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Highway 19A Traffic Management Plan Shifts Focus to Accommodate Seasonal Visitors

The South Island Highway Upgrade Project is shifting into summer gear to help seasonal visitors navigate City roads and detours.

“We will soon see seasonal visitors arrive with different routing and information needs than residents,” says Ron Neufeld, the City’s general manager of operations. “The focus of our traffic management planning now shifts to help this group travel safely and efficiently.”

The primary goals of the project’s traffic management plan during the summer months include simplifying signage for all traffic navigating detour routes, and encouraging seasonal visitors to travel the scenic oceanside detour route.

Summer changes to the 19A Traffic Management Plan include the following:

- Route A, previously one of three equally-weighted detour routes, will become the main summer detour route promoted to seasonal visitors. It will be referred to as the “Oceanside” route in all communications for seasonal visitors. Signage and routing will focus on encouraging seasonal visitors to use this route.
- Signage will be simplified along all detour routes, as follows:
 - Messaging on electronic boards will highlight Routes A & B only during summer months
 - Detour signage will be removed at 2nd Avenue and Hwy 19A, as well as along Hwy 19
 - Electronic signs boards will be updated with new messaging and re-located to main routes

The Oceanside route will be promoted to seasonal visitors using the following methods:

- Publishing a new map to highlight the Oceanside route (this map will also be available online)
- Providing maps to local lodging and other seasonally-focused businesses through the Chamber of Commerce, and distributing maps province-wide via the Visitor Information Centre network
- Posting Oceanside route signs and information at Oyster Bay and Seymour Narrows pull-outs
- Encouraging visitors to follow the Oceanside route this summer via local and Comox Valley media

“Part of the summer focus on keeping seasonal traffic on the Oceanside route is a direct result of working with the Chamber of Commerce and businesses along 19A that rely on summer visitors using this route,” says Mayor Charlie Cornfield. “As part of this, the City reminds residents that, although there are no businesses located in the construction zone, those businesses located on Highway 19A directly to the north and south of the zone are open for business as usual.

“We see residents are making their way around the construction zone efficiently,” adds the Mayor. “We’d like to thank all the people who’ve changed their route over the past few months. This type of cooperation is key to improving our infrastructure and our community. The highway upgrade project is on schedule and on budget, and the cooperation of residents and businesses has helped make this possible.”

Ongoing speed and volume concerns on the Galerno detour route are being addressed as follows:

- Increasing the number of speed limit signs on Galerno
- Working with the RCMP and ICBC
- Working to encourage northbound-only use of Galerno
- Re-positioning reader-board signage to remind southbound drivers to travel via South Alder

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