



June 4, 2003

Gordon Pearce
Chair, Transportation Committee
Alberta Economic Development Authority
McDougall Centre
455 – 6th Street SW
Calgary, AB T2P 4E8

RE: Alberta Transportation Study

Dear Mr. Pearce:

It has come to the attention of the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce that you are working in partnership with Alberta Transportation, and have retained Prolog and the Van Horne Institute to study the present position and future outlook of Alberta's transportation sector.

The Red Deer Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests that east-west transportation routes between Alberta and British Columbia be included in this study.

More specifically, we encourage an analysis of the need for the Howse Pass Highway. This gentle mountain pass begins just south of the Saskatchewan River Crossing where the Howse River flows into the Saskatchewan River. The distance from the Columbia Icefields Parkway (Highway 93) to the top of the pass is 25 kilometers. Once through the pass and over the great divide, the highway would follow the Blaeberry River to connect with the Trans-Canada Highway at Donald's Station, north of Golden. The British Columbia portion of the road is 55 kilometers and follows an existing logging road.

We acknowledge the world class resource of the Banff/Jasper National Parks and its environmental sensitivities. We also recognize that it constitutes one of the greatest inter-provincial trade barriers in the country and that the Howse Pass Highway would reduce central Alberta shipping costs to the Port of Vancouver by 10 to 15 percent. Despite the initial perception that these points are in conflict, we believe that a healthy balance can be struck.

The concept of extending Highway 11 through the Howse Pass has been promoted for almost 60 years. It took on new meaning in the mid-70s when the Government of Alberta rebuilt Highway 11 west from Rocky Mountain House to connect with the Columbia Icefields Parkway at Saskatchewan River Crossing. This well-maintained highway was built to a standard that allows heavy truck traffic, however, since the Icefields Parkway restricts truck traffic it has become an under-utilized resource.

Our central Alberta businesses now need this access more than they ever have and analysis of this option appears to fit within your study parameters pertaining to transportation logistics.



RED DEER CHAMBER
of COMMERCE

Policy

We look forward to discussing this matter with you to determine if the Howse Pass can be included in your Alberta Transportation Study and identify and role the Red Deer Chamber of Commerce can play in providing the information you require.

Yours truly,

RED DEER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Don Oszli, CA, CMA
President (2002-03)