

2025

CITY OF VICTORIA | Transportation, Engineering and Public Works

Douglas Street RapidBus Project

James Bay Neighbourhood Association Meeting

March 11, 2025

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Agenda

Douglas St. RapidBus project

- 2025 Transportation highlights in James Bay
- Douglas Street Bus Lanes Downtown
- James Bay Vehicle Access & Possible Circulation Changes
- Questions

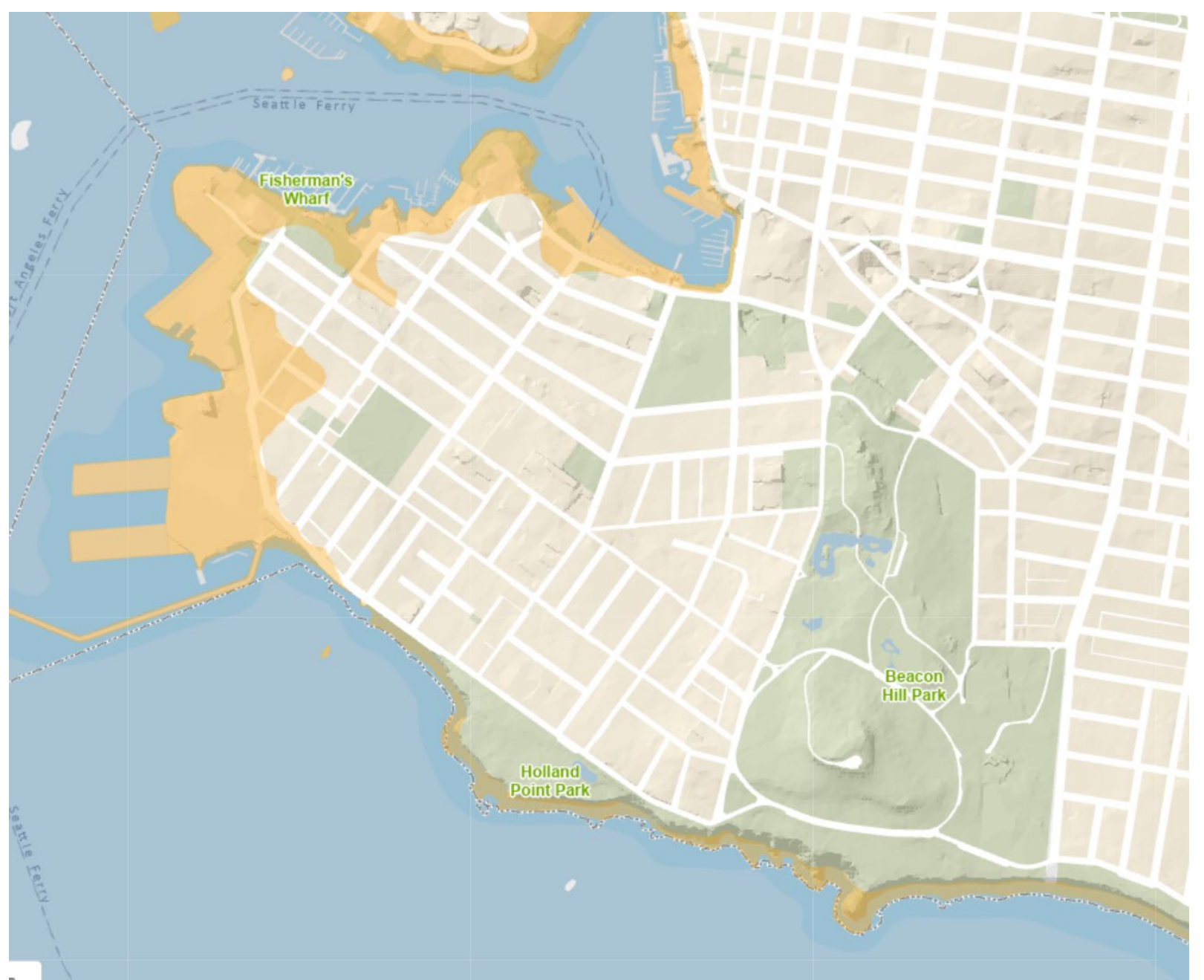


Before we begin...

- Transportation is an important issue to our entire community
 - Road safety and mobility matters to staff, Council, residents and visitors.
- Mobility needs are personal
 - What works best for me may not work for my neighbour.
 - The City aims to provide safe options for everyone to get around regardless of income, age or abilities.
- Please be respectful and share the space
 - Raise hands or put questions/comments in the chat
 - Remain muted when not speaking



Tsunami Hazard Map



Douglas and Dallas – Big Ideas

2018 – Live on Douglas (JBNA)

2024 Places and Spaces

Mile "0" Placemaking



- Re-align Dallas Road at Douglas Road to connect Mile "0" to the waterfront and view
- Expanded and improved green space with rain gardens, lawns, and play
- Celebrate and interpret Lekwungen cultural heritage
- New traffic circle to improve circulation and safety
- Tour bus parking

Birds-eye view looking south

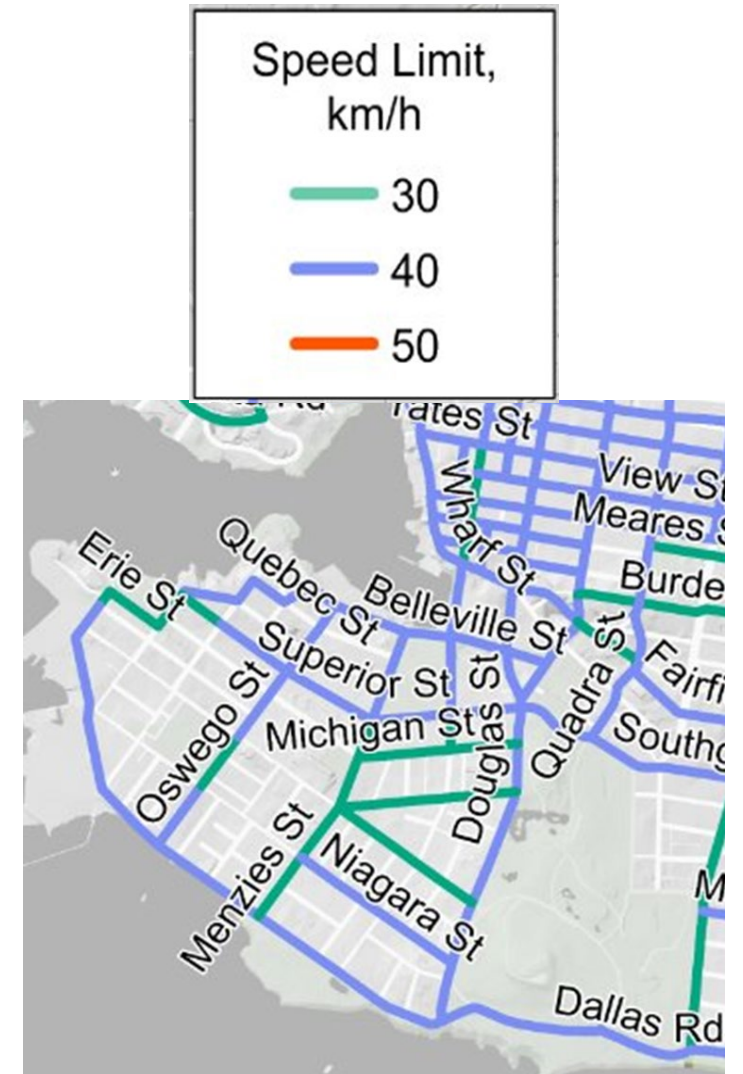
Before we begin...

- We have heard you!
 - Through recent phone calls and emails, Official Community Plan engagement, and decades of feedback from James Bay residents, common themes have emerged:
 - Need for better access to/from James Bay
 - Desire to address cruise ship traffic
 - Requests for traffic calming and slower speeds
 - Frustration during special events
 - Concerns about seniors and people with mobility issues
 - Transit needs
 - We will continue to improve transportation in James Bay through this and other projects



2025 James Bay Projects

- Recently completed 30km/h local streets in James Bay
- Council recently approved lower speed limits on collectors and arterials as per map
 - Signage planned to be complete citywide by end of 2026
- New or upgraded Crosswalks Planned for 2025
 - Michigan & Oswego
 - Erie St & Fisherman Wharf Park
 - Quebec & Pendray





Blanshard Street – Thank you for your Patience

More Efficient:

- New dedicated left-turn lanes
- Turn detection
- Better signal coordination along corridor

Safer and More Accessible:

- Repaving and refreshed paint markings
- Protected bike lanes and accessibility upgrades

More walkable:

- Treed median – Yates to Johnson
- Lighting and other landscaping improvements
- Safer crosswalks and better separation from traffic

Improved driveability and cycling facilities on Blanshard Street will free up capacity on Douglas Street.

Caledonia to Kings (~2025)



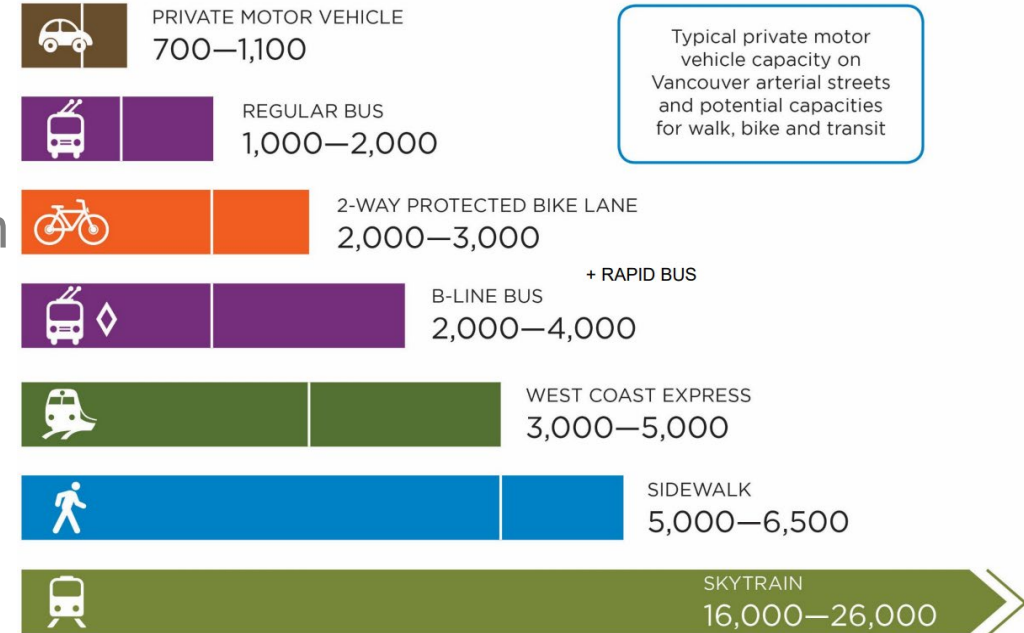
Fort to Belleville (~2025)

Douglas Street Project Background

Why invest in better transit?

- Accommodate future population growth
- Contribute to climate action
 - ~25 per cent of all emissions from transportation
- Improve air quality and congestion – move more people with fewer vehicles on the road
- Reduce household transportation costs

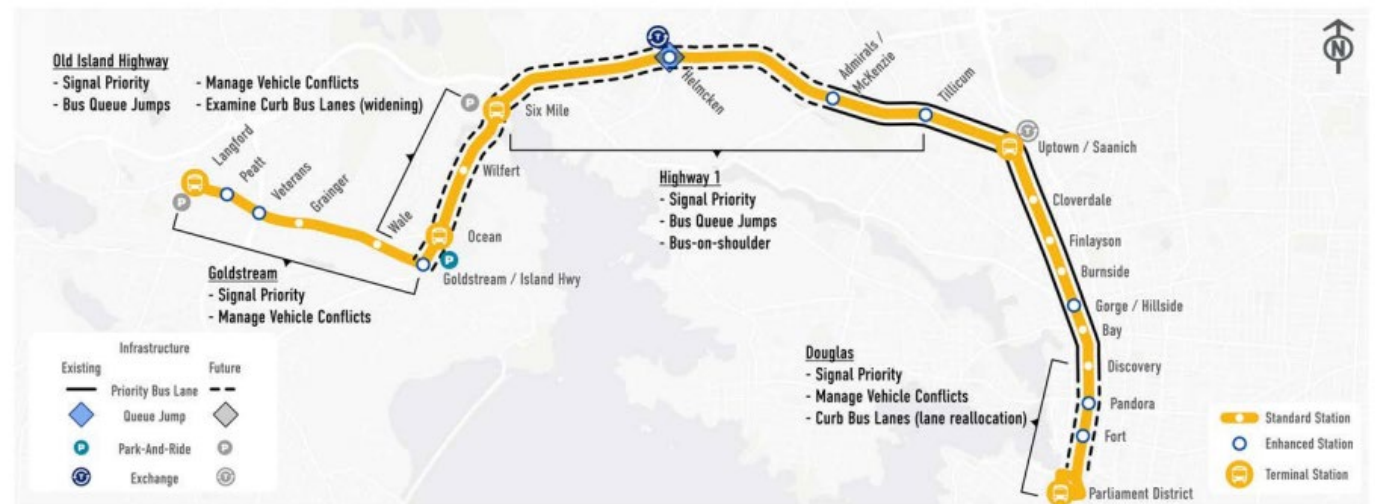
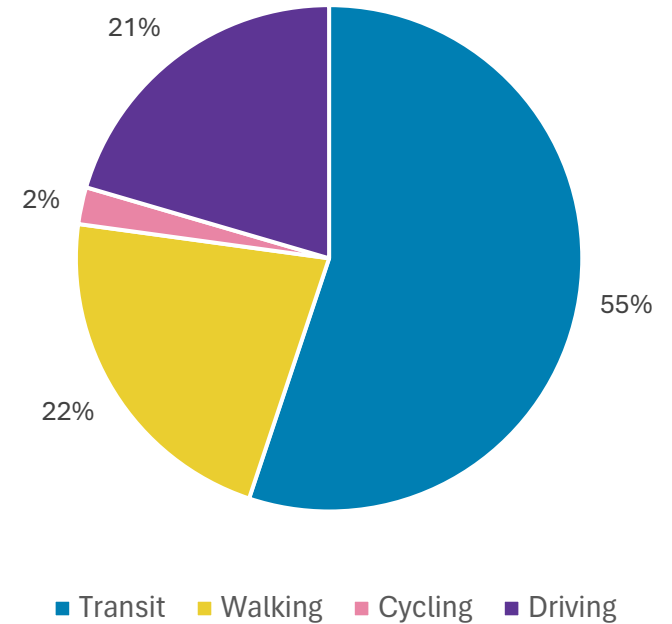
PEOPLE-MOVING CAPACITY: Vancouver Urban Transportation Modes (in persons per hour per direction - 3 metre lane width)



Why Douglas St.?

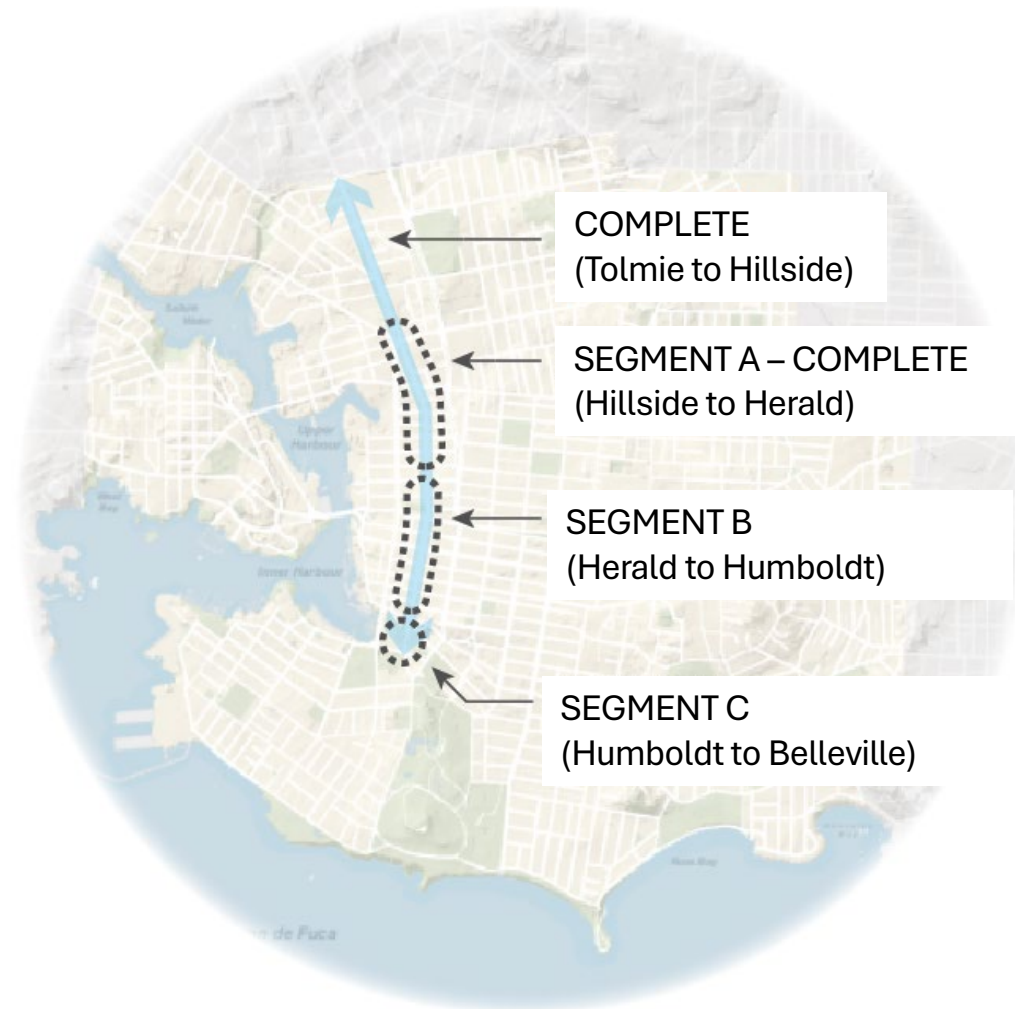
- **Transit on Douglas St. carries 55 per cent of the people with less than 10 per cent of the vehicle traffic.**
- **20+ years of engagement have confirmed Douglas St. as a rapid transit corridor.**
- The Province and other municipalities are investing to improve connections to Westshore, airport and ferry terminal via Highway 1.
- The Province’s Transit-Oriented Development legislation will help housing growth near Douglas St.

Douglas St. Traffic - Typical Weekday PM Peak



RapidBus on Douglas St.

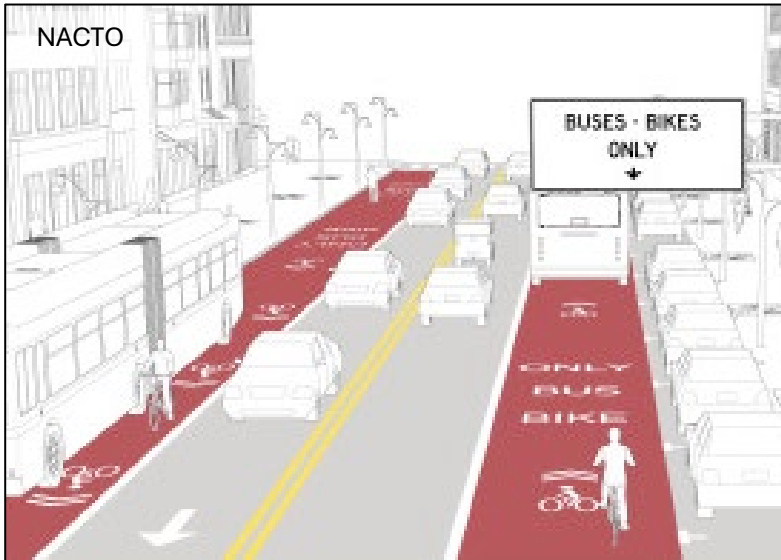
- Curbside **dedicated bus lanes** on Douglas St. (Tolmie to Hillside) completed in 2015
- Segment A – curbside dedicated bus lanes: completed in August 2024
- Segment B and C
 - Conceptual Design
 - Detailed design in 2025 ← **We are here**
 - Update to Council in 2026
 - Construction in 2027-2028



Segment A – Hillside Ave. to Herald St.

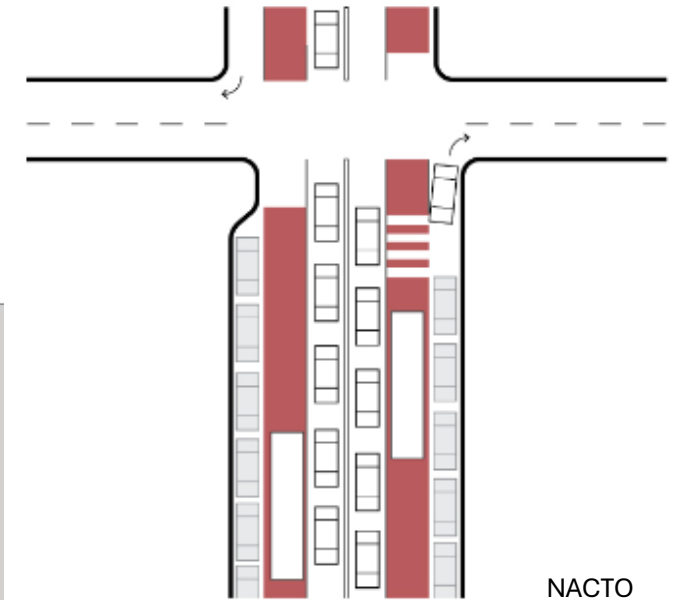
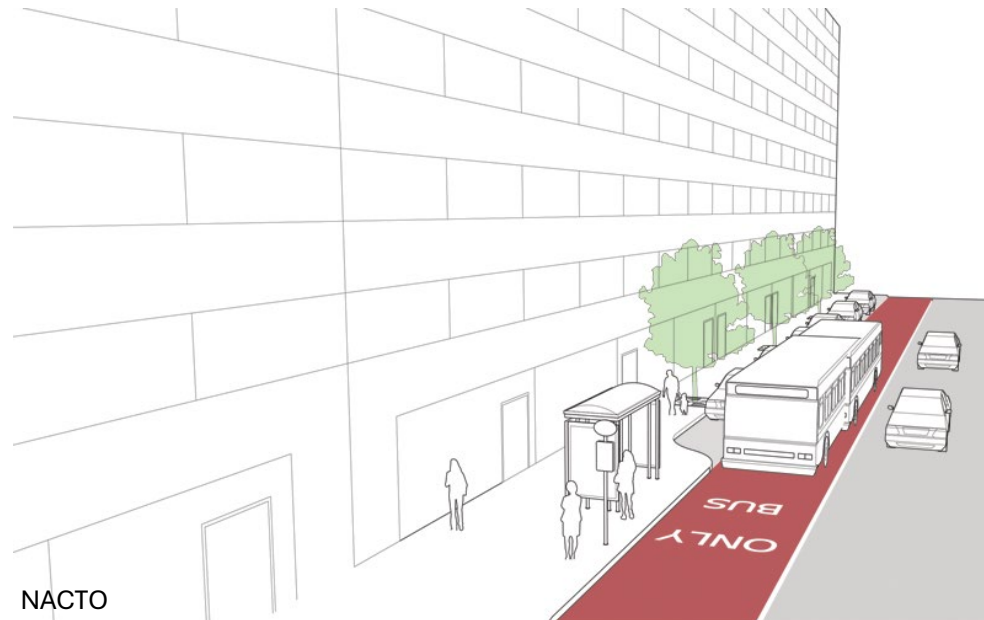
Design Approach: **Converted from peak-only to 24/7 curbside bus lane**

- **Complete**



Segment B – Herald to Humboldt St.

Design Approach: Preliminary recommendation for offset bus lanes



Various design considerations related to turning movements, downtown traffic circulation and accommodation of cyclists will need to be further analyzed through the detailed design process.

Segment C – Humboldt to Belleville St.

Design Approach: **Undetermined**

- Complex & technically challenging:
 - Limited space compared to other segments
 - Need to accommodate curbside RapidBus stops & local bus stops
 - Will be the focus of remaining detailed design
- Council report recommended exploring:
 - Transit-only northbound travel lanes
 - Circulation improvements to/from James Bay via Blanshard St.
 - Relocating Legislature transit exchange to Crystal Gardens
 - More resilience against special events & protests
- Staff & consultants are doing detailed analysis of the above options & more

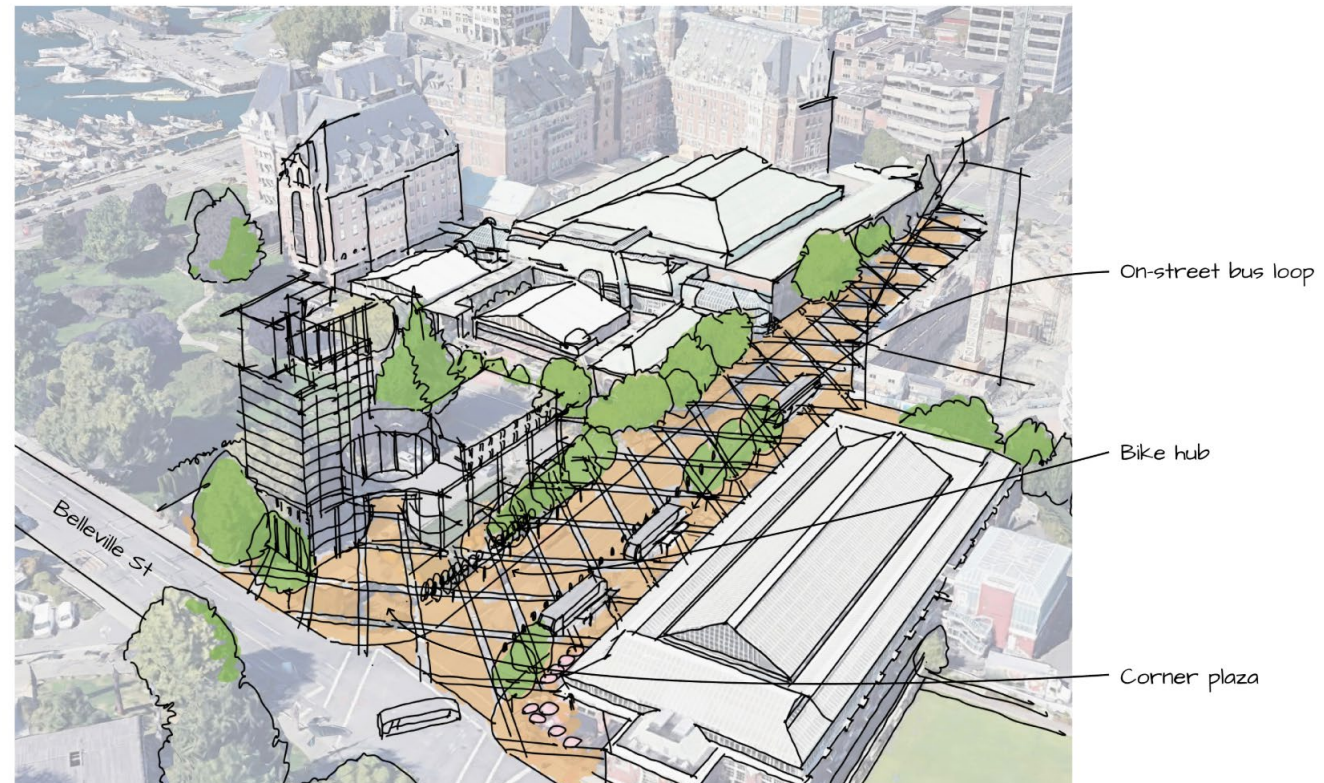


Relationship to James Bay

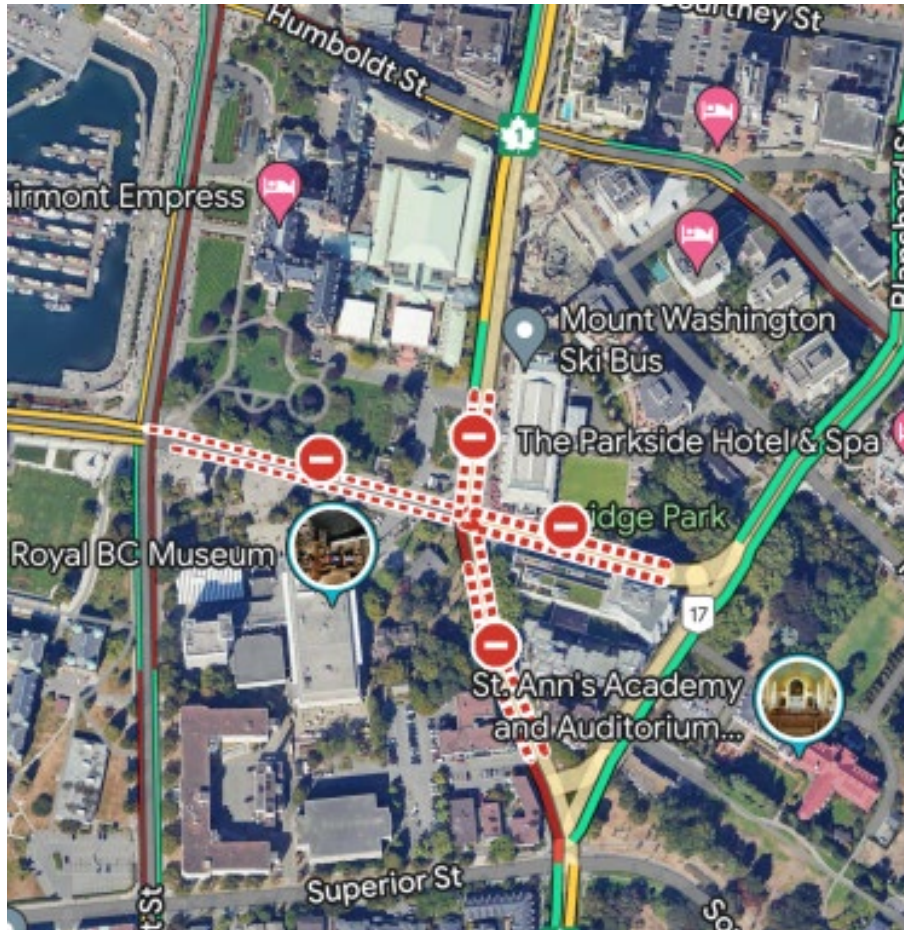
Potential Transit Exchange at Douglas/Belleville St.

Douglas Street - Transit Exchange Concept

- Current exchange at Legislature:
 - Often closed for special events/protests
 - Lacks amenities for drivers & passengers
- Mixed views in OCP Places & Spaces engagement for James Bay:
 - Some prefer proposed location over the existing one
 - Others worry it will increase congestion and decrease accessibility
- Staff will incorporate these concerns as we explore options for this block

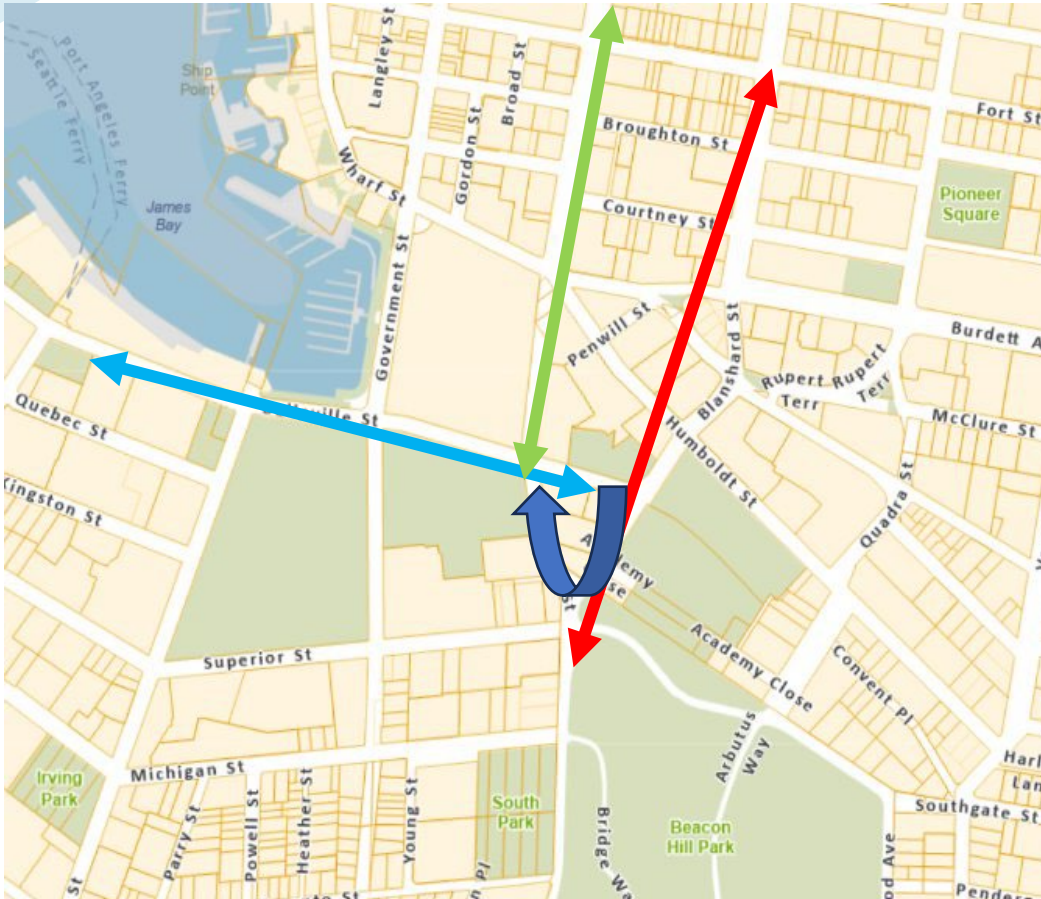


Access to/from James Bay



- Currently traffic circulation into James Bay is constrained to Government or Douglas St.
- These streets are regularly impacted by special events, parades and protests
- Reliable access to James Bay residents is needed

Exploring Access Improvements



- Prioritizing Blanshard St. for general purpose traffic:
 - Clear and prioritized access to James Bay
 - Reliable access during special events & protests
 - Give priority to traffic avoiding the Inner Harbour area
- Belleville St. as a ceremonial / pedestrian street
 - New circulation limits pressure on Inner Harbour, while still providing access
- Douglas St. has less traffic pressure while still supporting vehicles and loading/parking
- Opportunities for buses to turn around without running through James Bay

Exploring Access Improvements



- New 'T' intersection with Traffic Signal at Belleville / Blanshard
 - Direct Access to James Bay via Blanshard
 - New crosswalks – Cridge Park & St. Anns Academy
- New intersection alignment at Douglas/Blanshard/Southgate/Superior
 - Provides north/south access to Blanshard
 - Maintains vehicles access on Douglas
 - Removes vehicle slip lane
- Detailed design still underway
- **Access to James Bay is the key part of design process**

Next Steps

Segment B and C – Design

Council recommendation:

Commence detailed design for **dedicated bus lanes and other complete street improvements**

Segment B and C improvements schedule:

- Detailed design thru 2025
- Report back to Council in early 2026 with outcomes of detailed design and recommendations for next steps in implementation
- Pursue/confirm funding & finalize design in 2026-27
- Plan for construction in 2028



Public Engagement

- At this stage, design is focused on technical feasibility and analysis
- High-level themes from OCP engagement & decades of public feedback are informing this phase of design
- Further public engagement and communications are planned in early 2026
 - Pending Council direction on next steps
 - Design approach for Segment C will be clearer at this point
- All residents can send concerns to eng@victoria.ca for staff review



Thank You!

Questions?

Contact:

Safety / Intersections / Traffic --> eng@victoria.ca

Infrastructure issues (sidewalks, trip hazards, etc.)--> pw@victoria.ca

Bus Use

- Route 95 Blink serves 10,000 passengers daily on weekdays

Bus Layover Study

Existing Exchange	Route #	Route	Future Low		Future High	
			Frequency in Minutes	Bays	Frequency in Minutes	Bays
Legislature Exchange	3	James Bay/Royal Jubilee	15	0	15	0
	10	James Bay/Royal Jubilee	15	0	15	0
	30/31	Royal Oak/Downtown	15	2	15	2
	32	Cordova Bay/Royal Oak	30	0.5	30	0.5
	47	Goldstream Meadows/Downtown	20	1.5	20	1.5
	48	Happy Valley/Downtown	20	1.5	20	1.5
	53	Vic General/Langford Exchange	30	0.5	30	0.5
	61	Sooke/Langford/Downtown	10	3	10	3
	65	Sooke/Downtown via West Hills	30	1	30	1
	70s	Peninsula Routes	4	6	4	6
	95	Langford/Downtown	4	6	4	6
99	Downtown/Uptown/Uvic	0	0	4	3	
Fairfield/Douglas	4	Uvic/Downtown	10	1	10	1
	6	Royal Oak/Downtown	4	4	4	4
	7-21	Uvic/Downtown/Interurban	10	0	10	0
	27/28	Gordon Head/Majestic/Downtown	4	6	4	6
	27x/28X	Shelbourne Express	0	0	0	0
		Cook Street FTN	15	1	15	1
N/A	11	Tillicum/Uvic	20	0	20	0
				34		37

Scenario 1 – Status Quo

- All routes that currently layover downtown continue to do so at higher frequencies in the future
- Includes contingency bay for future Cook St. FTN
- Significant increase in number of bays needed compared to existing

This scenario is not tenable due to space constraints

Bus Layover Study

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	53	Vic General/Langford Exchange	30	0.5	30	0.5
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	65	Sooke/Downtown via West Hills	30	1	30	1
	70s	Peninsula Routes	4	6	4	6
	95	Langford/Downtown	4	6	4	6
99	Uptown/Downtown	0	0	2	5	
Fairfield/Douglas	4	Uvic/Downtown	0	0	0	0
	6	Royal Oak/Downtown	6	0	6	0
	7-21	Uvic/Downtown/Interurban	10	0	10	0
	27/28	Gordon Head/Majestic/Downtown	4	0	4	0
	27x/28X	Shelbourne Express	0	0	0	0
		Cook Street FTN	15	1	15	1
N/A	11	Tillicum/Uvic	0	0	0	0
				21		26

Scenario 3 – RapidBus + commuters

This scenario is the most likely

- 95, 70's, Cook Street FTN, and commuter routes layover Downtown
- Additional "99" RapidBus added and needs between 0 and 2 minute frequencies
- 3, 10, 6, 7/21, 27/28, Cook Street FTN still route to Downtown, but layover outside of Downtown
- 4, 11, 31/32 do not serve Downtown

Legend:

Terminates outside of Downtown

Routes through Downtown, but does not layover

Zero frequency means route does not operate

Douglas St. Regional Transit Corridor

Project History

- 2005 – Douglas Street Corridor Priority Plan
- 2008 – Douglas Street Rapid Bus Study
- 2010 – Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Study
 - 18-month process including 1500 people attending meetings and 500 businesses engaged
 - High level of support for Douglas St. as a Rapid Transit Corridor
- 2011 – Victoria Region Transit Future Plan
 - 5800 people engaged
 - Douglas St. identified in Council-endorsed rapid transit network
- 2013 – Victoria Region Service Review and Victoria Transit Priority Project
 - Engagement through open houses, surveys, regional workshops, stakeholder sessions and events

Douglas St. Regional Transit Corridor

Project History

- BC Transit 10-year Vision – Ongoing
- 2020 – South Island Transportation Study (MoTI)
 - “...policy and investment on increasing the infrastructure needed to build connections, capacity, improve safety and the choices for sustainable travel.”
- 2021 – Victoria Regional RapidBus Implementation Strategy (BC Transit)
 - “...daily transit travel would increase from approximately 80,000 to over 200,000 trips per day in 2038”
- 2022 – Council directed staff to provide options + recommendations for bus lanes from Belleville to Discovery St.
 - Conceptual design work in collaboration Watt Consulting, BC Transit
- 2024 – Staff presented conceptual designs to Council
 - Council directed staff to begin detailed design for dedicated bus lanes & complete street improvements on Douglas St. from Herald to Belleville St.
- 2024 – Official Community Plan engagement
 - City-wide engagement on mobility needs, as well as Places and Spaces workshops in James Bay

Douglas St. Regional Transit Corridor

Project Future

- 2024 – Staff presented conceptual designs to Council
 - Council directed staff to begin detailed design for dedicated bus lanes & complete street improvements on Douglas St. from Herald to Belleville St.
- 2024 – Official Community Plan engagement
 - City-wide engagement on mobility needs, as well as Places and Spaces workshops in James Bay
- 2025 – Continue to work on detailed design and analysis
 - Traffic flow modelling, BC Transit and other stakeholder needs, public feedback and more
- Early 2026 – Report back to Council
 - Staff will present outcomes of detailed design analysis and recommendations for next steps
- 2027 – Seek funding and finalize design (pending Council direction)
- 2028 – Construction (pending Council direction and available funding)