogue will be an integral part of advancing and agreed upon concepts that arise from this group's discussions. All discussions are without prejudice to Hupacasath and Tseshaht's rights, title and interest.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the working group is to participate collaboratively enabling short-term and long-term planning for the Island Rail Corridor within the Tseshaht Nation, Hupacasath Nation, and ACRD.

## **Scope of Work**

The IRCWG will work together to identify and develop improvements and plans for the Corridor that benefit people living in the ACRD region, and on Vancouver Island, including the following:

- First Nations interests.
- Collaboration of local government and stakeholders.
- Establishment of a shared vision for the rail corridor that best meets the financial, legal, business and community interests.
- Future planning for potential population and climate changes.
- Optimal transportation network for community and Vancouver Island.
- Safety concern and requirements, including the alteration of corridor elements to meet possible emergency or redundant routes.
- Consideration for multi-model transportation network.
- Pursue work within the context of the entire corridor for the development of transportation alternatives.
- Articulation and summary regarding the history of rail and how it was established in the Alberni Valley.

## **Membership**

The IRCWG will consist of representatives from the Hupacasath First Nation, Tseshaht First Nation, and the ACRD. Other groups as agreed to by all the parties.

## **Meeting Procedures**

For the period starting January 2024 and ending December 31, 2024, the meetings of the Working Group shall be held every second month or as agreed upon by the group. Decisions of the group will be made on a consensus basis. The meeting shall be facilitated by the CAO of the ACRD or one of the group partners.

At least one representative from each partner shall represent quorum.

## **Resources and Reporting**

ACRD administrative staff resources will provide support to the Working Group including preparing agendas, coordination of research and reports from consultants, recording of all meetings and ensuring agendas, minutes, are forwarded electronically for circulation to all members.

Note: Meeting minutes are deemed to be open public information unless specifically stated and minuted as being Confidential/In-Camera.

Technical support shall be coordinated and contracted by the ACRD but will be provided by and a mutually agreed upon third party. Technical services shall be established through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that will be issued by the ACRD. The contract for technical service will prioritize the following key areas:

- a) Coordination of contextual comparators and facilitation of blue-sky or Greenfield examination of opportunities the IRCWG could consider.
- b) Technical analysis and/or investigations regarding the breadth and viability and of new markets by rail or by an alternative engagement of the rail corridor both regionally and in connection with the greater Vancouver Island;
- c) The ability to synthesize and summarize the previous work and research completed by other rail corridor proponents (ICF, provincial government, etc.,)
- d) The facilitation of Working Group member discussions to help establish and articulate a vision for a highest a best shared use for the corridor, as well as possible alternative uses should consensus not be achieved.
- e) The development of public engagement and communications plans;
- f) The ability to help bridge appropriate themes and technical information with other standing committees, such as the ACRD committee on Transportation (exploring emergency and alternative routes to Highway 4);

- g) The ability to coordinate and integrate possible additional work that may be required as the IRCWG examines various options (e.g., engineering, legal, academic business case investigations and comparisons, and other subcontracted work).
- h) Help assemble and summarize historical mapping and other studies.

## **Funding**

Funding for the participation of Working Group members will be borne by their appropriate organizations.

Funding for services provided by external contractors (contracted technical, facilitation, etc.) will be covered by the ACRD.

NOTE. Upon completion of the IRCWG work and receipt of a final report, participating organizations will be financially responsible for the recommendations they choose to implement within their organization.

## **Term**

Unless agreed upon by all parties involved in the IRCWG, the work of this Working Group will conclude with a summary report received no later than December 31, 2024. Any changes to the term will be established through the consensus of all parties.