



# Katzie First Nation and City of Pitt Meadows United in Concerns Regarding Funding Shortfall to Support Grade Separation at Harris Road

February 13, 2024

**File Number:** 2024-05

*Grade separation at Harris Road is critical to address many existing and future rail impacts to Katzie members and residents of the City.*

Katzie First Nation (Katzie) and the City of Pitt Meadows (the City) are jointly announcing our shared concerns regarding the current lack of funding for the proposed grade separation at Harris Road (Project), which is one component of the Pitt Meadows Road and Rail Improvements Project (PMRRIP). The Project would help alleviate adverse impacts associated with the movement of goods by rail with the elimination of the at-grade crossing, which currently poses safety, access and other concerns for both Katzie members and residents of the City.

Despite this lack of funding for the grade separation at Harris Road, it is Katzie's and the City's collective understanding that the siding and lead track component of PMRRIP, which proposes to enhance Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railway's (CPKC) mainline track capacity and throughput, is intended to proceed.

"The rail component and the grade separation have always been intended to be completed together under the PMRRIP," said Katzie Chief Grace George. "We cannot support anything that enhances CPKC's mainline track capacity without mitigating the significant impacts, risks and challenges faced by our residents from existing and future rail traffic at Harris Road. Eliminating the at-grade crossing at Harris Road is an important part of that."

“Katzie and the City stand united in our assertion that grade separation is needed at the Harris Road rail crossing” said Mayor Nicole MacDonald. “The at-grade crossing is one of the busiest in the Lower Mainland and one of the highest risk in Canada, impacting emergency response times, access, traffic flow and congestion, public safety, and economic development.”

Projections show that these rail impacts will only increase as train volumes in Pitt Meadows continue to grow. By 2030, it is predicted that train volumes will double, resulting in over 7.5hrs/day of blockages at the Harris Road rail crossing - the main roadway in and through the City. The Harris Road crossing is a main access point between Katzie IR1 and the rest of its territory to the north, where Katzie members travel to hunt, fish, harvest and practice their culture. It is also the primary route for emergency services to have timely access to Katzie IR1.

“The Project is critical infrastructure that will mitigate the impacts of trade growth on our respective residents and improve safety, livability, viability, and economic prosperity.” said Mayor MacDonald. “We remain committed to the Project and finding a path forward.”

“Katzie and the City are calling on several key parties – including the federal and provincial governments, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and CPKC to collectively discuss the grade separation at Harris Road, our concerns and how we can ensure its implementation.” concluded Chief Grace.

In addition to this announcement, Katzie and the City have sent an official letter to the Federal Minister of Transport, the Provincial Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the President and CEO of Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and the Associate Vice President of CPKC. [A copy of this letter is available here.](#)

-30-

**For more information:**

**Katzie First Nation**

Stephen Bruyneel

Katzie First Nation Communications Advisor

[sbruyneel@katzie.ca](mailto:sbruyneel@katzie.ca)

604-842-1971

**City of Pitt Meadows**

Stephanie St. Jean

Director of Corporate Services

City of Pitt Meadows  
[communications@pittmeadows.ca](mailto:communications@pittmeadows.ca)

[Home](#) > [Our Community](#) > [News](#) > [Media Releases](#)

> [Katzie First Nation and City of Pitt Meadows United in Concerns Regarding Funding Shortfall to Support Grade Separation at Harris Road](#)



**KATZIE**  
FIRST NATION  
...Land of the Moss



Peter Xotta  
President and CEO  
Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
100 The Point, 999 Canada Place  
Vancouver, BC V6C 3T4  
Sent via email: peter.xotta@portvancouver.com

Jeff Edwards  
AVP Market Strategy & Demand Management  
Canada Pacific Kansas City (CPKC)  
7550 Ogden Dale Road S.E.  
Calgary, Alberta T2C 4X9  
Sent via email: jeff.edwards@cpkcr.com

The Honorable Pablo Rodriguez  
Minister of Transport  
Government of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Sent via email: pablo.rodriguez@parl.gc.ca

Hon. Rob Fleming  
BC Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure  
PO Box 9055 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2  
Sent via email: rob.fleming.mla@leg.bc.ca

February 6, 2024

Dear Minister Rodriguez, Minister Fleming, Mr. Xotta, and Mr. Edwards,

Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows are writing to express our shared concerns for the funding shortfall to support the Pitt Meadows Road and Rail Improvements Project's ("PMRRIP") proposed grade separation component at Harris Road ("Project"), as well as, look forward to collectively discussing the Project in early 2024 and finding a solution to close the funding gap.

The Project is intended to help alleviate adverse impacts associated with the movement of goods by rail and improve Canada's trade network by eliminating the at-grade rail crossing at Harris Road, which currently poses safety, access, and other concerns for our respective residents.

We understand CPKC is continuing to pursue the PMRRIP siding and lead track rail project. Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows have always understood that the PMRRIP siding and lead track rail project, which is intended to enhance CPKC's mainline track capacity and throughput, would not proceed without the Project. We cannot support a project to accommodate increased throughput without a clear plan to mitigate the significant impacts, risks and challenges faced by our residents from existing and future rail traffic at Harris Road. Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows recognize the Project as an integral part of the plan to alleviate adverse impacts, which will require additional steps and initiatives.

### ***Concerns with the Harris Road Rail Crossing***

The at-grade rail crossing at Harris Road is currently one of the busiest crossings in the Lower Mainland and one of the top 500 (3%) highest risk railway crossings in Canada, raising significant safety and quality of life concerns for Katzie First Nation and the City of Pitt Meadows. There are currently up to 28 freight or 3.5 hours of blockage at the Harris Road crossing on any given weekday, which limits access for



**KATZIE**  
FIRST NATION  
...Land of the Moss



emergency vehicles and has significant impacts for our residents' commutes, including for access to essential services. For Katzie First Nation, the Harris Road crossing is a main access point between Katzie IR1 and the rest of our territory to the north where members travel to hunt, fish, harvest and practice their culture, and is also the primary route for emergency services to have timely access to Katzie IR1.

These rail impacts will only increase as train volumes in Pitt Meadows continue to grow. By 2030, it is predicted that train volumes will double, resulting in over 7.5hrs/day of blockages at the Harris Road rail crossing - the main roadway in and through the City.

In summary, a grade separation project at Harris Road will mitigate trade growth impacts, improve Canada's trade network, enhance emergency response, make commutes faster and safer, reduce vehicle emissions and congestion, and foster community connections, making Pitt Meadows a more livable city. If the CPKC siding and lead track expansion is to proceed, the road separation project at Harris Road must proceed alongside it.

#### ***Next Steps***

Each of the government bodies and organizations addressed in this joint letter have different roles to play in the Project and PMRRIP rail components. We request that all parties work together, collaboratively and creatively, to identify how to fund and support the grade separation project at Harris Road.

When considering the adverse local and regional impacts associated with trade growth and increased rail activity, the need for this grade separation project on a national, provincial, regional, and local level will only continue to grow.

We look forward to continued engagement on the implementation of the grade separation project at Harris Road. Katzie First Nation Council and City of Pitt Meadows Council are committed to collectively discuss and progress this Project with representatives from your respective parties in early 2024.

Sincerely,

Chief Grace George  
Katzie First Nation

Mayor Nicole MacDonald  
City of Pitt Meadows



**KATZIE**  
FIRST NATION  
...Land of the Moss



**Cc:**

Katzie First Nation Council  
City of Pitt Meadows Council  
Mike LoVecchio, Director Indigenous Relations and Government Affairs, Canada Pacific Kansas City  
Aliana Slot, Manager of Infrastructure Projects – Regulatory and Consultation Programs, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Duncan Wilson, Vice President, Environment and External Affairs, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Cliff Stewart, Vice President, Infrastructure, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Charlotte Olson, Director, Infrastructure Delivery, Vancouver Fraser Port Authority  
Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
Hon. Sean Fraser, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities  
Hon. David Eby, Premier of British Columbia  
Hon. Anne Kang, BC Minister of Municipal Affairs  
Hon. Lisa Beare, MLA, Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge  
Hon. Dan Coulter, BC Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit  
Jordan Stein, Regional Advisor for Pacific, Prairies, North & Atlantic Operations, Office of the Minister of Transport  
Matthew Paisley, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities  
Michael Kurliak, Policy Advisor, Office of the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities  
Tyler Norman, Regional Advisor, British Columbia, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
Galen Richardson, Senior Regional Advisor, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance  
Kathryn Krishna, Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Kevin Richter, Associate Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Kevin Volk, Assistant Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Ashok Bhatti, Executive Director, SCR, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Sohee Ahn, Executive Director, Trade Policy & Negotiations, BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure  
Luc Chamberland, Director, Rail & Marine Determinations Directorate, Canada Transportation Agency  
Mark Roberts, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Pitt Meadows  
Samantha Maki, Director of Engineering & Operations, City of Pitt Meadows  
Justin Hart, Manager of Major Projects, City of Pitt Meadows