



# PLANNING AND FEASIBILITY STUDY

## Digby Island / Tsimshian Peninsula Access Project

September 2003



**PLANNING AND FEASIBILITY STUDY  
DIGBY ISLAND/TSIMSHIAN PENINSULA ACCESS PROJECT**

undertaken on behalf of:

Lax Kw'alaams First Nation  
Metlakatla First Nation  
City of Prince Rupert  
BC Ministry of Transportation  
Western Economic Diversification Canada

by:



TRILLIUM *Business Strategies Inc.*

with major components of the study completed as follows:

Technical Feasibility and Cost  
Conceptual Bridge Designs  
Potential Program Savings  
Potential Proceeds from Land  
Potential Economic Benefits

*Stevens Engineering Ltd.*  
*Delcan Corporation*  
*Ministry of Transportation*  
*Royal LePage Advisors*  
*CCG Consulting Group Ltd.*

September 2003

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Prince Rupert Region is situated on the North Coast of British Columbia. It is the traditional territory of the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla peoples.

About 1,200 people, mostly First Nations, reside on the Tsimshian Peninsula. The Lax Kw'alaams First Nation is located at Port Simpson, 20 km north of Prince Rupert. The Metlakatla First Nation is also located on the Peninsula, near Venn Passage.

About 15,000 people live in the city of Prince Rupert on Kaien Island, a rugged coastal island adjoining the mainland. The Prince Rupert Airport on Digby Island services the region.

There are no road connections between Lax Kw'alaams, Metlakatla, the airport and Prince Rupert.

Improved transportation service has been an important local priority. Ideally, a network of roads and connecting bridges would connect the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla communities, the Airport on Digby Island, and Prince Rupert. These improvements, which have become known as the Digby Island/Tsimshian Peninsula Access Project (Access Project), would facilitate the movement of people and goods within the region as well as into and out of the region.

In June 2001, the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation, Metlakatla First Nation, City of Prince Rupert, Ministry of Transportation and Western Economic Diversification Canada agreed to complete the planning and feasibility phase of the proposed Access Project.

The proposed transportation improvements include the following components:

1. a road connecting the existing Prince Rupert road network near the Fairview Terminal to a bridge at the harbour entrance
2. a suspension bridge spanning the harbour from Kaien Island to Philips Point on Digby Island
3. a road connecting the suspension bridge to the existing Digby Airport Road
4. a road connecting the Digby Airport Road to a bridge across Venn Passage
5. a tied-arch bridge spanning Venn Passage from Dundas Point on Digby Island to Verney Island on the Tsimshian Peninsula
6. a road connecting the Venn Passage bridge to the south end of the Tuck Inlet Road leading to the community of Lax Kw'alaams, and a spur road to the community of Metlakatla.

The study concluded that the development of a network of roads and connecting bridges to connect the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla communities, the Airport on Digby Island, and Prince Rupert is technically feasible, and the infrastructure could be constructed for about \$138 million (2003\$).

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