

Government Street Refresh.



Phase 1 Background Report

July 2021

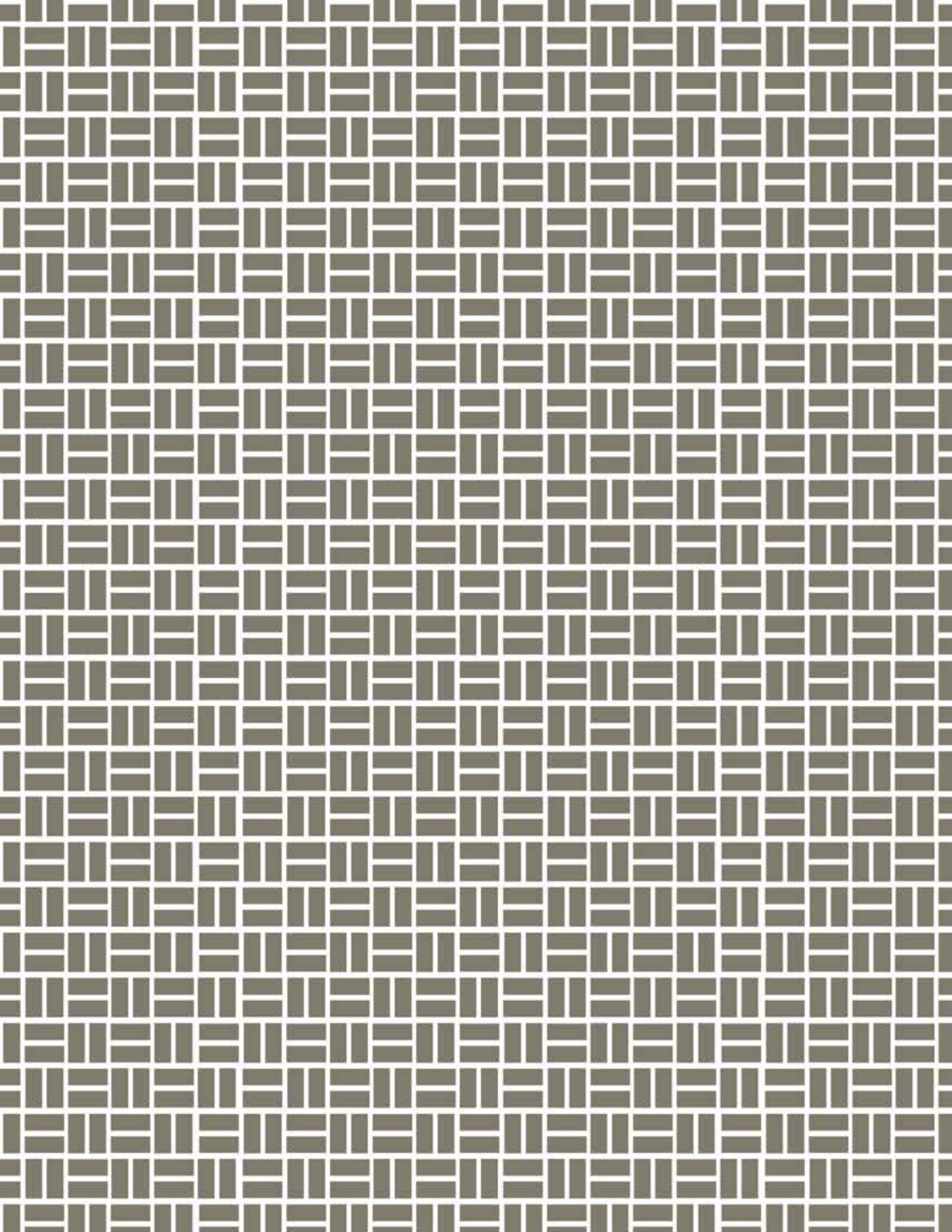
**The City of Victoria
is located on the
homelands of the
Esquimalt and
Songhees people.**

DIALOG®

Prepared for the City of Victoria
by Dialog
July 2021

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Introduction and Project Process





1961 aerial view, BC Archives i-26474

Introduction

The City of Victoria is developing a streetscape design for Government Street between Pandora Avenue and Humboldt Street. The project includes a detailed design of street furnishings and landscaping from Humboldt to Yates, and a concept design for the two blocks between Yates and Pandora.

This Phase 1 Background Report provides an overview of the planning and design process that the City will undertake, as well as the policy context, site analysis and transportation considerations, and best practices.

Expanding the pedestrian priority of Government Street is a strategic priority for the City, with the framework for its evolution laid out in: Council's Strategic Plan, the Official Community Plan, the Downtown Public Realm Plan, the Downtown Core Area Plan.

In addition to being informed by the policy framework and strategic actions, this project is informed by the successes and lessons learned from the Build Back Victoria program (which took place in 2020), targeted public and stakeholder engagement, and relevant technical analysis including: infrastructure assessment, transportation assessment, multi-mobility assessment, public space assessment, and precedents and best practices.

While the policy framework has identified this project as a priority for some time, the City recognized that there are five reasons why now is the time to undergo this design process:

1. The Government Street streetscape hasn't changed in more than 50 years. The street furniture and street trees, traffic signals and other streetscape elements are nearing the end of their life and will need replacement in the coming years.



Project Areas



Design Framework

Phase 1 Spring/Summer 2021

Gathering knowledge and assessing existing conditions

Activities:

- Policy Review
- Public Engagement
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Identify Opportunities, Constraints and Initial Ideas
- Establishing Priorities



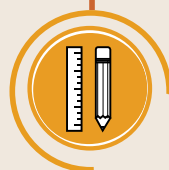
Concepts & Options

Phase 2 Summer/Fall 2021

Exploring options and a preferred approach

Activities:

- Stakeholder Workshops
- Concept Options and Evaluation
- Identify a Preferred Option
- Public and Council Engagement



Design Development

Phase 3 Fall 2021 to Winter 2022

Detailing the design and cost estimating

Activities:

- Stakeholder Workshop
- Refine Preferred Option
- Public and Council Engagement

Future Phased Implementation

2. We want to support downtown businesses impacted by the pandemic and build on the success of the City's Build Back Victoria program.
3. We also want to improve accessibility to support people with disabilities as well as encourage age-friendly public spaces to support children, youth and seniors.
4. The watermain underneath Government Street is scheduled for replacement in 2022/2023.
5. Making Government Street a people-priority street is an action of the City's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan and other planning guiding documents.

Project Process

The project will take place over three phases of work, from May 2021 to January 2022.

Phase 1 establishes the planning and design framework.

It is focused on gathering knowledge and creating a baseline for the design process. Activities include: policy review, identifying transportation and mobility options, drafting and initiation and engagement plan; working with stakeholders to identify opportunities, constraints and initial ideas; and, undergoing a public survey to understand what people would like to see and do on Government Street in the future.

Phase 2 identifies concept options, evaluates them and identifies a preferred option.

Phase 2 includes workshops with stakeholders and City staff to identify concept options for Government Street. These options are then further explored from a technical lens to understand what works and what needs

works. The options are then again shared with Stakeholders to evaluate together and work towards a preferred or hybrid option. The preferred option is developed and shared with the public and Council for comments and feedback.

Phase 3 is focused on design development.

Phase 3 evolves the concept with input from stakeholders, based on feedback that was received from the public and Council.

Public, Council and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Who Will Be Engaged

Stakeholder Working Group

A community stakeholder working group will be created to collaborate with the design team to inform the development of the design. The working group will be involved during each phase of the design process.

The community stakeholder working group includes one representative from each of the following groups:

- Downtown Residents Association
- Downtown Victoria Business Association (DVBA)
- The Bay Centre
- The Chamber
- Destination Greater Victoria
- City's Heritage Advisory Panel
- Accessibility Transportation Advisory Committee
- City's Accessibility Advisory Committee
- City's Active Transportation Committee
- Victoria Disability Resource Centre

- ICA (Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria)
- Queer Pride Society
- City of Victoria Youth Council
- Greater Victoria Placemaking Network
- Sidewalking Victoria
- Capital Bike
- Walk Victoria
- Architectural Institute of B.C.
- B.C. Society of Landscape Architects
- Urban Development Institute
- Business Representative on Government Street
 - Retail*
- Business Representative on Government Street
 - Restaurant*
- Business Representative on Government Street
 - TBA*
- Local arts and culture representative

In Phase 1 the working group will contribute to initial stages of analysis (identifying opportunities and constraints, evaluating Government Street today) and brain storming (sharing big and little ideas). This will inform Concept Option development by the design team in Phase 2.

In Phase 2 Stakeholders will work with the design team to evaluate concept options and to identify a preferred option or hybrid option.

In Phase 3 Stakeholders will review public and Council feedback on the preferred option along with the design team, and help to decide on a path forward. Finally, stakeholders will again meet in Phase 3 to see progress that is being made on the detailed design to provide feedback.

First Nations Involvement

As the City of Victoria is engaging the community about long-term improvements to Government Street, a place which significantly represents colonial settlement on the Nations' traditional territory.

A letter from the Mayor was sent to each of the Chiefs of the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations informing them of the project and asking if and how they would like their Nation to be involved, and what this might look like. The process will be determined in collaboration with the Nations.

During Phase 2 in-situ engagement will engage people to provide feedback on a preferred concept option. This will include staffed pop-ups on Government Street, as well as physical interventions such as ground decals to inform people about the opportunity to share their ideas.

Through an online survey in Phase 3 a refined concept will be shared for final feedback.

Public Engagement

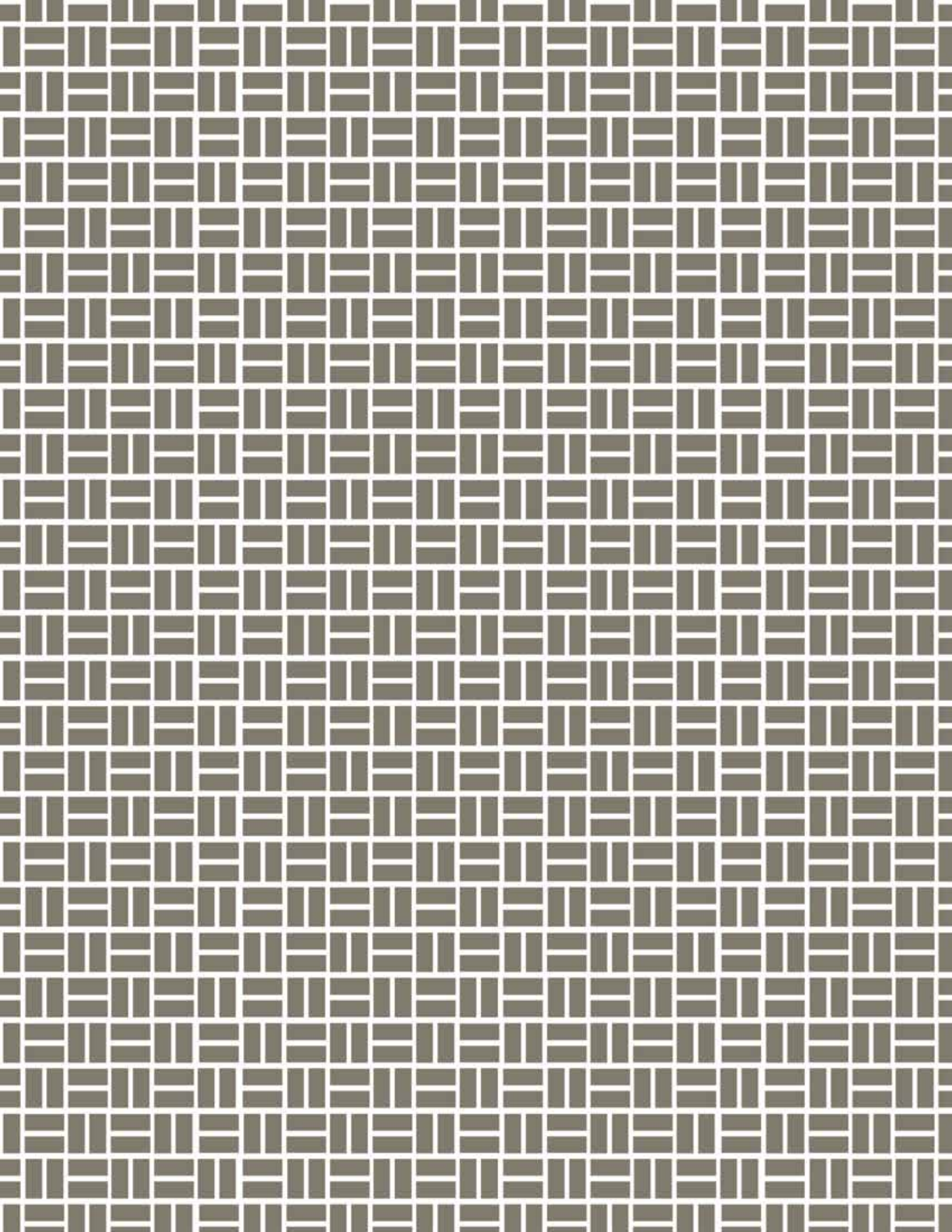
Broad Public Engagement will inform the design process in each of the three design phases. Online engagement using the City's online engagement platform Have Your Say will provide opportunities to weigh in virtually. There will also be opportunities for in person engagement.

Information about opportunities to provide feedback will be communicated through: websites, emails, social media, letters, video, printed ads, City Hall slideshow, posters, t-shirts, neighbourhood hot streets and more.

In Phase 1, an online survey will be used to understand the kinds of activities people would like to experience on Government Street in the future. Additionally, the survey will seek to understand how well Government Street is working for people today, and what the design team might need to prioritize or consider for improvements.



Circa 1914 aerial view looking north, near intersection of Yates, City of Victoria Archives (CVA) Mo5828_141



Policy and Planning Context



Policy Review

Expanding the pedestrian priority of Government Street is a strategic priority for the City, with the framework for this design process laid out in several key documents. Government Street is also an important component of the completion of the long-term AAA Bike Network.

The following provides a brief summary of relevant plans and initiatives.

Council's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

Council has identified the creation of a 'people priority' Government Street with a complete transformation of the street between Humbolt and Yates to be completed by the end of 2022.

The Official Community Plan (2012)

The 2012 OCP identifies two specific policies for Government Street:

- allow for an extension of one-way street to enable the extension of the Government Street Mall; and,
- extend the pedestrian corridor along Government Street Mall northward to Pembroke Street.

Additional broad objectives related to placemaking that are relevant for the planning and design of Government Street, include the following:

- Respond to the geographic context and create memorable places;
- Maintain view of existing landmarks and new landmarks be introduced to enhance visual identity and wayfinding;
- That streetscapes foster social vibrancy;
- That the built environment is beautified and

softened through natural features in the public realm;

- That public realm is animated through street life, festivals, celebrations and special events;
- That heritage values are considered; and,
- That streetscape improvements include art in public spaces and reflect the culture and heritage of Victoria.

Government Street can also support Community Wellbeing objectives by considering the needs of people of all ages; and, by seeking opportunities to promote social interaction among different generations through design and programming.

Finally, Government Street should seek to support Art and Culture, by considering the ways that it can support arts and cultural programming.

The Downtown Public Realm Plan (2019)

The Downtown Public Realm Plan identifies Government Street as a key corridor which connects major citywide attractions and destinations, and provide key points of entry into the Downtown area as well as a primary retail corridor. The plan sets out overarching strategies, design directions, short term actions as well as a suite of possible street furniture which are to be considered as a starting point for the detailed design process.

Overarching Strategies

Government Street is identified as one of two character streets, with the following key strategies for Government Street:

- Complete the Street (extend the pedestrian mall treatment between Wharf Street and Yates Street all the way to Pandora Street);
- Envision long-term change (curb-less shared street with multi-modal users freely moving through);
- Replace street trees and planters (replaces existing trees with dense canopy in planters with more transparent canopy trees that will allow the true heritage of Government Street to be more visible); and,
- Encourage sense of shared space (allow for temporary road closure to promote pedestrian environment and community building).

Visual Victoria

The Public Realm Plan identified the following directions which emerged out of the integrated Visual Victoria planning process:

- Reconfiguring the intersection of Government Street and Wharf Street to make it more comfortable and accessible for pedestrians, and emphasize it as a key pedestrian gateway and connection point between the Lower Causeway/Legislative Precinct and Old Town.
- Implementing a 'shared street' or whoonerf streetscape design on the new extension between Yates and Pembroke. Specifically, a curb-less streetscape environment with a continuous ground plane and paving materials, and the separation of pedestrian

from vehicular space using bollards, bench elements and other streetscape elements and furnishing. Together with temporary and seasonal traffic closures, this design will support the use of Government Street as a linear plaza, and an events and festivals space. This will also increase the use of the corridor a ceremonial street and parade route.

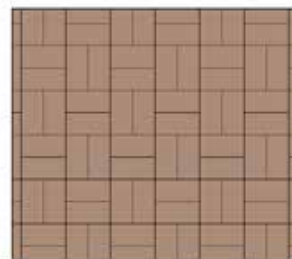
- Exploring the opportunity to incorporate more on-street parking within a shared streetscape environment similar to Broad Street for the existing section between Wharf Street and Yates Street.
- Exploring the opportunity to re-establish two way vehicle travel along Government Street through the Downtown.

Short Term Action

As a more immediate, short term action, the street trees and planters between Wharf St and Yates St will be replaced, given their deteriorating condition and the desire to have a more suitable tree species that does not block views of heritage building facades. As a part of this strategy, an irrigation system would also be installed.

Furnishings

A furnishing strategy that enhances the distinctive character of Government Street is



Downtown Public Realm Plan Planter and Paving Pattern for Government Street

proposed, with basket weave mortar set pavers, basalt wayfinding, and boulevard banding. The furnishing suite is proposed to take on the same furnishing suite as Old Town District, but with the addition of new planters and street trees with the specific planters, seating and street trees to be determined as part of detailed design. A suite of tree types (form, size, and canopy) is also recommended. Specific species will be in alignment with the Downtown Tree Specifications.

The Downtown Core Area Plan (2011)

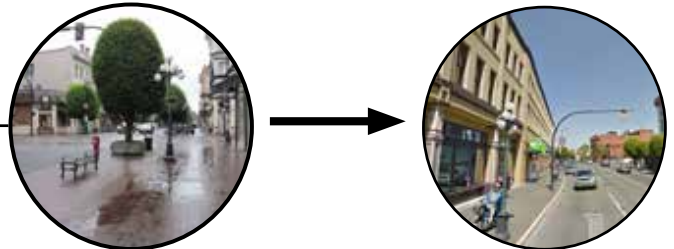
An extension of the Government Street Mall north to Pembroke Street is identified as one of the Public Amenity strategies of The Downtown Core Area Plan. This project is an important stepping stone in achieving this goal, and it is expected that this project will set an approach that will eventually be extended to provide a consistent experience throughout the entire length.

Several other policies and actions will be considered as a part of the design process:

- support connectivity across Government Street for pedestrians and cyclists;
- support public sidewalks with a minimum width of 5 to 6m depending on right-of-way conditions;
- encourage the provision of a single row of trees on both sides of right-of-way to enhance pedestrian realm;
- incorporate well-design and strategically located street furniture that is appropriate for the high volume of pedestrian flow;
- pedestrian-scale lighting on sidewalk;
- street furniture design should provide a sense of continuity along the street;
- minimal grade difference between street surface curb and sidewalk;

● Complete the street

- Extend existing Government St. treatment and aesthetics between Wharf St. and Yates St. all the way to Pandora Street.



● Envision long term change

- Curb-less shared street with multi-modal users freely moving through.



● Replace street trees and planters

- Replace existing trees with dense canopy in planters with more transparent canopy trees that will allow the true heritage of Government Street to shine and become more visible.



● Encourage sense of shared space

- Allow for temporary road closure to promote pedestrian environment and community building.



Downtown Public Realm Plan Strategies for Government Street

“One of the most prominent features in the Historic Commercial District is the Government Street Mall, which currently stretches northward from Belleville Street to Yates Street and connects the Inner Harbour with the Old Town Area.”

- The Downtown Core Area Plan (2011)

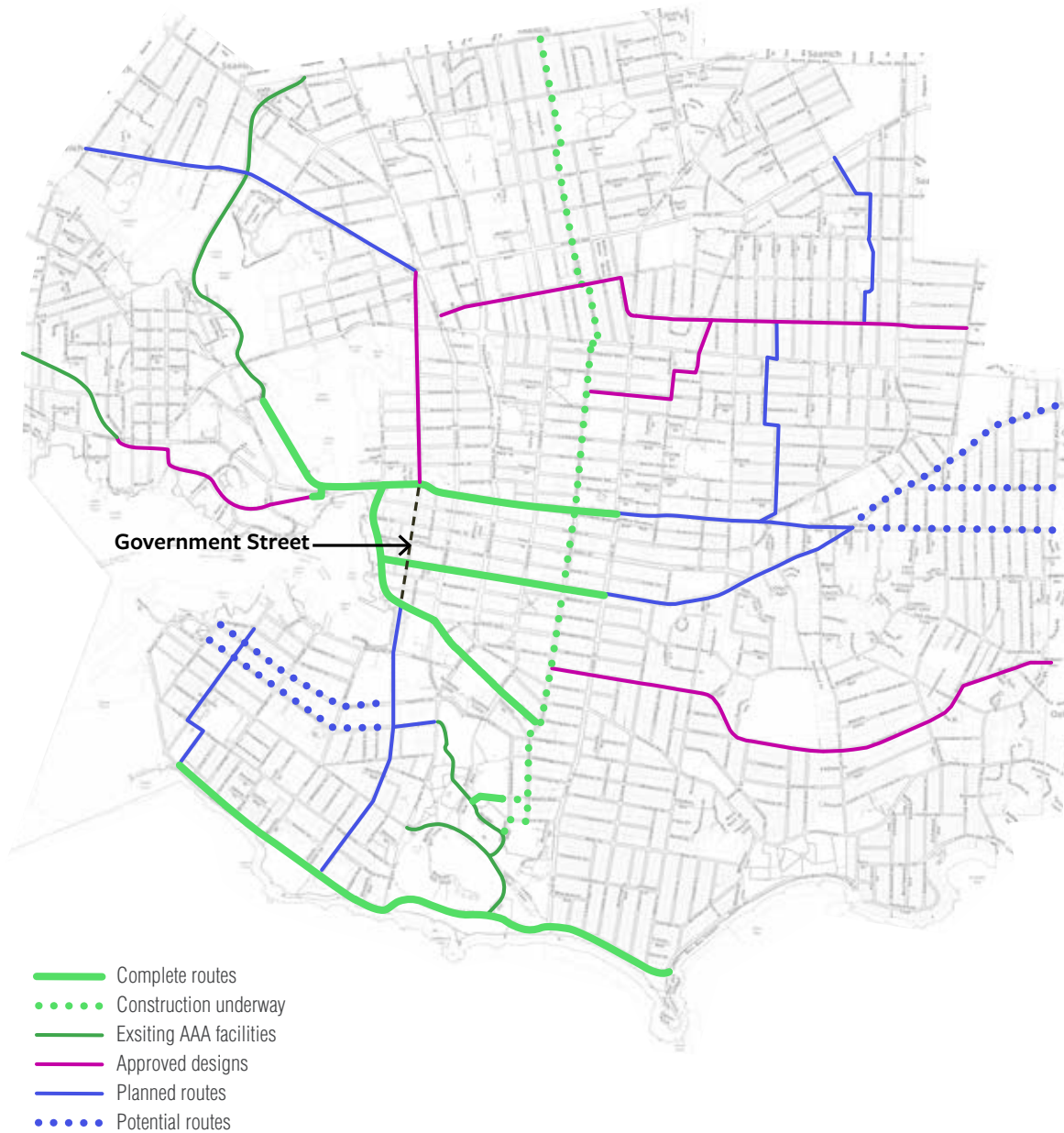
- generally two lanes of travel;
- travel lanes are wide enough to accommodate shared bicycle traffic;
- provide infrastructure to support seasonal and special event closures;
- ensure street furnishings exhibit designs unique to the Mall; and,
- establish generous tree planting and green infrastructure features.



Downtown Public Realm Plan Trees, Furnishings and Materials

Bicycle Master Plan (2016)

Government Street Refresh is book-ended by a planned AAA bicycle facility to the north which has an approved design, and by a planned route to the south.



Bicycle Master Plan - Cycling Network

Urban Forest Master Plan (2013)

The UFMP provides guidance on the management and enhancement of treed environments throughout the city of Victoria. It is a high-level plan that provides a 'roadmap' to help the municipality invest in and maintain its urban forest for the next 20 years and beyond.

Overall Vision:

In 2060, Victoria's homes and businesses lie within a stunning urban forest that is healthy, diverse and abundant in all parts of the city. Treed environments are valued as an integral part of this vibrant, livable and sustainable community: supporting biodiversity and watershed health; enhancing neighbourhoods; and creating places for activity, enjoyment and relaxation. Victoria's urban forest exemplifies sound and innovative practice and community stewardship.

The vision is supported by four goals, all of which are relevant for Government Street Refresh:

1. Develop and maintain strong community-wide support for the urban forest;
2. Protect, enhance and expand Victoria's urban forest;
3. Design and manage the urban forest to maximize watershed health, biodiversity, and the conservation of sensitive ecosystems;
4. Maximize community benefits from the urban forest in all neighbourhoods.

Recommendations

The following highest priority actions are relevant for Government Street Refresh:

City-wide Recommendations

- D. Increase urban forest cover to more optimal levels in neighbourhoods currently exhibiting low canopy cover.
- E. Conserve or replace sufficient greenspace to sustain the urban forest, with particular attention to the needs of large canopy trees.

“A desirable urban forest is about quality as much as quantity. It envisages a diversity of high quality, productive treed environments, distributed throughout all parts of the community. A high quality and productive urban forest is one that, while abundant, makes room for and upports the broad range of other values, needs and functions within a compact city like Victoria.”

- The City of Victoria Urban Forest Strategy



Recommendations for Public Lands

M. Manage existing mature street trees so as to extend their Safe Useful Life Expectancy (buying time for newer trees to develop and contribute meaningfully to the urban forest canopy).

N. Continue a vigorous street tree replacement program, selecting species and locations so as to maximize species and age diversity,

- be ready for future climates,
- minimize nuisance and risk,
- minimize maintenance costs, and
- maximize green infrastructure and other benefits.

Downtown Canopy in 2013

The UFMP indicates that the downtown area had the lowest amount of tree cover at about 3.4% in 2013, and further explains that: “large trees tend to proliferate where there is the green space to support them. The neighbourhoods with the highest percentage of tree cover tend to be characterized by parks and open space or large, traditional, single family residential properties, with more generous treed boulevards. Areas with low cover tend to be more highly urbanized, have less green space and more impervious cover. Clearly land use has a significant influence on urban forest cover.”

The Vision for Downtown 2060

*In the downtown core areas, **trees are separated from underground services**, either in subterranean or above-ground planting vaults, where they can grow in deep and uncompacted soils and provide a ‘breathing space’ where people can sit amid a bit of nature. New spaces for trees and green infrastructure have emerged as a result of the community’s commitment to creating a more walkable and liveable downtown area, supported by proactive development planning and innovative design. **Where space for trees is limited, large shrubs in planters, colourful hanging baskets**, green walls and roofs, and small community gardens bring nature into the built environment. Some streets have been de-paved to make way for walking and bicycling trails amid a canopy of trees.*

Goals and Outcomes

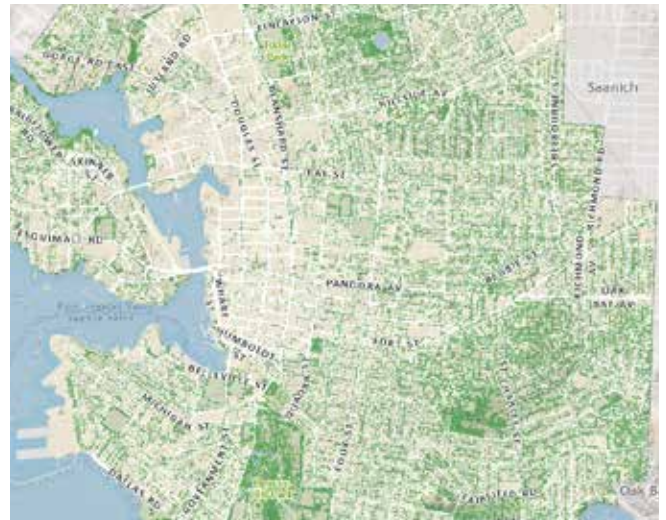
The following goals and outcomes directly inform Government Street Refresh.

Goal 2: Protect, enhance and expand Victoria’s urban forest.

- The urban forest is designed for longevity and resilience to threats such as climate change, development disturbance, or pest/disease outbreaks
- The built environment and urban forest support and enhance one another

Goal 4: Maximize community benefits from the urban forest in all neighbourhoods.

- The urban forest contributes significantly to the beautification and local character of the public realm.
- The urban forest supports the design objectives and functional intent of the city’s diverse urban places and thoroughfares.
- The urban forest is a part of the social fabric of the city, providing a safe place for festivals, smaller social gatherings and the enjoyment of nature.
- The urban forest is designed and managed to minimize risks and nuisances for residents, as well as conflicts with public and private utilities and infrastructure



2019 Tree Canopy Cover in Victoria



2019 Tree Canopy Cover on Government Street and Surrounding Areas

Build Back Victoria Program

The City has implemented a number of initiatives throughout the city to help support local businesses and the community through the COVID-19 pandemic. Government Street was a key location where these initiatives provided businesses with additional outdoor patio space and transformed the street into a pedestrian priority zone. This program will continue in parallel to the Government Street Refresh process. Public feedback on streetscape interventions has been collected as a part of this program, and will continue to be collected and to inform the Government Street Refresh design process.

Some of the key lessons that were learned as a part of this program to date include:

- People are generally supportive of the change to a pedestrian priority.
- People would like to see that the materials and language of design be elevated.
- People are generally supportive of the types of programming and activities that the interventions have given space to.

Art in Public Places Policies and Guidelines

The Public Art Policy notes that the City may allocate up to one percent of an overall construction budget for civic capital projects towards funding art in public places. As a part of the Government Street Refresh project, it will be important to consider how funding as a part of the watermain replacement and streetscape improvements can be used to support the Art in Public Places policy.



The Poet Laureate Legacy Tree by Glenn Closson is located at Broughton Street and Government Street.



The Red Dragon is located at Government Street and Pandora. Artist unknown.

Civil and Infrastructure Considerations

Government Street has evolved over time as a complex urban place. In the section between Humboldt Street and Yates Street we find both curb and mid-sidewalk drainage, utilities in both the roadway and sidewalk (BC Hydro and Telus vaults), and a more pedestrian orientated cross section with rollover curbs. The section between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue is more conventional curb and gutter drainage, and a more car orientated cross section. Of note are several below sidewalk basements for buildings fronting the street, resulting in a complex relationship between private and City property. Some basements have metal plate accesses in the sidewalks. There may be a desire to remove these accesses however in doing so one has to ensure there is no surface water that leaks into the basements. There is also a cistern located in the middle of the road at Johnson Street. Any alterations to these basements will require stakeholder discussions with affected parties.



Civil criteria: Impact to existing drainage, Impact to utilities, Impact to property basements, User safety and accessibility.

Heritage

City of Victoria Thematic Framework

To align the City of Victoria's heritage program with a values-based approach, a city-wide thematic framework was developed to identify the key civic historic themes. This framework functions as a means to organize and define historical events, to identify representative historic places, and to place sites, persons, and events in an overall context. The following themes and sub-themes are applicable to Government Street.

Theme 1: Coastal Settlement

This theme addresses the unique coastal location of Victoria, at the southern tip of Vancouver Island, where it protrudes south of the 49th parallel. It illustrates the movement of people to and from this location, including the original inhabitants and successive waves of immigration and settlement.

Sub-theme 1.1: First Nations' Presence

This sub-theme articulates the ancient and continuing First Nations' presence in Victoria. The Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations have lived in the area surrounding Victoria since time immemorial. Victoria was a rich resource hinterland and place of settlement for First Nations peoples (e.g., Klallam Village). Defensive sites were situated within the Inner Harbour, with a number of ancient villages located in Oak Bay, Esquimalt and Cadboro Bay. The Songhees Reserve (1850-1912) was a highly visible component of early Victoria, and many First Nations' people were employed in local industries. Aboriginal culture is an enduring presence.

Sub-theme 1.4: City Of Gardens & Landscapes

Natural landscapes and the unique local topography have always been a part of Victoria's identity, including rocky outcrops, swamps, creeks and shorelines. There are also specific views, seascapes, streetscapes and vistas that help define Victoria's character. This also includes the distinctive Garry Oak meadows that are found throughout the tip of southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. Camas fields were of particular importance to First Nations. This sub-theme also recognizes designed landscapes such as parks and boulevards. Public and private gardens are also of significance in defining the overall character of the City, neighbourhoods and individual sites.

Theme 2: Gateway Economy

Residents have worked in a wide variety of ways to sustain themselves. This theme looks at the historical legacies of early subsistence economies, such as commercial pursuits in fishing, agriculture, forestry, mining and service industries, as well as secondary manufacturing processes and changing forms of energy used to supplement human labour. The location of Victoria, at the tip of Vancouver Island, has positioned the city as a unique gateway.

Sub-theme 2.1: Frontier Boom Town

Victoria's role as a frontier boom town began with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company Fort and its associated agricultural pursuits. The Gold Rush Period of the 1850s and 1860s, the resource boom of Nanaimo and Cumberland coal in the 1880s and mining booms propelled Old Town's development as a commercial centre in the 1890s. The economy

experienced its greatest boom from the turn of the twentieth century until the economic collapse of 1913 and the outbreak of World War One in 1914.

Sub-theme 2.4: Global Tourism Destination

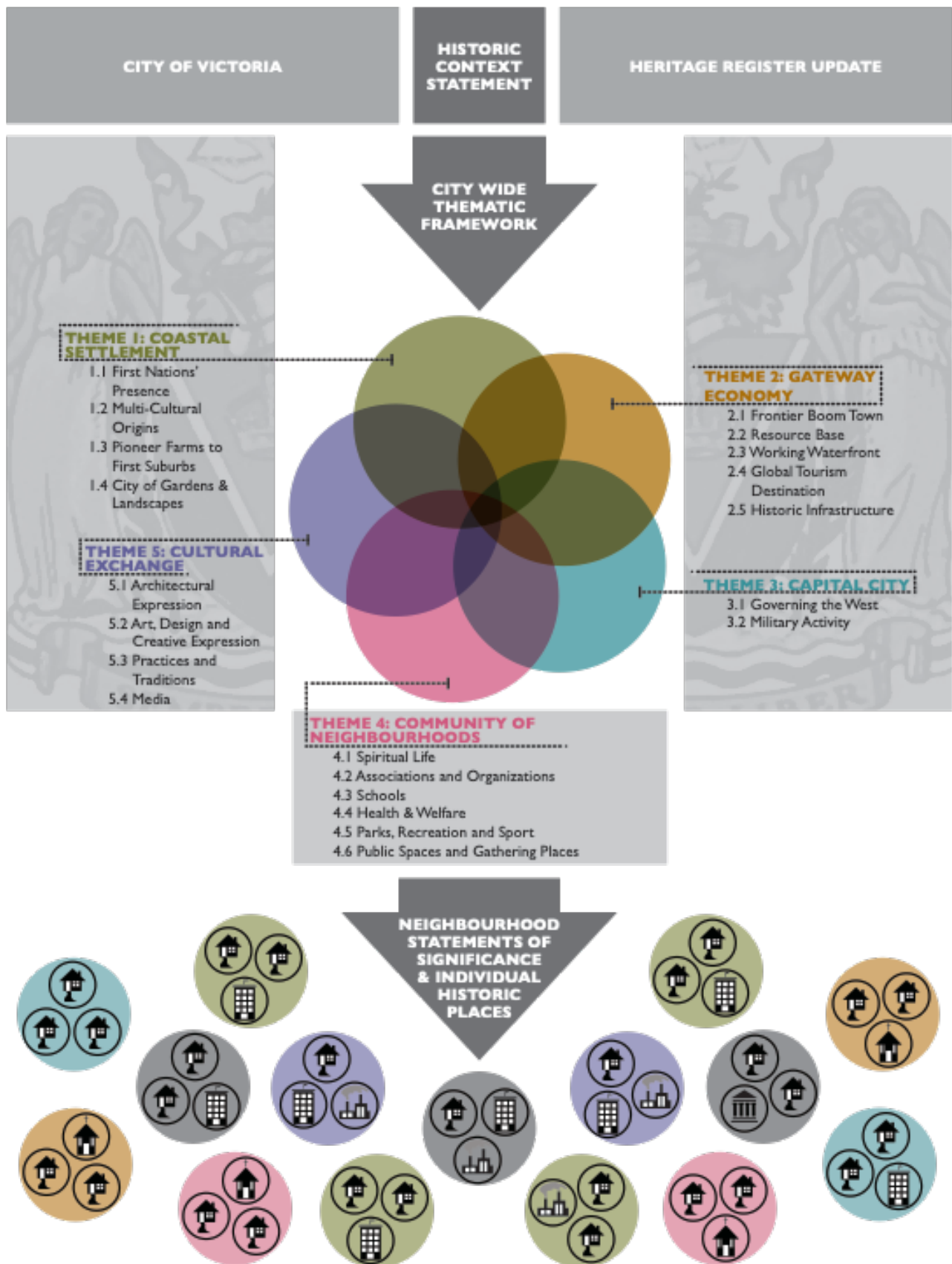
Victoria has long been a popular tourist destination. A hotel boom in the 1880s was a response to the increase in workers and travellers who required accommodation. The Empress Liners and Princess Liners were among the first to bring visitors to Victoria's shores. The advent of the Empress Hotel facilitated greater tourism capacity and for many decades, Victoria traditionally fashioned itself as a romantic and tranquil destination with British tendencies.

Sub-theme 2.5: Historic Infrastructure

An array of historic infrastructure helped consolidate the local economy, beginning with the establishment of roads out to the Hudson's Bay Company Farms. The establishment of railway lines starting in the 1880s facilitated the movement of goods and people. Victoria's extensive streetcar system allowed greater development of the neighbourhoods surrounding downtown. Victoria's sewer system, water pumping stations, electrical grid, roads, and bridges were further developed during the Edwardian era.

Theme 3: Capital City

As the capital of British Columbia, one of Victoria's primary functions is government administration. This position connects to numerous secondary and tertiary industries and pursuits.



Sub-theme 3.1: Governing The West

Governance and administration have been a defining theme of Victoria since the establishment of the Fort. As a capital city, Victoria has housed Colonial government buildings, early post offices, Land Title and assay functions and the Supreme Court. After Confederation in 1871, the federal presence was signalled by the construction of a number of key structures.

Theme 5: Cultural Exchange

This theme addresses the city's intellectual and cultural wealth and includes commemorations of intellectual pursuits, artistic expression and achievement. It recognizes intercultural relationships before and after European contact, and the diversity of cultural expression amongst a varied population.

Sub-theme 5.1: Architectural Expression

The transplantation of architectural styles from other countries and the unique local conditions resulted in a variety of different architectural styles and stylistic hybrids. This includes: Colonial Era architecture, exemplified by HBC vernacular, the Georgian style and an American influence in the mid-nineteenth century; Victorian Era Architecture (Picturesque Eclecticism) including the influence of the Second Empire style at the initiation of the federal presence, Gothic Revival, Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne Revival and Victorian Italianate; Edwardian Era architecture, with the rise of Neoclassicism and Classical Revival styles, the Arts and Crafts Movement (British Arts and Crafts, Craftsman and California Bungalows) and Edwardian Vernacular; Interwar Architecture as exemplified by Period Revivals,

Norman / Storybook cottages, Art Deco, Stripped Classicism and Streamline Moderne; and Modern architecture as exemplified by Postwar Modernism and West Coast Regional Architecture as well as the introduction of different forms of multi-family housing.

Downtown Victoria Business Association

In 2019 the DVBA completed a survey asking members to reflect on the 2018 Government Street Pilot Closures. Approximately 28 people participated. The following provides an overview of questions and responses.

64% of people (18) said that the number of people coming into their store stayed the same, while 29% of people (8) reported a decrease and 7% of people (2) reported an increase.

61% of people (17) said that they would not support Sunday similar closures, while 39% (11) said that they would.

People were divided 50/50 on whether or not they would support Sunday closures if they provided more animation on the street.

82% of people (23) represented retail, 11% (3) represented food and beverage, and 7% (2) represented service.

In 2015, Government Street businesses, the DVBA and the City engaged in an economic development charrette. The outcomes of the charrette were then revisited in 2019, and key takeaways were highlighted:

- Better integration of locals and tourists
- More flexibility and multi-modal movement in the public realm

- Unification of Government Street from Belleville North with increased connectivity
- More active use of public realm
- Promote mixed-use along entire corridor
- Replace existing street trees with narrow 'columnar' species at sidewalk level
- Improve areas for street furnishing, activity spaces, micro parks and cafes

During the charrette participants were asked to provide feedback on the elements that they both liked and disliked about Government Street.

The following were generally 'liked':

- In paving lighting in sidewalks
- Street art
- Rain gardens
- Flexible traffic flow (seasonal closures)
- Potted trees
- Tall and deciduous trees
- More Bike Parking
- Overhead / Catenary Lighting
- New / More Street Furnishings
- Covered Outdoor Areas

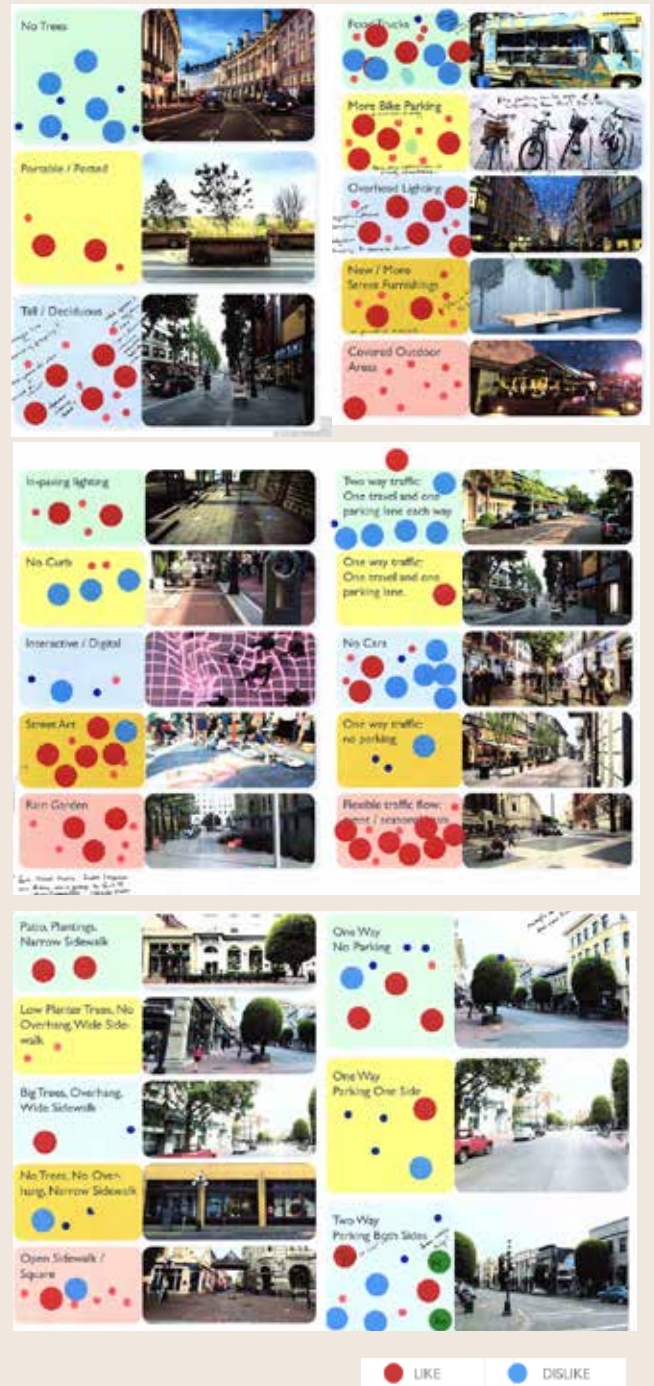
The following were generally not 'liked':

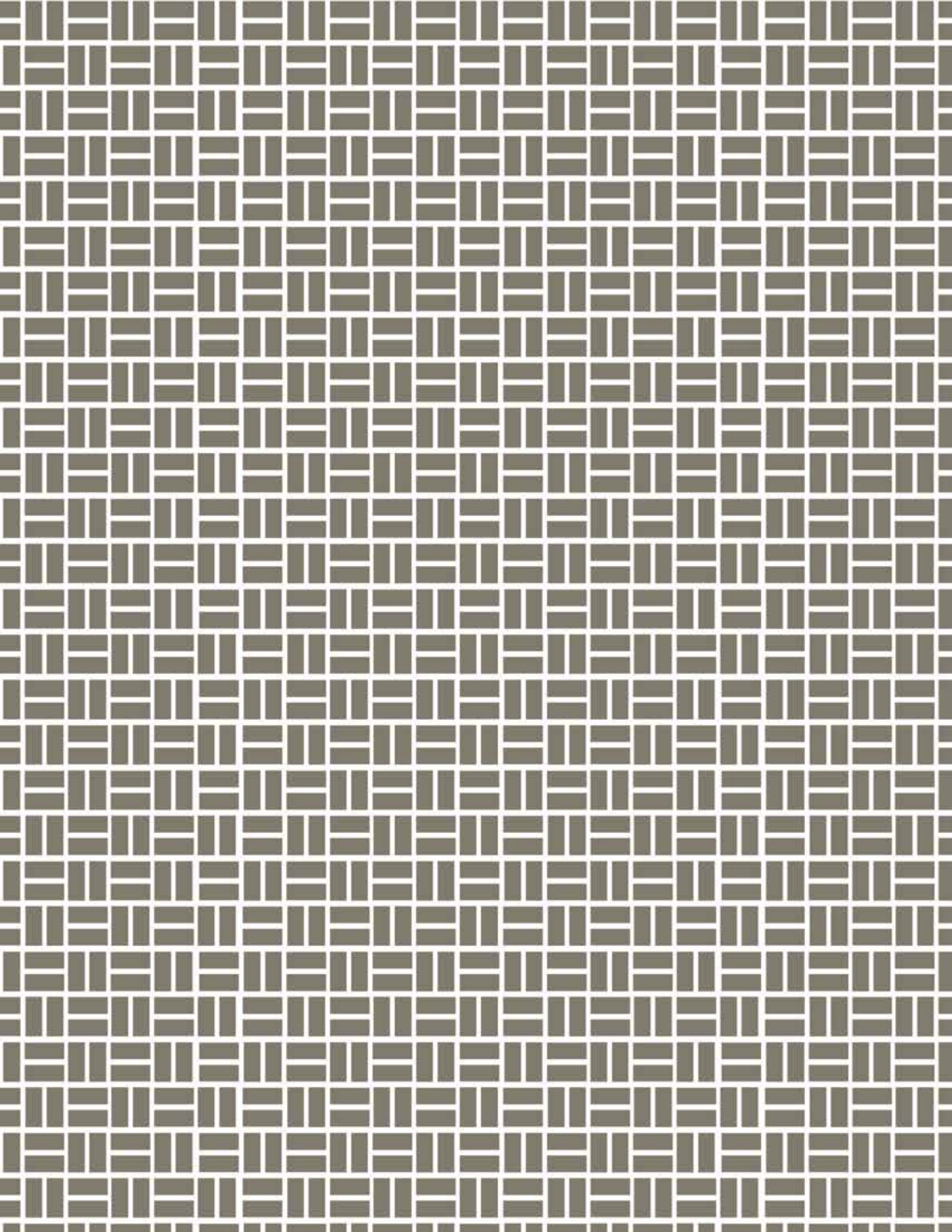
- No trees

The following were generally split:

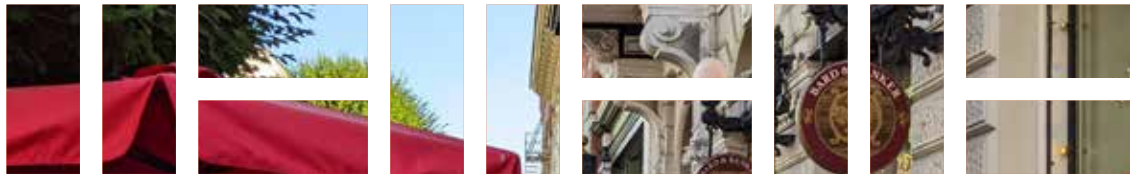
- No cars
- One way traffic with no parking
- Food Trucks
- Curbless environment

2015 DVBA Charrette Streetscape Ideas, Likes and Dislikes





Site Analysis



Government Street is the Downtown's most prominent pedestrian priority street and one of its signature destination retail high streets.

- Downtown Public Realm Plan



Approaching the southern gateway at Humbolt



The Gate of Harmonious Interest

A Destination, A Connector and A Place of Culture and Identity

Government Street is itself a destination for locals and visitors alike, a downtown connector for people moving through the City, and a place of unique historical character and identity.

Gateways

The southern gateway at Humboldt links Government Street to the Inner Harbour and the seats of both the government (the Legislative Assembly) and tourism (the Empress Hotel and other destinations). The formal architectural expression on this end of the street lends itself to its prominent, ceremonial location at the heart of the city. This is the nexus between government and commerce.

The Information Centre and plaza at the corner of Humbolt and Government Street plays an important role in wayfinding, and act as the stepping stone connecting tourists to Government Street.

Legend

↔ Government Street

□ Gateways



Destinations

1. Legislative Assembly
2. Royal BC Museum
3. Inner Harbour
4. The Empress Hotel
5. Information Centre and Plaza
6. Bastion Square and Trounce Alley
7. Market Square
8. The Gate of Harmonious Interest
9. Centennial Square and City Hall



Government Street

The northern gateway at Pandora links the study area to Chinatown, which has its own distinct character. There are opportunities to explore how to express this unique intersection of two very unique districts.

Bastion Square and Trounce Alley

Bastion Square and Trounce Alley are located at the centre of the study area. They are important places for locals and visitors alike. These landmarks and the restaurants that activate Government Street through the use of patios establish this as a key destination.

Parade and Protest Route

As the connection between City Hall and the Legislative Assembly Government Street plays an important role as a processional space for both celebration and protest.

Commercial Character

South of where Bastion Square and View Street meet Government Street there is a fine grained mix of shops and restaurants. This area is where more of the tourist serving shops are located, and is a food and beverage and night life destination. North of View Street the retail character shifts as it becomes more local serving. There is very little food and beverage in this area.

Connections to Other Sites of Interest

Market Square, Johnson Street retail, Chinatown, Broad Street and Yates are all vibrant destinations. Government Street can further build upon these important shopping and food and beverage destinations.



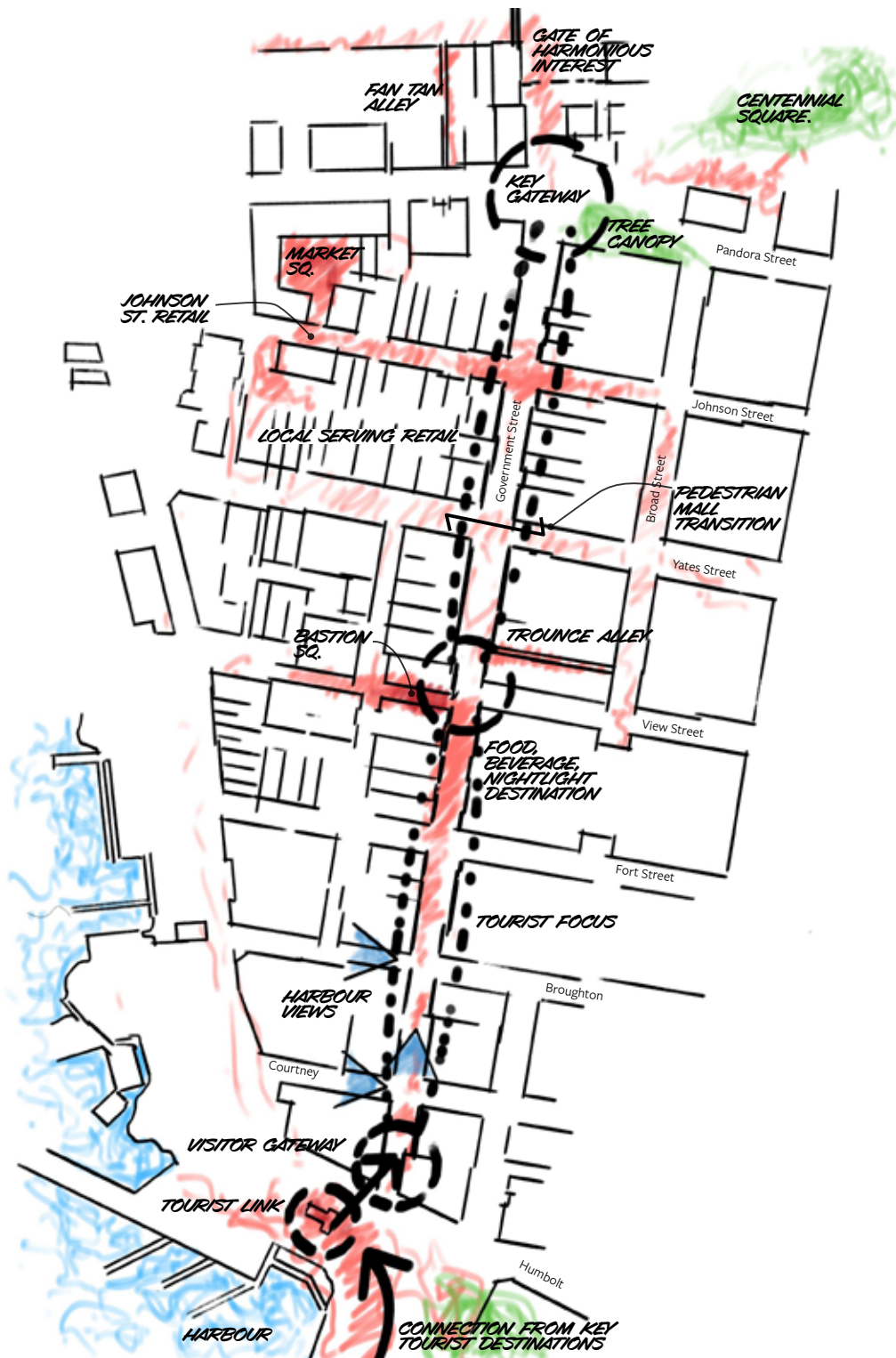
Bastion Square



Trounce Alley



People gathering at the Legislative Assembly on July 1, 2021 to reflect on the history of residential schools in Canada.



Destinations and Heat Map and Site Analysis

Heritage Inventory

Heritage Kiosk

The “heritage kiosk” in front of Hudson’s Bay is not being used to its full potential and in its current configuration doesn’t necessarily invite the passerby to stop, but it does fit in with the other heritage-style street furniture. Alternative programming ideas should be considered if this feature is to remain. The brick pavers illustrate the community’s connection to the street and differentiate it as special. The street trees are also quite distinct and their planters are notably a product of the Modern concrete era, not necessarily in keeping with the historic style of the other street furniture, but honest in their representation of their construction era.

Bastion Square and Trounce Alley

The entryway to Bastion Square is an important moment along the street and the canopy has grown to become a known, yet somewhat dated design feature. As this area is a link to the former location of the Fort, the first major, tangible expression of colonialism in the city, this may be a good spot to consider expressing a camas meadow, or a representation thereof, which would exemplify the historic landscape of this land, pre-contact.

The entrance to Trounce Alley is another important moment, yet this intersection does not necessarily live up to its potential.



Heritage kiosk, as well as street tree in concrete planter in front of Hudson’s Bay, 2021



1960s view of entrance to Trounce Alley, CVA Mo7722_141

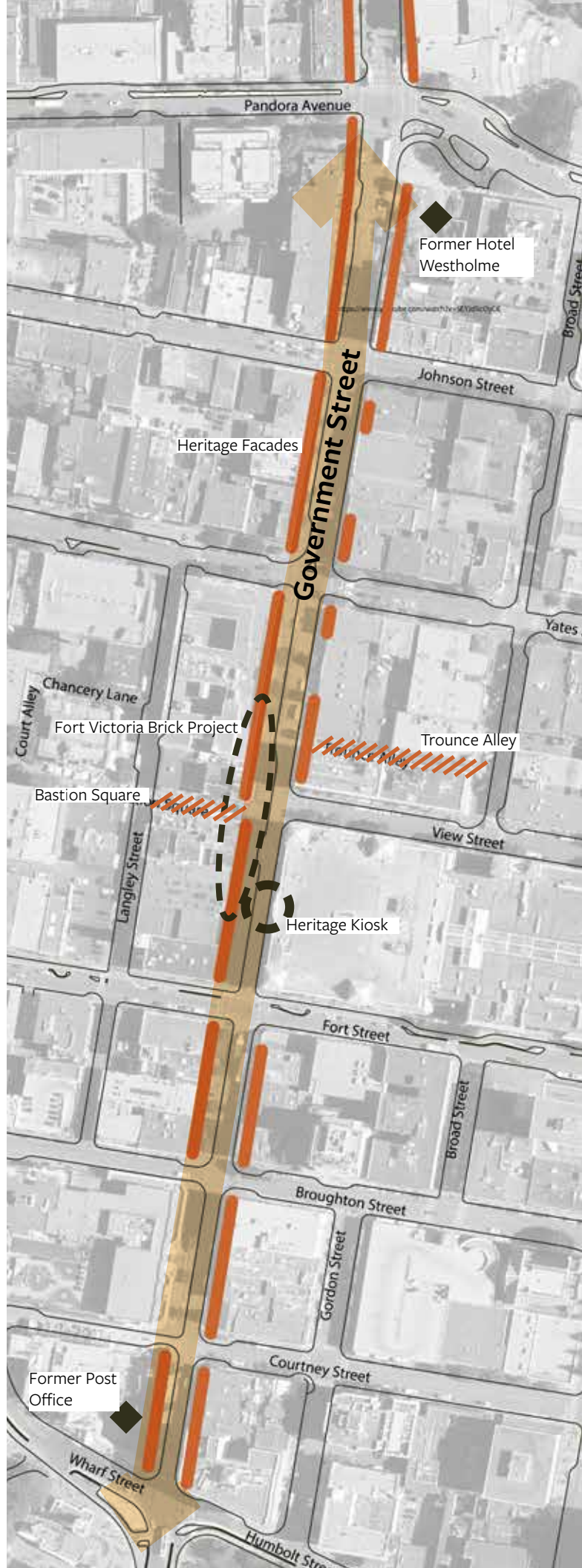


Bastion Square entryway, 2021



Future Entrance to Bastion Square, 1960, CVA Mo1365_141

Right: Heritage Inventory



Cast Iron Cluster Lights

In 1909, a group of Victoria businessmen were attending an exposition in Seattle and were impressed by the newly installed cluster lights there. Upon returning to Victoria, they petitioned City Council and, in 1910, cluster lights were placed on city streets. Although they were inspired by the Seattle lights, Victoria's cluster lights differ slightly, being designed and manufactured locally by Hutchison Bros. Their design has not changed since 1910, but in later years floral baskets were suspended from them, and together they have become synonymous with Victoria, the City of Gardens. (Source City Archives)



Cast Iron Cluster Light

Fort Victoria Brick Project

The Fort Victoria Brick Project was an undertaking of the Greater Victoria Civic Archives Society, which sought to commemorate early Victoria pioneers and settlers by outlining the boundaries of the original fort with a double row of bricks, each engraved with the name of a pioneer.

The bricks are located mostly on the west side of Government Street from Bastion Square/View Street down almost to Broughton Street. Some of the bricks are located in an outline of the old bastion at Government Street and Bastion Square, while others descend from the bastion west into Bastion Square. (Source: <https://www.victoria.ca/EN/main/residents/archives/faqs/fort-victoria-brick-project.html>)



1842 map by Adolphus Lee Lewis showing the proposed location of Fort Camosun (renamed Fort Victoria in 1846)



1852 Fort & future Downtown Victoria map, UVic Special Collections



Fort Victoria Brick Project



1903 view of 1100-block with streetcar, CVA Mo7056_141



Fort Victoria. To the left, Governor Douglas' headquarters, to the right the building used as a church and school, ca. 1860, CVA Mo5380



Circa 1900 view looking north from 900-block with streetcar tracks, CVA Mo7058_141



Post Office, formerly located at intersection of Humboldt, now the site of a new building



1930s view looking south from approximately View Street, CVA Mo7543_141



Northern gateway, former location of Hotel Westholme, 2021



Circa 1955 view toward southern gateway to study area, CVA Mo7670_141



Arch constructed by Chinese community to welcome Earl Grey in 1906, CVA Mo9087_141



Circa 1899 looking south from Pandora; Chinatown begins directly behind, CVA Mo6534



Hotel Westholme, formerly located just south of Pandora, now an empty lot



1994 view looking north from Fort, CVA Mo9925_141



Mall pedestrian treatment under construction along 900-block, circa 1970s, CVA Mo9926_141



1960s view of east side of block between Yates and Johnson, CVA Mo7713_141

Lost Buildings

The gateway intersections of Humboldt and Pandora were home to significant buildings that are no longer standing. The somewhat controversial redevelopment of the Post Office/Custom House site at Humboldt, as well as the now vacant lot at Pandora that was home to the Hotel Westholme (later Plaza Hotel), may provide opportunities for public art (re)interpretations.

Lost Features

Beyond opportunities to recall the natural landscape that once existed along this corridor (including camas meadows and the close proximity to the harbour), as well as specific buildings, there are certain historic features of the street that no longer exist, namely the striking utility poles and wires that once lined the street, as well as the temporary gates that were constructed to welcome visiting dignitaries. The streetcar tracks and trams were also a defining feature of the street before the personal automobile led to their demise. Each of these features would indeed be considered relics, however they were important components of the historic streetscape and opportunities may exist to reinterpret them in a public art fashion.

Built Context and Historic Streetscape

The heritage buildings lining both sides of the street are perhaps the most conspicuous feature of Government Street. Their individual styles each demand attention, yet they fit well together as an illustration of a mature city. The elaborate cornices of the buildings could be considered one of their most compelling elements, as their continuous traverse of each block provides a datum line that could be further studied as designs are explored. The fine grain and sawtooth profile of the buildings is also a telltale feature of an historic streetscape that should be celebrated.



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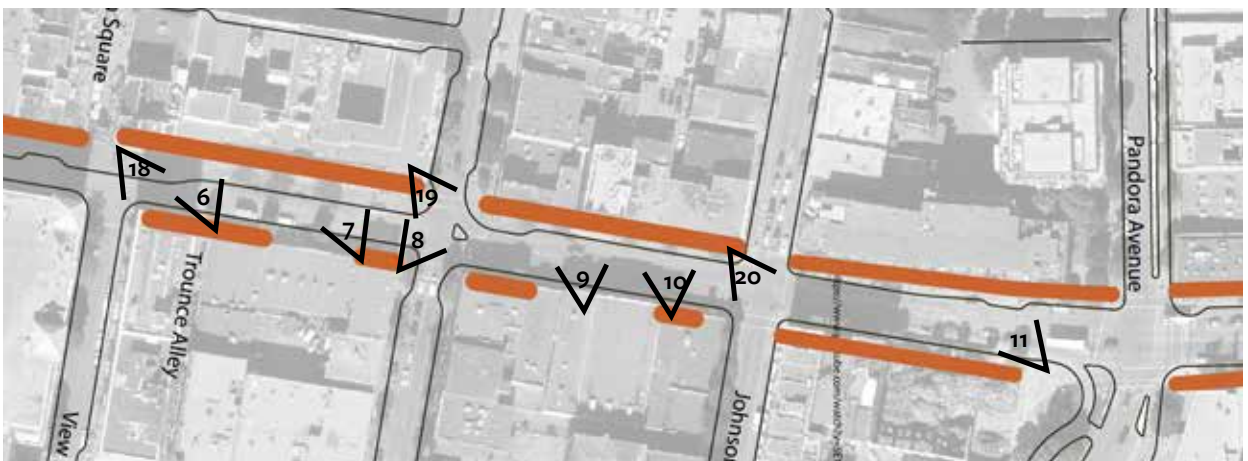
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Trees

Hornbeams

The most common trees on Government Street are hornbeams in tree rings south of Yates, and hornbeams in the ground north of Yates. The dense, low and round canopy creates a distinct pattern and character along the street.

The tree rings are pre-case concrete and were imported from Germany as a part of the 1970's pedestrian mall upgrades. The hornbeams are kept trimmed into a distinct shape that is often more upright on the street side and rounded on the sidewalk side, and sometimes trimmed around lighting poles and signage.

North of Yates where the trees are planted in ground the canopy starts higher (at about 7 or 8 feet) whereas the trees that are in tree rings south of Yates have a lower canopy, sometimes starting as low as 5'5". The low canopy as well as patios and furnishings south of Yates makes the sidewalk zone feel constrained in this area, even though it is wider here.

A full arborist report is not available at this time, however initial observations indicate show that the trees are causing the tree rings to heave and crack in places. Additional damage to the tree rings can be observed (it appears to be from impact). The soil quality also appears to be low, and many trees are showing signs of stress.

The City should consider analyzing the hornbeams in tree rings to understand how deep the root system is in the ground. Depending on the level of disturbance that will be created by replacement, location of future trees in planters may be limited to current locations as repairing the sidewalks may be difficult.



Hornbeam showing signs of stress.



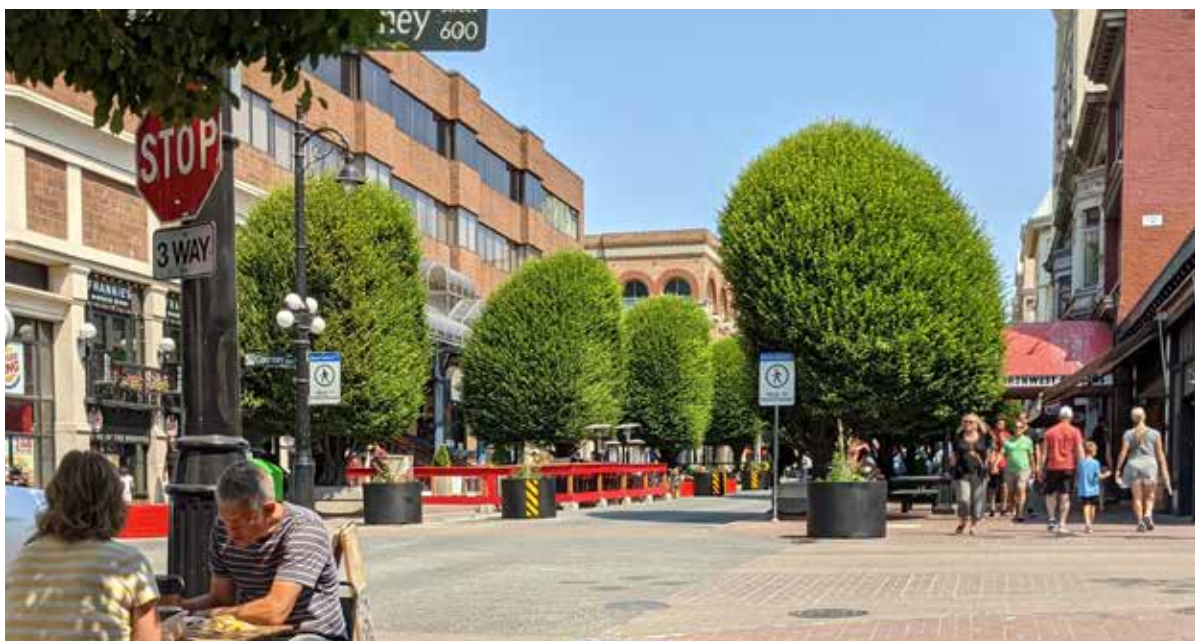
Hornbeam in concrete tree ring, trimmed upright on the street side, rounded on the sidewalk side, and back to from lighting and signage.



Hornbeams in ground north of Yates are planted in ground and have a higher tree canopy.



Hornbeam in concrete tree ring showing cracking and heaving.



The hornbeams create a dense tree canopy, making it difficult to see businesses and heritage facades.

Red Oaks

There are a number of large red oak trees planted in ground on the west side of the block between View Street and Yates Street. These trees are girdled and showing signs of stress.

Cherry Trees

There are benches below cherry tree bosque outside of The Bay Centre. The cherry trees are failing to thrive in their current conditions and need replacement.

Tree Succession Planning

While some of the trees on Government Street may still be able to live for years to come, a succession plan should be in place to allow for a phased replacement of trees as needed. This succession plan should maintain a coherent look and feel as this evolution takes place, rather than a patch-work approach. Additionally, future species should provide a light and open canopy to maintain views of heritage buildings and businesses.

Future Challenges

It will be challenging to find opportunities to plant trees in ground due to underground utilities and basements. Utilities run under sidewalk as well as below the street. As a result, some of the only opportunities for planting trees in ground will be in the middle of the street.

Where opportunities exist to plant trees in ground, the City could consider using structural soil or silva cells to provide opportunities for larger tree species, to encourage health and longevity and to build the urban forest.



Red Oak with root girdling



Cherry Trees at The Bay Centre

In the blocks between Yates and Pandora where a greater transformation to the streetscape is possible, the City may consider relocating utilities from under sidewalks to the street so that they are clustered rather than distributed. This could provide an opportunity to establish in ground street trees along sidewalks, and to grow the urban forest.

In areas where planting trees in ground is not possible, smaller tree species in pots will be the only option. Unfortunately, this means that there is likely to be a reduction in street tree canopy along Government Street as succession takes place. Present day best practices and engineering requirements would preclude many of the tree planting practices from the 1970s which resulted in the trees that are present today. The City may wish to consider allowing for variances to some of the tree planting limitations to allow for more opportunities for street tree planting. Additionally, any opportunity to provide greater soil volumes, such as large custom planters should be explored.

The tradition of potted trees on Government Street dates back prior to the 1970s pedestrianization project. In winter Christmas trees strung with lights were placed out in pots along the street.



1960 view north from 900-block, CVA Mo8508_141

Street Furnishings

As a part of Old Town, the use of globe lights and heritage seating and waste receptacles contributes to the rich character of Government Street.

There are a few instances of more modern multi-stream waste receptacles, which detract from the iconic heritage character. The hornbeams and tree rings are unique to Government Street and one of the most defining features of streetscape identity. Roll curbs, wide sidewalks, weave pattern brick paving from building face to curb are all defining features.



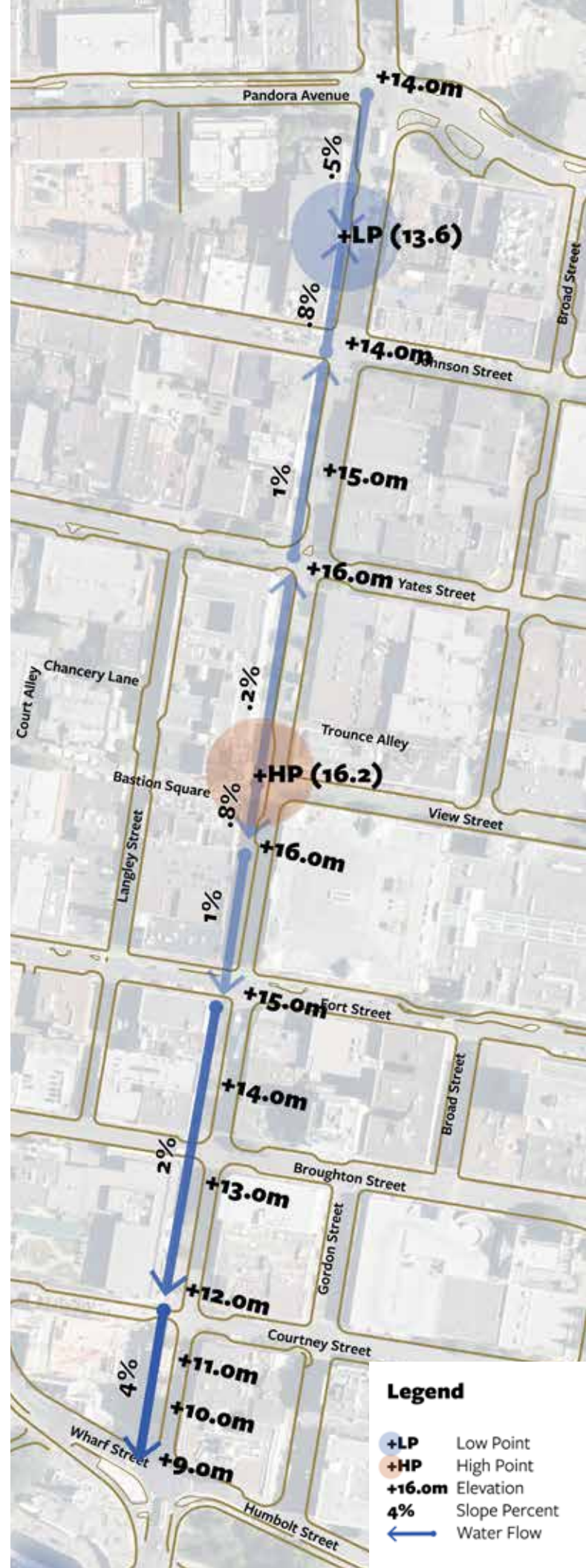


Elevation and Water Flow

Government Street gently ascends upwards from Pandora Street south Towards View Street; and, from Humbolt north to View Street. View Street is at the high point. This location is also where Government Street meets two significant destination points (Bastion Square and Trounce Alley).

There may be some opportunities to consider rainwater infiltration in the areas north of Yates Street, where the project scope could consider changes to grading and drainage. The low point between Johnston and Pandora Avenue would be a natural place to consider rainwater interventions.

Right: Elevation and Water Flow



Civil Engineering

Government Street has evolved over time as a complex urban place. In the section between Humboldt Street and Yates Street we find both curb and mid-sidewalk drainage, utilities in both the roadway and sidewalk (BC Hydro and Telus vaults), and a more pedestrian orientated cross section with rollover curbs. The section between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue is more conventional curb and gutter drainage, and a more car orientated cross section. Of note are several below sidewalk basements for buildings fronting the street (see Figure), resulting in a complex relationship between private and City property. Some basements have metal plate accesses in the sidewalks. There may be a desire to remove these accesses however in doing so one has to ensure there is no surface water that leaks into the basements. There is also a cistern located in the middle of the road at Johnson Street. Any alterations to these basements will require stakeholder discussions with affected parties.



Entrances

Areas with higher frequency of entrances and smaller scale retail tend to have more activity on sidewalks and more people in public realm. The blue triangles indicate the location of entrances along the street.

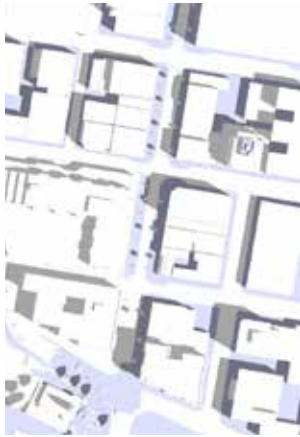
Two sites show no entrances as they are currently under construction or in planning phases (*).



Right: Map of Entrances

Sun-Shadow Studies - Humbolt to Fort

10 AM



June 21

1 PM



5 PM



7 PM



10 AM



September 21

1 PM



5 PM



7 PM



10 AM



December 21

1 PM



In general, the west sidewalk receives sun by 10am, and both sidewalks are in full sun by noon. The north-east corners receive a sliver of sunshine into the evening, providing a potential opportunity for seating or patio with evening uses.

Sun-Shadow Studies - Fort to Yates

10 AM

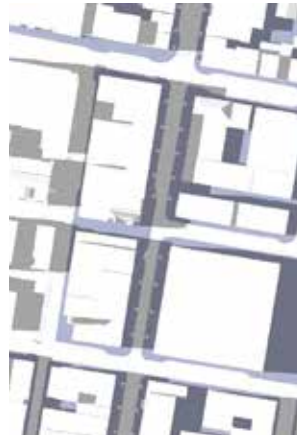


June 21

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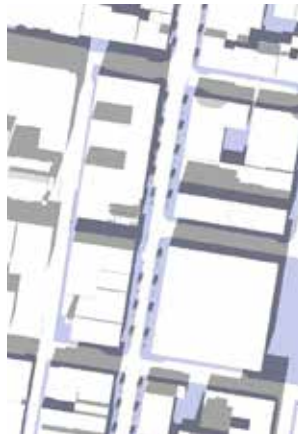


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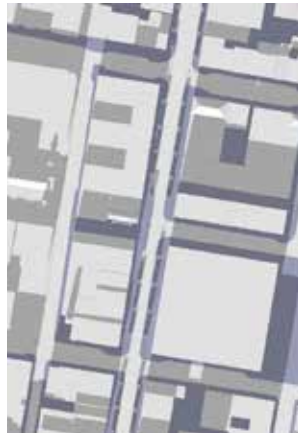


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December 21

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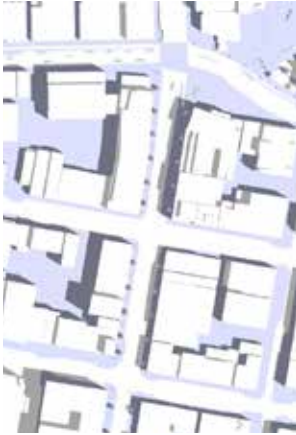


The west sidewalk between View and Yates gets morning sun in spring and fall and remains sunny past noon. There is a sliver of sunshine that move across the south-east corner of Government Street and Yates in the spring, providing a potential opportunity for seating or patio with evening uses.

The west sidewalk between View and Fort are in shadow at 10am in the fall and winter. Meanwhile the east sidewalk receives afternoon sun throughout the year.

Sun-Shadow Studies - Yates to Pandora

10 AM



June 21

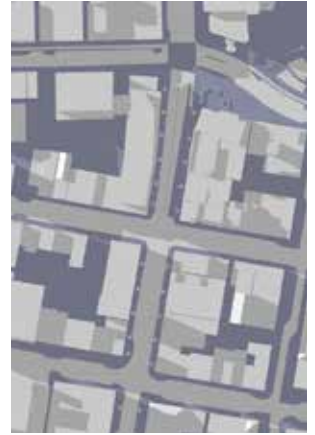
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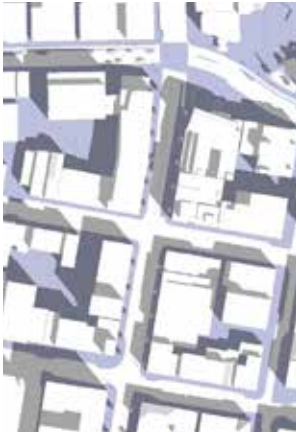
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September 21

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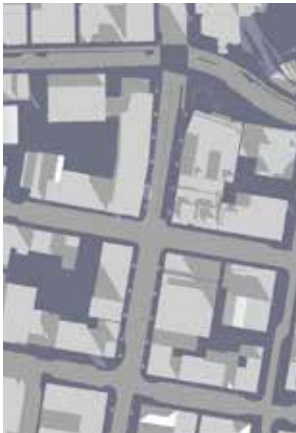
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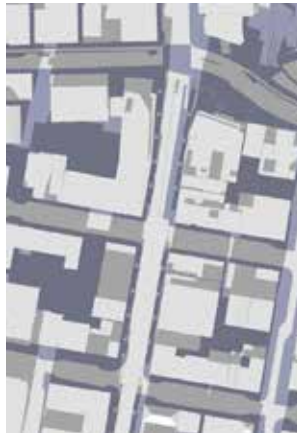


10 AM



December 21

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The west sidewalk gets morning sun and remains sunny past noon in spring and fall. By noon the east sidewalk is also in sun. The treed area on the south east corner of Pandora and Government Street is the only place where sun reaches a public space past 5pm. There would be an opportunity to consider better use of this space in the future, particularly when the parcel to the south redevelops.

Build Back Victoria Interventions



Legend

-  Pedestrian Priority Zone
-  Timed Pedestrian Only Zone

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the City implemented *Build Back Victoria* initiatives to support local businesses and the community to reopen and recover. Along Government Street this initiative gave restaurants and businesses the opportunity to expand their patios, and services on sidewalks and streets in a pedestrian priority zone from Humboldt Street to Yates Street.

During the summer of 2021 timed pedestrian only zones were created allowing more space for people walking and cycling within the right-of-way.

A public survey was launched in the spring of 2020 to understand how the Build Back Victoria program was working for people. The follow is a summary of Lessons Learned from Build Back Victoria Engagement Survey.

- Out of the 795 people who participated in the Build Back Victoria survey this spring, the highest number of respondents reside in other municipalities at 22.4%. The second and third highest response came from Fairfield at 14.4% and James Bay at 13.8% respectively.
- More than 8,729 comments, suggestions and ideas were submitted by residents, businesses, visitors and stakeholders demonstrating a strong interest in Government Street
- 35.3% of respondents were 40-59 years of age, followed by 33% of respondents being 60-79 years of age; and 29.2% being 25-39. Only 1.8% of respondents were 12-24 and .8% were 80+.
- 80% were generally satisfied with the BB program.
- Most residents, businesses and visitors would like to see the program continue and enjoyed the extra space



Piloting of Timed Pedestrian Only Zones



Red hexagonal benches providing public seating and black planters defining the space



Picnic benches providing public dining areas

- There was strong support for continuing Government Street pedestrian priority, with a full or partial closure to vehicle traffic.
- Many people indicated they liked:
 - Extra space for patios
 - Safety from vehicle traffic
 - Space to socially distance from other pedestrians
 - Music and entertainment
 - European feel and increased community space

Spotlight: Government Street - Improvements for Spring/Summer 2021 Design

- Some voiced they would favour a more cohesive look to the design, easier street crossings and increased protection from traffic
- Many voiced that seasonality and physical characteristics of Government Street (windy, limited sun, large scale) should be considered with any new design treatments
- Some voiced concerns for potential negative impacts on business: reduced parking(?), loading zones, parkade access and the movement of people into the street away from storefronts
- A few voiced concerns a full 24/7 closure would hurt businesses, and that a partial or timed closure would be more manageable to accommodate, potentially with nighttime activities, animation and entertainment in designated areas
- A few participants voiced concern on how a full road closure would impact tourist bus drop off and noted the need to accommodate local B.C. summer tourists travelling by car
- Many wanted the removal of the hornbeam trees

Key themes for improvements on Government Street include

- More live music and entertainment
- increased signage for pedestrian and vehicle traffic wayfinding
- Better support for pedi-cabs, slow cycling, and other non-motorized transportation
- Secure bicycle parking
- incorporation of art and artisan vendors into street animations
- Improved maintenance of street furniture and temporary animations
- More bathroom access
- More youth-focused street animations
- Specific concerns were noted, including:
 - loss of on-street parking to facilitate patios and flex spaces. Others supported converting more parking stalls to support loading and customer pick up / delivery.
 - Accessibility for seniors and people with mobility challenges related to patios and parking
 - Traffic navigation and traffic flow challenges
 - limited access for tourist buses
 - Delivery challenges for businesses
 - The need for more pick-up zones and short-term parking for businesses
 - Street closures provided an unfair advantage to restaurants located in pedestrian priority zones.
- There were suggestions to consider a timed closure or seasonal closure of Government Street, rather than a full permanent closure to better facilitate deliveries, tradespeople and shoppers driving to downtown businesses.

- Some were concerned that a full closure could negatively impact businesses who depend on customers driving downtown to visit shops, services and restaurants

Key Themes for Improvement:

- More wayfinding signage
- More public seating
- Aesthetics -- more plants, art and prettier street barricades
- Better traffic flow management and increased signage
- Increased bicycle parking

Patios and Flex Spaces:

- More cohesive animation / permanent infrastructure to beautify areas and create cohesive look (i.e.: planter boxes, tables, chairs, bollards)
- Improved maintenance to keep areas and furniture clean
- Continued focus on ensuring accessibility of patios

Food trucks were generally well-supported and many commented they wanted more in Victoria as long as they did not conflict with brick-and-mortar businesses, managed waste and noise pollution.

- Solutions to reduce waste
- More food trucks outside of the downtown area
- More public bathrooms and mobile water stations near food trucks
- Increased advertising and creation of a food truck map to better locate vendors



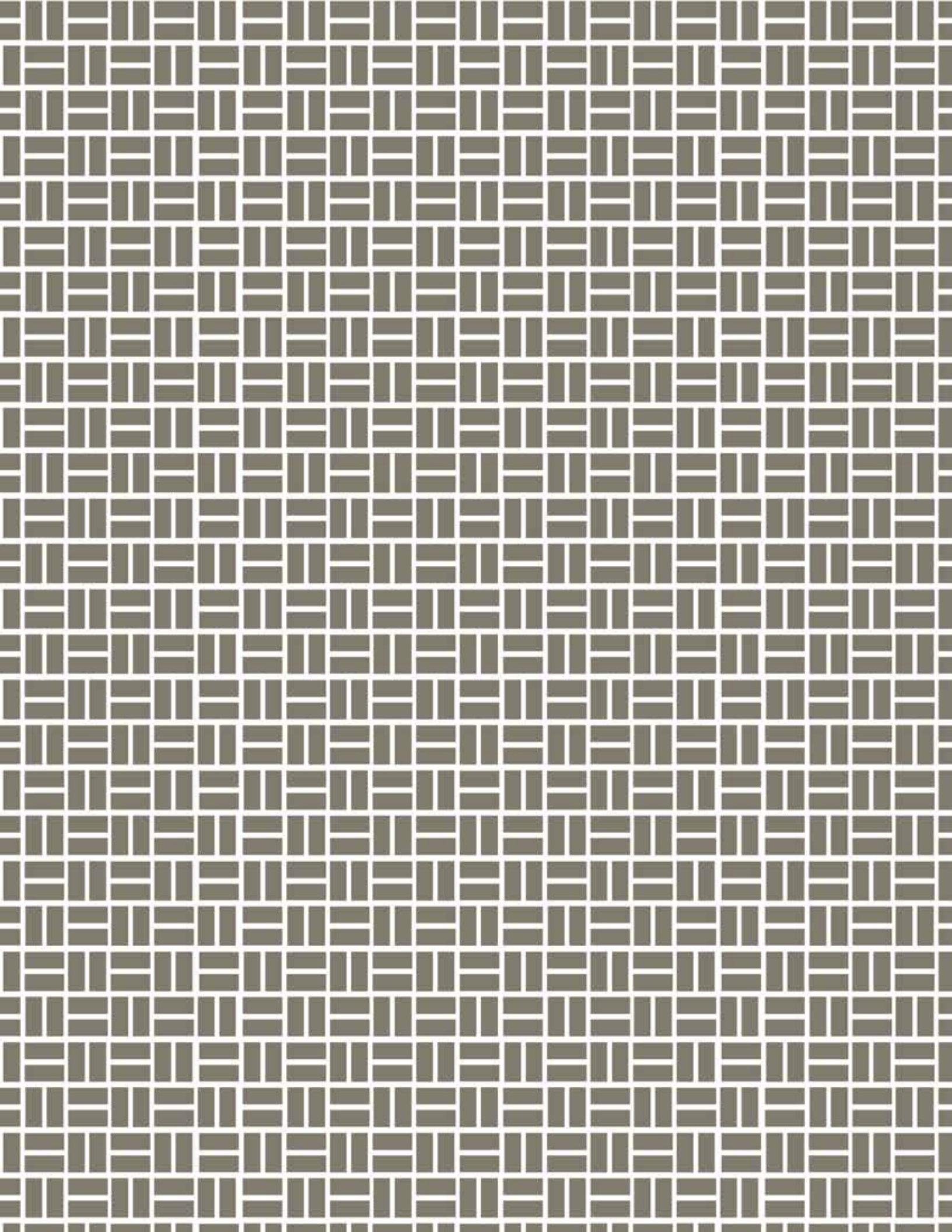
Restaurant patios are included in the sidewalk and street in some areas which can lead to a narrow route for pedestrians.



The patios at View Street create vibrancy and a clear destination and hub of activity, particularly in evenings.



North bound traffic remains in some areas; and, the travel zone becomes shared with pedestrians and low speeds.



Transportation and Mobility Memo



Approach

This memo provides background information for considering improvements to Government Street from a transportation perspective. It is intended to highlight key issues that have been identified based on information available to the project team, rather than being a detailed transportation technical analysis.

First, this note provides an overview of the existing and anticipated future conditions of travel by mode in the Government Street corridor to identify opportunities and constraints. This information is further used to identify potential evaluation criteria for options evaluation in phase 2 of the project, and finally digested into key considerations for designing circulation options.

The intention behind this memo is to synthesize key information that leads to a detailed understanding of the potential trade-offs between modes. To this end, several guiding objectives underpin this high-level evaluation.

Guiding Objectives

- People first approach. Impacts on pedestrians are placed at the forefront of thinking, including about all other modes.
- Maintaining safe access and circulation for all modes. Looks for opportunities to minimize conflicts between modes and distribute trade-offs.
- Facilitating economic activity.
- Porous and flexible. Provides opportunities for special events, seasonal needs as well as future trends and changes
- Inclusive. Understands that disadvantages to modes may also disadvantage social groups. Prioritizes needs for accessibility.
- Legible. Comprehensible design from a user perspective. Concepts can be understood by the public.

Study Area

This memo primarily focuses on transportation considerations within the Government Street corridor between Humboldt Street and Pandora Avenue (study area). Local connections to nearby streets and destinations are also considered where appropriate.

Build Back Victoria Program and The Government Street for People Initiative

In support of the Build Back Victoria (BBV) program—a permit-based program designed to support local businesses during COVID-19 by providing access to public spaces for commercial use—the “Government Street for People” initiative (GSPI) has transformed Government Street into a pedestrian priority space between Humboldt Street and View Street. This initiative serves to not only support the BBV program, but will be used to help the city design longer-term infrastructure changes (e.g. walking, cycling, parking, loading) along this corridor.

At present, Government Street is closed to vehicle traffic between 10pm until noon, seven days a week, with full access permitted for private and commercial vehicles from 10pm until noon the following day. That said, during closure hours, vehicles will be permitted to cross Government street, maintaining some level of street permeability. Because of these changes, current impacts to mobility and circulation can already be observed, as well as the potential opportunities and constraints in making such changes permanent in the future. For these reasons, each of the modes / infrastructure assessed in the following section will incorporate the impacts observed to date from the GSPI where relevant.



Figure 1: Government Street at Humboldt Street

Assessment by Mode

Walking

Existing Conditions

Government Street is already an important space for pedestrians in Downtown Victoria. Street-oriented businesses, catering to both tourists and locals, contribute to a constant stream of pedestrian activity in the area. Seasonal factors also influence walking on Government Street, with warmer temperatures bringing parades, protests, and additional cruise ship activity. For example, combined pedestrian data from select segments of Government Street shows a clear peak in pedestrian activity in July and August.

Space for pedestrians is not continuous on Government Street. While select blocks offer up to 7 meters of right-of-way for sidewalks, this allocation reduces to 4 meters or less between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue. Instead, additional vehicle lanes and parking are provided. Signalized intersections from Fort Street to Pandora Avenue enable safe pedestrian crossings.

Heavier pedestrian traffic can be observed between Humboldt Street and Yates Street, with a larger concentration of local shops, services, and food and beverage establishments compared to the section of Government Street north of Yates Street. At present, the GSPI has mimicked this pattern by restricting vehicle access between Humboldt Street and View Street, providing more and safer space for people walking, cycling, and rolling. For these reasons, the cross streets of Courtney Street and Fort Street (one way, east bound)

and Broughton Street (two-way) have become critical in maintaining a certain degree of circulation and street permeability for vehicles.

Potential Future Conditions

Looking to the future it is anticipated that the demand for more and safer pedestrian space will increase, particularly with the piloting of initiatives such as the GSPI. As well, an influx of tourism, and therefore pedestrian traffic (among other forms of traffic) should be expected as the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Opportunities

While pedestrian traffic is notably heavier to the southern end of study area, an opportunity exists to distribute pedestrian activity further north, particularly as the City continues to grow and densify. As well, and as demonstrated by the GSPI, there are opportunities to provide additional space for gathering, passing, resting.

An opportunity exists to improve wayfinding that provides more intuitive connectivity from Government Street to east and western corridors, such as through Bastion Square and Trounce Alley.

Constraints

While the study area does see heavy pedestrian activity, there is nonetheless a desire of many people, particularly tourists, to take in Government Street by vehicle, particularly under a time constrained schedule (e.g. cruise passengers).

As demonstrated by the GSPI, a shared street space, while a safer environment from vehicles,

can nonetheless result in some degree of conflict between users such as with people walking, cycling, and rolling.

It is important to consider the trade-offs in potential design elements. For example, a curbless environment, while helpful to those with mobility challenges may be disruptive to those with visual impairments. Similarly, street trees, while great in their ability to provide shelter from heat / precipitation, but actually be a visual impairment, particularly given the size / placement of the tree.

Evaluation Criteria

- Attractive / welcoming space for people to spend time in or travel through
- Safety and comfortability of travel
- Improved pedestrian permeability (both on Government Street and links to surrounding streets)

Cycling

Existing Conditions

Currently, bi-directional AAA cycling facilities are available on Pandora Avenue, Wharf Street and Fort Street. Hence, facilities on Wharf Street are the only provision for north-south cyclist movements in downtown Victoria. Bicycle volume data (Humboldt Street to Yates Street) from 2021 shows over 100 cyclists per day along Government Street.

Similar to people walking, Government Street is a key destination for people cycling, with existing cycle parking currently well-used. Cyclists have also benefited from the GSPI as they are now able to cycle in a safer, car free zone between the hours of noon and 10pm. That said, it is worth noting that some interference between cyclists and other users

can be observed with the street currently operating as a shared space. For these reasons, it is possible that commuter cyclists have displaced to other, more efficient cycling routes such as those on Wharf Street.

Potential Future Conditions

Uni-directional AAA cycling facilities are planned for Government Street north of Pandora Avenue (2021) and south of Humboldt Street (2022). Hence, the intermediate segment of Government Street represents a potential desire line for cyclists. While the formation of a desire line at the intermediate section of Government Street is certainly possible, it is important to understand the types of cyclists who may form such a desire line (i.e. commuter cyclists vs. recreational cyclists), as this will likely impact the extent to which the City might invest in dedicated cycling infrastructure connecting Humboldt Street to Pandora Avenue. For example, the GSPI is already demonstrating that Government Street as a shared space appears less conducive to the needs of commuter cyclists relative to recreational cyclists. In other words, Government Street between the sections of Humboldt Street and Yates Street could be considered more of a destination, and less of a mobility corridor. As a result, decisions will need to be made around what type of function this section of Government Street will serve in the future (i.e. a mobility corridor, a destination, or both), and therefore what type of cycling infrastructure is most appropriate.

Opportunities

Considerations when re-imagining the provision of space on Government Street include to potential to further accommodate north-south cyclist movements in Downtown Victoria

and provide a continuous cycling connection on Government Street. Such facilities would provide more immediate connections to businesses on Government Street as well as further opportunities for cycling in downtown more generally.

As Government Street serves as both a mobility corridor and destination, there is an opportunity to enhance connections to and provision of additional bicycle parking.

Constraints

The provision of AAA cycling facilities is context dependent and responds to the speeds and volumes of adjacent vehicle traffic. Restoring two-way traffic, limiting vehicle volumes, and reducing vehicle traffic will be important factors in determining the feasibility of a future continuous AAA cycling facility on Government Street. If Government Street remains one-way for vehicles in some segments, the provision of a contraflow bike lane inherently requires enhanced safety measures on-street and at intersections, with this additional complexity potential reducing legibility.



Figure 2: Planned Cycling Routes and Desire Lines

At higher speeds and traffic volumes a greater degree of separation for cyclists is usually recommended. The need for this delineation of space for cyclists has the potential to disrupt efforts to prioritize pedestrians on Government Street. Hence, traffic speeds and volumes are a key limiting factor for enhancing both walking and rolling on Government Street.

Cyclists are not a homogeneous group, with varied intensities and trip purposes. Establishing a cycling connection along Government Street has the potential to attract all bicycle users. However, those cyclists traveling at higher speeds and preferring the most direct and efficient route may not be compatible with a further pedestrianized Government Street. To strike a balance, efforts to make Government Street less permeable for cyclists and establish slower cycling speeds may be required.

Evaluation Criteria

- Provision and quality of north-south routes connection
- Provision and quality of bike parking
- Level of accessibility by bike within the study area, as well as to / from the study area
- Degree of conflict with other travellers / modes such as those walking, rolling, driving

Transit

Existing Conditions

While nearby Douglas Street acts as the city's principal transit corridor, Government Street does fulfill a role in Victoria's regional transportation system. Bus routes and transit stops along the Government Street corridor between Humboldt Street and Pandora

Avenue are shown in Figure 4. Route 10, which services the connection between James Bay and Royal Jubilee Hospital, operates the length on Government Street in the study area for northbound travel. Two transit stops are provided on Government Street: south of Broughton Street, and north of Yates Street. In terms of boarding activity, it is worth noting that the two transit stops on Government Street are used by relatively few passengers compared to the stops on Douglas Street (See Figure 3).

For buses servicing connections to Esquimalt and Victoria West via the downtown and Johnson Street Bridge, Government Street is also a brief stopover. These routes include 14, 15, 24, and 25, which operate on alternating one-way routes in the downtown. Each of these buses stops on Government Street heading northbound between Johnson Street and Yates Street.

At present, the GSPI has resulted in the rerouting of Route 10 to Wharf Street. However, other bus routes (14, 15, 24, 25) operating on Government Street have not been impacted as they operate north of View Street between Johnson Street and Yates Street.

Potential Future Conditions

While Government Street does fulfill a role in the transportation system, it plays a more minor role than other corridors such as Douglas Street. As a result, the existing routes and transit stops along Government Street may be more easily relocated to other streets or segments of Government Street, freeing up curb space for other uses. As mentioned previously, this concept is already being piloted as a result of the GSPI. More detail regarding this potential future condition is discussed in greater detail in the opportunity and constraints section below.

Opportunities

Currently there are no southbound transit movements on Government Street, while route 10 is the only service operating between Humboldt Street and Yates Street. With only two transit stops in the corridor, there is some flexibility to relocate stops to make room for another curbside use if required. Moreover, route 10 could be rerouted to Wharf Street, as has temporarily been done during the GSPI. The temporary stop on Wharf Street at Broughton Street is approximately 125 meters as the crow flies from the Government Street location and southbound service to James Bay already occurs on Wharf Street.

Constraints

Existing one-way street patterns on major east-west routes in the Downtown mean the complete removal of bus service on Government Street has the potential to be

disruptive with current traffic patterns. For example, rerouting buses to turn onto Douglas Street to access Pandora Ave and the Johnson Street Bridge would take place upstream from the current transit stop on Yates Street. As a result, the coverage provided by this stop on Yates Street and the stop on Government Street would be lost in the downtown. Hence, it is desirable to retain access for buses on Government Street between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue.

The through movement on Fort Street and westbound right turn from Yates Street are two important movements for the current bus network. Closing these movements would disrupt buses, with similar impacts to downtown coverage as described above.



Figure 3: Transit Boarding Activity



Figure 4: Transit Services on Government Street

If two-way traffic is permitted on Government Street between Humboldt Street and Yates Street buses may become a less desirable mode for the street as a result of lost passing space to oncoming vehicles. Careful consideration of whether to retain the route 10 on Government Street should be taken where two-way travel is established or where frequent/permanent closures would result in circuitous movements for the bus.

Evaluation Criteria

- Appropriate provision for the operational needs of transit routes
- Good transit access to area
- Legible and convenient pedestrian routes between Government Street and transit routes / stops

Motorised Traffic

Existing Conditions

Several streets play an important function in circulation of motor vehicles within Downtown Victoria. In the case of Government Street, it is both an important roadway for coming into downtown and a lower volume street where travel is only permitted northbound. As shown in Figure 5, higher vehicles volumes are concentrated near the Johnson Street Bridge on Government Street, Pandora Avenue, Johnson Street, Yates Street, and Wharf Street. The immediately parallel routes to Government Street are somewhat constrained as Wharf Street is nearing capacity and Douglas Street remains an important street for the transit system.

In addition, seasonal impacts to traffic volumes are worth noting as colder winter months bring more through traffic, potentially adding volumes

to already near-capacity streets such as Wharf and Douglas. As a result, the winter months risks placing additional demand on nearby corridors such as Government Street.

Potential Future Conditions

As evidenced by existing traffic volumes, Government Street and Wharf Street are the habitual route for many people travelling from James Bay. Hence, further densification in this neighbourhood is likely to increase volumes on Government and Wharf Streets if shifts are not made in these established travel patterns. Blanshard Street is a more suitable alternative for motor vehicles, eventually forming part of the regional highway system.

As alternative modes of travel such as walking and cycling become increasingly promoted / provided for, the impact of motor vehicles may lessen over time as people opt to drive their personal vehicles less. In addition, it is important to consider the impact ridehailing services may have on streets / traffic volumes as they may contribute to an addition of vehicles (people switching from walking / cycling), or a reduction



Figure 5: Relative Traffic Volumes in Downtown Victoria

in vehicles (people switching from using their personal vehicles). More detail regarding ridehailing services is discussed below.

Opportunities

Several short blocks exist in the southern extent of Government Street in the downtown. Currently mainly restricted to one-way travel, these streets present an opportunity to retain local access and circulation despite restrictions to travel on Government Street.

As previously mentioned, a considerable number of trips between James Bay are serviced by Wharf Street.

Constraints

Based on traffic volumes at the Johnson Street and Humboldt Street intersections, uninhibited two-way traffic on Government Street would certainly establish a convenient connection for many motorists. In cases like this where desire lines are being completed for motor vehicles, measures such as slower speeds and complete or timed closures will likely be needed to manage traffic volumes and maintain safety for walkers and rollers on Government Street.

For through traffic, disruptions or closures in the southern extent of Government Street closest to Humboldt Street are likely to divert further vehicles onto Wharf Street. Impacts on Wharf Street will need to be managed, with the BBV program and timed closure of Government Street providing an opportunity to assess the magnitude of potential impacts. Regardless, impacts on Wharf Street will need to be managed.

The current street network does pose some legibility constraints on motor vehicles when considering restrictions on Government Street. Specific considerations for loading and parking are discussed in subsequent sections. Where full closures to motorized vehicles are introduced on Government Street, accommodating two-way movements across Government Street along east-west streets may be desirable.

Evaluation Criteria

- Impacts on surrounding strategic roads
- Legible vehicular circulation

Loading & Servicing

Existing Conditions

With a mixture of shops, services, and food and beverage establishments space for loading and servicing is offered on street in designated truck loading / commercial loading zones, 20-minute meters, and passenger zones when actively loading and unloading. However, as a result of the City of Victoria's new Commercial Loading Permit Program (January 2020), drivers must purchase one of two permits (20 Minute Meter Permit – vehicles less than six (6) metres in length; Truck loading permit – vehicles more than six (6) metres in length), in order to legally load / onload in any of the above-mentioned areas .

As a result of the GSPI, however, access for loading / servicing along Government Street between Humboldt and Yates street is currently limited to the hours of 10pm until noon, with new commercial loading zones and accessible parking stalls available on and adjacent to Government Street (zones are outlined in red in Figure 6 below).

Potential Future Conditions

As cities continue to grow, there is no question that the demand for loading / servicing space in cities will also increase. However, the types of delivery vehicles and therefore the types of spaces required may continue to change (e.g. bike vs. truck vs. van freight). For example, as was observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, a surge in urban / home deliveries added to the demand for loading space within cities, as well as the demand for drop-off / pick-up locations. As a result, many cities, including Victoria are starting to turn their attention to “smart” curbside management practices that can not only accommodate loading / servicing needs more effectively, but also the general increase in demand for curb space be it from ride hail companies or shared mobility companies, among others. For these reasons, one of the key initiatives within GoVictoria, the City’s



Figure 6: New Loading and Accessible Parking Zones

Sustainable Mobility Strategy is to “Rethink the Curb”.

Opportunities

As shown in Figure 6, several new zones have been allocated for loading / servicing as a result of the GSPI, some of which are located on Government Street cross streets (Fort, Broughton, Courtney Streets), and some in back alleys / side streets (Langley Street). As these zones have now been created, an opportunity exists to make them permanent, as well as to develop additional zones if they are found to be effective in their ability to service the needs of the surrounding area.

As mentioned in the existing conditions section, space for loading and servicing is offered on-street in designated truck loading / commercial loading zones, 20-minute meters, and passenger zones provided the delivery vehicle has the correct permit. With that said, there is the potential to increase the dynamics of permitted loading / servicing zones such as with more nuanced seasonal and time-based regulations (i.e. using the same space for different purpose at different times of day). Importantly, these types of zones / spaces on Government Street are currently only available for use between the hours of 10pm and noon between Humboldt and Yates Street as a result of the GSPI.

Constraints

While the new loading / servicing zones do work to offset the parking limitations resulting from the GSPI, these new zones may be inadequate in accommodating the demand for loading / servicing needed by local businesses, particularly as Government Street remains closed to cars between 10pm and noon.

Assuming the current dynamic parking scheme remains in place or is enhanced, loading / servicing may still be space constrained, be it from the size of delivery vehicle or space congestion from on-street traffic.

Implementing more time-based regulations may be constrained by the inability or unwillingness of either delivery companies or businesses to deliver / receive goods at certain times of the day.

Evaluation Criteria

- Appropriate provision to enable economic activity
- Minimization of conflict with other street users

Personal Vehicle Parking

Existing Conditions

A mixture of on and off-street parking is located on and adjacent to Government Street (see Figure 7 for all parking available in Downtown Victoria). City-wide, there is an estimated 2,000+ on-street spaces. Currently, a limited number of on-street parking is available on Government Street, all of which are located north of View Street. However, additional on-street spaces remain available on all nearby cross streets between Humboldt Street and Pandora Avenue.

On-street spaces are the most expensive in this area, with hourly rates for on-street parking being \$3 Monday through Saturday (90-minute time limit), \$2 on Sundays (4-hour time limit), and free after 6pm and on holidays.

In terms off-street parking, the City operates

five parkades and three surface lots providing over 1,800 spaces, and offer a mix of electric vehicle charging, bike storage, motorcycle and car share spaces. At present, the City is converting all of their parkades from a ticket-based system to a more efficient “Pay by Space” system, of which operates similarly to the on-street system, requiring drivers to pay when they park using the ParkVictoria app or a pay station, and no longer need to collect a ticket . All parkades will have streamlined rates: \$2/hour, free from 6 pm to 9 am and on Sundays and holidays, and 1-hour free parking spaces will be available on the lower floors to ensure there is free parking available for use.

With 361 spaces, the parkade closest to Government Street is the Bastion Square parkade on the corner of Yates and Langley Street. However, all City-owned parkades and two of the three surface lots fall within walking distance of Government Street.

In addition to City operated parking, there exist multiple private parking lots (surface and parkades) across the downtown core. Within



Figure 7: On and Off-Street Parking

proximity to the study area are 9 parkades with over 400 spaces (see Figure 9). However, hourly rates / rules / restrictions cannot be confirmed as they are not uniformly regulated.

Potential Future Conditions

As mentioned in the Loading and Servicing section, “smart” curbside management practices are emerging as a way to more effectively manage how curb space is used. In terms of personal vehicle parking, this primarily impacts on-street parking. While the hope is that demand for parking will decrease in the future, the removal of all on-street parking is unlikely. Therefore, it is important to consider how the on-street parking that does remain (e.g. on-street spaces located on Government Street north of View Street) is managed, and whether its removal or repurposing is something that is desired / justifiable, particularly if there is an observed trend in more people walking, cycling, rolling in place of driving.



Figure 9: Nearby Private Parking Lots

Opportunities

An opportunity exists to make permanent the parking changes that have occurred along Government Street as a result of the GSPI (on-street parking restricted to north of View Street). Depending on the level of demand and potential future design / infrastructure changes to Government Street further north, additional on-street parking could be removed or converted to having more of a dynamic use such as for loading / servicing if it doesn't already. As well, existing surface lots (be they City or private) may be redeveloped into more purposeful uses (e.g. pop-up park or shop space, residential development) provided the lot is underutilized with the level of supply consistently exceeding the level of demand.

In any case where the removal of supply is proposed, it will be important to conduct a demand study to ensure the demand can be adequately accommodated elsewhere.

There is also an opportunity to increase the use of off-street parkades / lots, something that will likely be necessary given current and potential future parking removal / reduction / repurposing. In terms of increasing the use of off-street parkades, the City is already in the process of making its lots operate more efficiently by converting to a “Pay by Space” system (described in existing conditions above). That said, there are additional opportunities exist to enhance access and use of parkades through legibility and wayfinding efforts.

Constraints

Maintaining access and accommodating turn movements into / out of parkades is imperative, particularly in the removal of parking spaces or

vehicle access such as in the case of the GSPI.

Given its contentious nature, solid justification / evidence must be provided in the repurposing of parking, be it on or off-street. For example, some businesses along Government Street welcomed the GSPI, while others were concerned about a reduction in business potential from a lack of all-day vehicle access.

Evaluation Criteria

- Legible vehicular access to parking locations
- Legible / convenient pedestrian access between parking location and Government Street

Taxi and Ride-hail

Existing Conditions

At present, there are eight dual purpose taxi / fire hydrant zones. Taxis are able to wait for fares in each of these zones, with each zone having space for only one taxi. Regulations dictate that taxis must remain in their vehicle and immediately relocate upon the arrival of an emergency vehicle . The location of the zones are as follows:

- 1632 Store Street
- 1200 Government Street
- 761 Fort Street
- 827 Fort Street
- 634 Humboldt Street
- 728 Humboldt Street
- 930 Fort Street
- 1030 Fort Street

In addition to the dual-purpose zones, taxis are also permitted in passenger zones, and there are three overnight taxi stands to get people in and out of the downtown quickly and fill in gaps in bus service. Additional details regarding general taxi-related permits and restrictions is described

in the City of Victoria's Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (Bylaw No. 03-060).

With only one dual purpose zone located on Government Street, and the opening of the Government street to vehicles from 10pm until noon, the GSPI has had little restrictive impact on taxi service.

Currently ride-hailing services such as Uber do not operate within the City, however, ride-hail approval in Victoria coincided with the pandemic and are expected to operate in the future.

Potential Future Conditions

As mentioned in the existing conditions section, ride-hailing services are expected to operate throughout Victoria in the future, adding to the demand for curb space currently occupied by taxis, personal vehicles, buses, among others. As has already been mentioned in the loading / servicing, and personal vehicle parking sections, the likely increase in demand for curb space by taxi / ride hailing companies further emphasizes the need for “smart” curbside management practices such as dynamic parking spaces and time-access controls.

Opportunities

The likely increase in demand for curb and road space as a result of what is expected to be an influx of ride hail vehicles further justifies the need for “smart” curbside management practices such as dynamic parking spaces, time access controls, and pick-up / drop-off locations.

A reduction in demand for personal vehicle parking could result from people switching from driving their personal vehicles to ride hail

services. However, if people switch from walking, cycling, or taking transit it could actually add to vehicle traffic and demand for curb space.

Geofencing of ride hail services (and potentially taxis) is something that certain cities have piloted as a way to direct traffic to less busy streets for pick-up and drop-offs. For example, in 2018, Lyft piloted a geofence in San Francisco to limit the amount of pick-up and drop-offs along the busy Valencia Street .

Constraints

While the level of impact ride hailing services will have on vehicle traffic is not yet known (e.g. are people tending to switch from driving personal vehicles, or from walking, cycling, or taking transit), it is certain that there will be an increase in demand for curb space. Therefore, when and how these services are able to operate in the City must be strategically planned for using “smart” curbside management practices.

Evaluation Criteria

- Appropriate level of provision for taxi and ride-hail waiting areas
- Efficient management of ride-hail pick-up and drop-off areas

Micromobility

Existing Conditions

At present, the City’s streets and traffic bylaws have not been amended to contravene the Provincial Motor Vehicle Act which currently prohibits the use of micromobility devices such as electric scooters and hoverboards on streets or bike lanes. However, the City is currently working on the development of a Shared

Mobility Business Regulation Bylaw that will permit the operation of shared mobility services such as electric and dockless bikeshares. However, this bylaw has not yet been presented to council for adoption.

Potential Future Conditions

Similar to ride hail services, it is only a matter of time before micromobility technologies arrive in the form of shared systems in the City of Victoria. As mentioned in the existing conditions section, the City is already working on the development of a Shared Mobility Business Regulation Bylaw, of which will help to plan for how and where these modes will be able to operate.

Opportunities

In the development of the Shared Mobility Business Regulation Bylaw, consideration should be given to how the City can plan for and regulate the use of micromobility technologies (e.g. e-scooters) as people are already operating these technologies despite their illegality. In planning for these modes, the City can be better equipped at controlling where and how people operate them as opposed to people making their own decisions. As a result, the City can relieve some of the potential disruption to other travellers, be they people walking, cycling, or driving. Examples of cities in British Columbia to have recently amended their bylaws to permit these technologies include Kelowna, Vernon, and Vancouver.

In addition to written regulations regarding where and how these technologies can operate / dock / park, geofencing can be used to control access, helping to minimize disruption (be it to people walking or driving) and improve safety

for all. For example, the GSPI has demonstrated that with the street closed to cars, people of all modes are taking advantage of using the street, not just pedestrians. As a result, there is at times notable interference between those who are walking, and those using faster modes like scooters and bikes.

Constraints

Even in permitting and planning for the operation of new micromobility technologies, it is likely that some users will disregard regulations and operate / dock / park in undesignated areas, disrupting other travellers. Relatedly, the operation of these modes, particularly e-scooters, remains a contentious issue as their operation can be disruptive (real or perceived) to other travellers.

Evaluation Criteria

- Flexibility to cater for future micromobility movement through the area
- Flexibility to allow for appropriate micromobility parking in the area
- Tourist-Oriented Modes

Tourist-Oriented Modes

Existing Conditions

Several tourist-oriented modes have been identified for consideration, all of which fall under the classification of a motor sightseeing vehicle in the City of Victoria's Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (Bylaw No. 03-060). Three primary types of tourist modes are identified: motor sightseeing vehicles (e.g. tour buses), pedicabs / rickshaws, and horsedrawn vehicles, with restrictions on area / hours of operation and stopping, standing, and parking briefly described below.

Tourist-oriented modes are relevant when discussing the existing and potential future conditions of Government Street as the study area is a tourist hub and will have demand for movement / parking from such modes now and into the future.

Potential Future Conditions

As mentioned in the existing conditions section, the study area is expected to remain a tourist hub into the future. For these reasons, how and where tourist-oriented modes will be able to park and operate throughout the study area will continue to be an important consideration, particularly given their irregularity in size / shape / operating technology (e.g. diesel tour buses, horse drawn carriages).

Motor Sightseeing Vehicles (Tour Buses).

As the study area is and will remain a popular tourist hub, tour buses will often travel along Government Street as part of their tour route. However, the parking of tour buses is regulated by Schedule D in the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (Bylaw No. 03-060). While tour buses do provide a popular service, particularly to cruise passengers, the size and noise level of tour



Pedi-cabs are a popular sightseeing mode.

buses can be quite disruptive to people walking, cycling, resting in the area, as well as to vehicle traffic.

Pedicabs and Rickshaws. These modes provide a unique, quieter, and smaller alternative to the conventional tour bus. However, because of this, they are fairly regulated by the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (Bylaw No. 03-060). An existing area of operation map presented in Figure 9.

Horsedrawn Carriages Similar to pedicabs and rickshaws, horse drawn carriages are a unique, albeit controversial, alternative to the tour bus. Therefore, their operation and parking is fairly regulated by the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw (Bylaw No. 03-060) with the area of operation presented in Figure 10.

Across all of these modes, the demand to access the study area, particularly between Humboldt and Yates Street will undoubtedly continue in the future, particularly in seasons of heightened tourism. For these reasons, the regulations surrounding where these modes can operate / park may need to be revisited, particularly with the emergence of “smart” curbside management practices and initiatives such as the GSPI resulting in restricted vehicle access during peak times of the day.

Opportunities

In allowing the operation of these modes within the study area, there is an opportunity to slow other vehicle modes, potentially deterring them from using Government Street as a thoroughfare. This is particularly the case with non-motorized tourist-modes such as pedicabs and horsedrawn carriages.

Constraints

Where and how to permit the operation of parking of these modes remains challenging, particularly given their unique size and shape, and with restricted vehicle access resulting from initiatives such as the GSPI.

Anecdotally, compatibility of these modes with other modes and street activity can be negative, such as with ping pong ball scaring horses, and disruption to patrons on patios from idling tour bus emissions.

Evaluation Criteria

- Provision for tourist vehicle pick-up / drop-off in appropriate locations
- Appropriate circulation routes provided for tourist vehicles



Figure 9: Schedule A - Pedicab Existing Area of Operation Map



Figure 10: Schedule B – Horsedrawn Vehicle Area of Operation

Key Considerations

The discussion above demonstrates how there are multiple transportation considerations that will need to be considered and balanced when developing options for Government Street. In order to provide some focus to the decision-making process, it is useful to first examine certain key considerations as listed below, before delving into how these may fit together into various options. These key considerations seek to distill some of the more fundamental decisions to be made, by drawing upon the objectives of the project, modal considerations as well as the characteristics of the street.

Vehicular circulation on the northern extent between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue?

Two-way traffic between Johnson Street and Pandora Avenue is almost essential, to retain vehicular connectivity to the strategic Pandora Avenue / Johnson Street east-west corridor. A key consideration is whether vehicular access should be retained between Johnson Street and Yates Street, with a secondary consideration being whether this would entail two-way access for all vehicles, one-way northbound access, or one-way northbound access restricted to transit.

Key Limitations

- Maintaining access to the Johnson Street Bridge
- Capacity of the Johnson Street / Pandora Avenue / Wharf Street intersection, including
- queue lengths on Pandora Avenue
- Transit coverage prior to crossing the Johnson Street Bridge (in relation to the existing northbound stop on Government Street between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue)

Treatment of southern extent between Courtney Street and Humboldt Street?

A key consideration is whether to continue to allow vehicular access through this block, or alternatively to close it to vehicles in order to form a southern gateway. There is the potential to convert this space into a square that draws people in from the waterfront and the Inner Harbour Causeway, as part of a gateway treatment. This would clearly establish Government Street as a local street in downtown, forcing motor vehicles to access via a less direct route.

Key Limitations

- Other efforts required to reinforce gateway, activate this zone and ensure this doesn't become a dead-zone
- Impacts on Wharf Street traffic volumes

Focus of pedestrian prioritization?

This key consideration relates to which blocks are the most important in terms of pedestrian movements and activity, and hence should be the highest priorities for pedestrian prioritization. It appears that the central blocks (between Yates Street and Fort Street) appear to be the current key hub of pedestrian connections through Trounce Alley, Bastion Square and the Bay Centre. Vehicular access could be restricted to create a central area of pedestrian activity that also improves east-west pedestrian permeability.

Key Limitations

- Is the adjacent block between Fort Street and Broughton Street equally as important for pedestrians?
- Providing reasonable access to loading for businesses (i.e., single block closures)
- Capacity of mall to open onto the street and contribute to outdoor public realm

Logical circulation at the intersection of View Street and Government Street?

View Street is the only east-west street in this section that ends at a T-intersection at Government Street (it does not continue across Government Street). Opening Government Street for two-way traffic on either side of View Street, especially between Yates Street could enhance local circulation and mall parking lot access, avoiding the creation of a cul-de-sac at the end of View Street

Key Limitations

- Full closure between Fort Street and Yates Street poses challenge of creating cul-de-sac on View Street
- Distinct local routing alternatives using View Street depending on the location of potential closures to Government Street (result of existing interruption of Broad Street by the Bay Centre and one-way routes)

Appropriate provision for cyclists along Government Street?

Connecting to planned facilities on Government Street outside the downtown is desirable and completes a cyclist desire line. However, infrastructure-heavy cycling facilities are unlikely to be compatible with a people first street. Providing two-way cycle facilities is also complicated in scenarios where there is one-way vehicular access.

Key Limitations

- Vehicle volumes and speeds
- Density of pedestrians vis-à-vis density of cyclists, and how this varies by time of day and season
- Interactions with parked and moving vehicles – contraflow less desirable and planned facilities on other segments of Government Street will not be bi-directional.

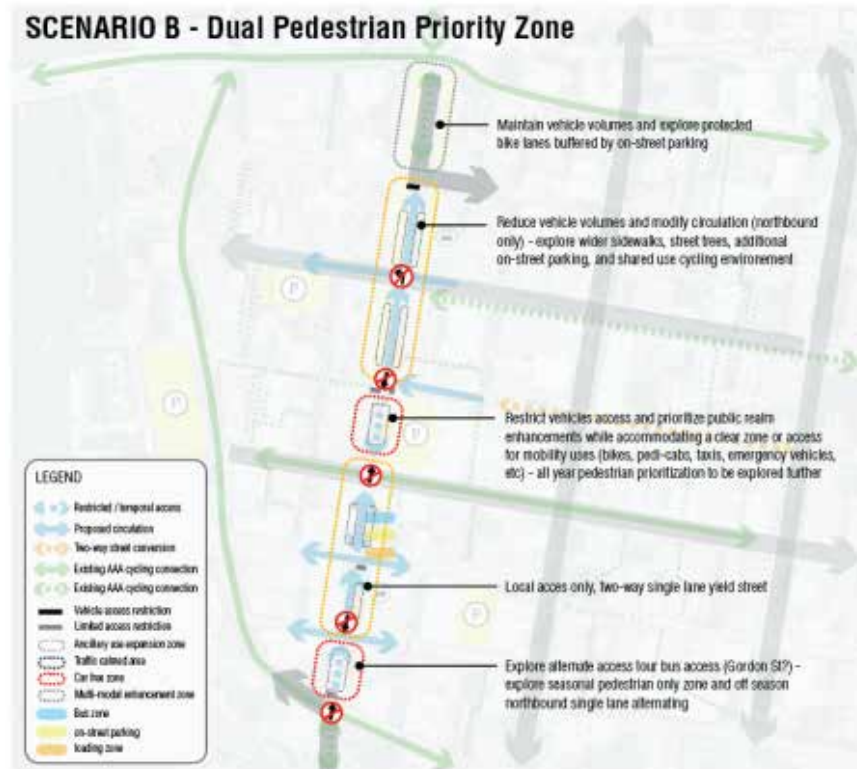
Mapping of City Options against Key Considerations

The following tables provide a high-level overview of how initial circulation options provided by the City reflect the key considerations above.



Option A

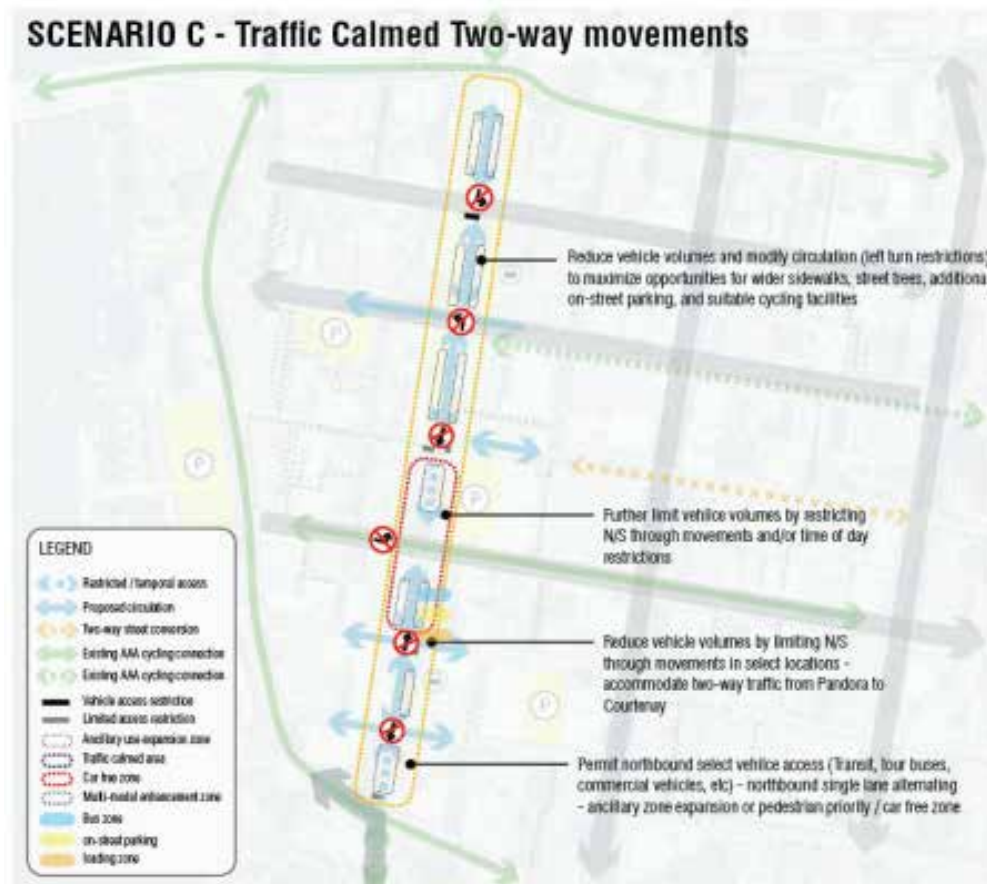
Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Maintains existing two-way circulation patterns	Remains open to select vehicles as a single though lane	Prioritized public realm between View Street and Broughton Street. No vehicles, at least seasonally	Continuous two-way movement between View Street and Johnson Street via Government Street	Protected bike lanes extended to Yates Street. Cyclists accommodated on corridor



Option B

Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Maintains two-way travel between Pandora Avenue and Johnson Street. Through travel for buses not explicit but able to be accommodated	Seasonal pedestrian only zone with northbound single lane alternating accommodated in the off season	Prioritized public realm between View Street and Fort Street. No vehicles, at least seasonally	Continued access onto Government Street northbound from View Street	Protected bike lanes extended to Johnson Street. Single direction of vehicle movements potential hurdles cycling

Table 1: Alignment of options with key considerations



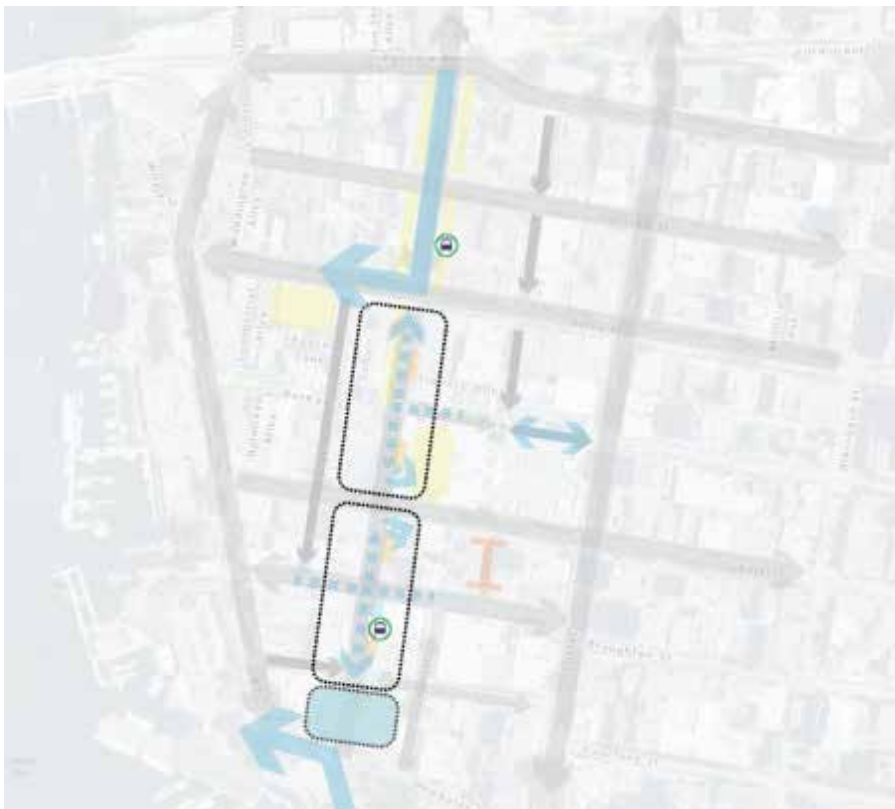
Option C

Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Discontinuous vehicle travel between Yates Street and Pandora Avenue	Remains open to select vehicles as a single though lane	Restrictions on north-south through movements at View Street and Broughton Street minimizes vehicle volumes	Continuous two-way movement between View Street and Johnson Street via Government Street. Possible left turn to access Fort Street	Compatible with two-way cycling movements travelling in the same direction as traffic



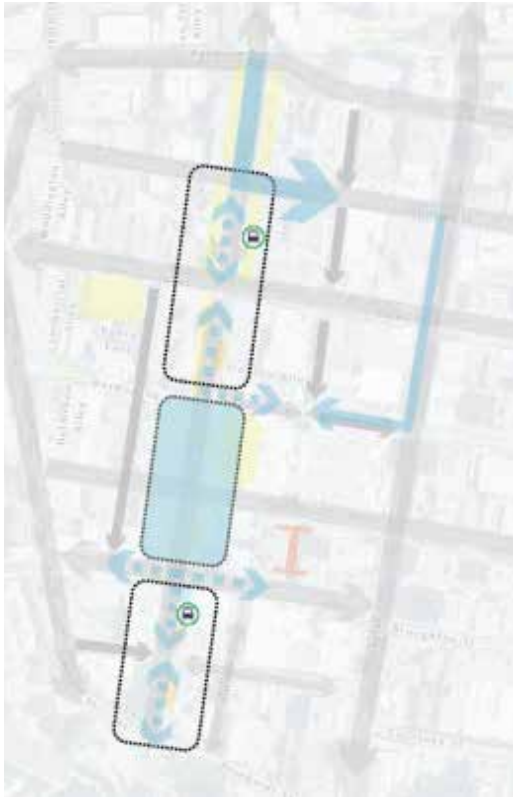
Option D

Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Southbound only between Pandora Avenue and Yates Street. Through travel for buses not explicit but desirable	Remains open to vehicles extending to forced turn on Fort Street	Prioritized public realm between View Street and Broughton Street. Only vehicle access from View Street	View Street as main access point to Government Street. Exits via Fort Street and Yates Street	Converging one-way segments present challenge to providing consistent cycling facility

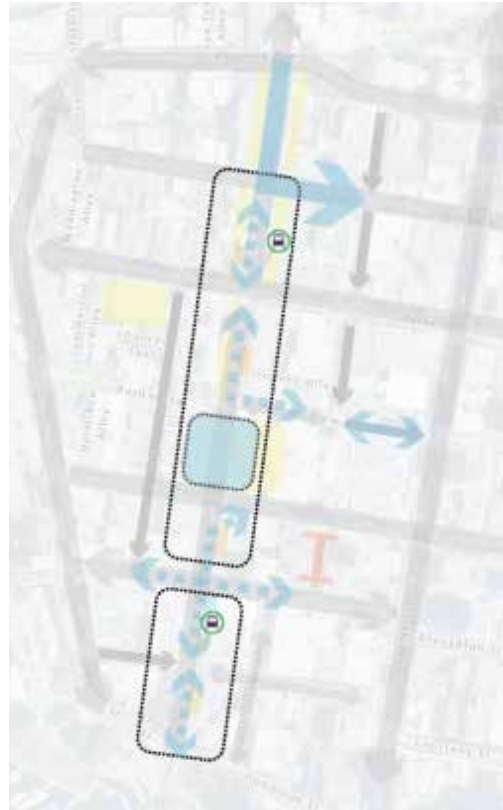


Option E

Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Southbound only between Pandora Avenue and Yates Street. Through travel for buses not explicit but desirable	Pedestrian only zone in some capacity	Restricted through movements at Fort Street, Yates Street and Courtney Street limit vehicle volumes.	View Street as main access point to one section of Government Street. Exits via Fort Street and Yates Street	Potential to incorporate two-way cycling movements if short contraflow lane provided to Pandora Avenue

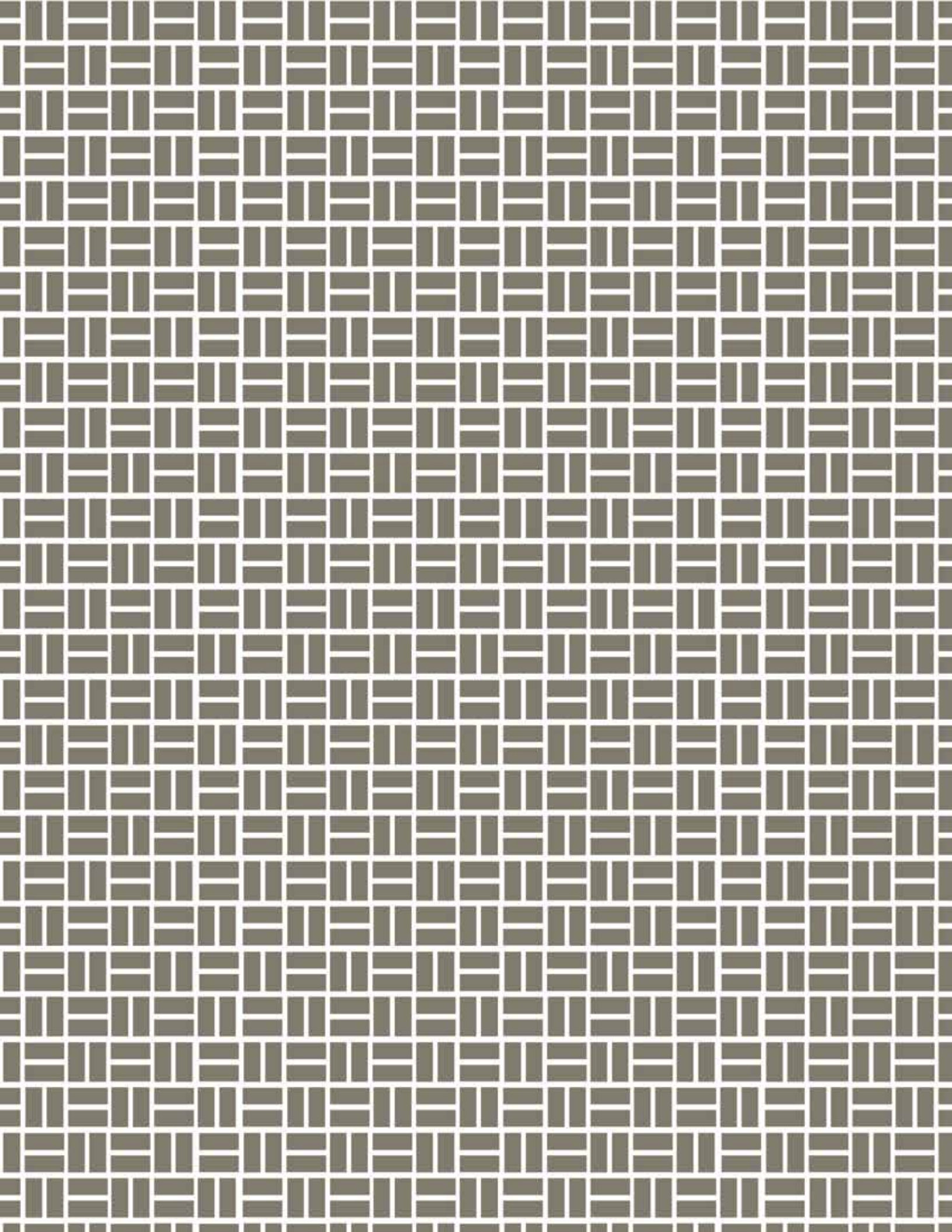


Option F

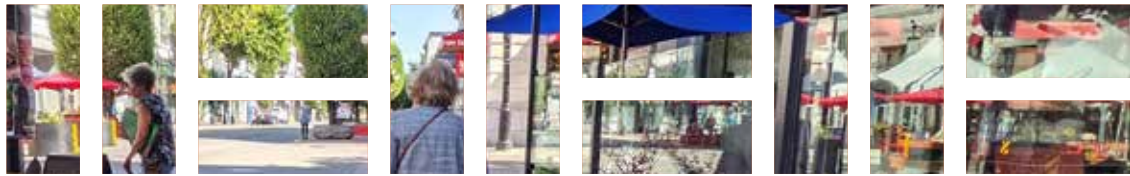


Option G

Yates to Pandora	Humboldt to Courtney	Pedestrian Prioritization	Logical View Street	Legible Cycling
Southbound only between Pandora Avenue and Johnson Street. Through travel for buses not explicit but desirable	Local vehicle access only with no through movement at Courtney Street intersection	Full closure for pedestrians:	Continuous two-way movement between View Street and Johnson Street via Government Street	Potential to incorporate two-way cycling movements if short contraflow lane provided to Pandora Avenue



Best Practices



1970's Pedestrian Mall Movement

The last time significant streetscape improvements were made to Government Street was in the late 1970's between Humbolt and Yates Street. These improvements emphasized its pedestrian-priority character and heritage and included the use of brick pavers, rolled curbs, widened sidewalks, street trees in planters, pedestrian lighting, street furniture and other streetscape elements.

These changes were a part of an urban design movement that was taking place across North America. In 1959 Burdick Street in Kalamazoo was created as the first pedestrian street. It was designed by Victor Gruen who is credited for popularizing the movement. By the 1980s more than 200 pedestrian malls had been created.

The main objectives driving the pedestrianization movement were:

- a desire to compete with suburban shopping malls and reverse the decline of American downtowns;
- a desire to allow pedestrians to walk from store to store in a leisurely manner and away from congestion, noise, and air pollution.

By 2005 many pedestrian malls failed, and only 20 of the original 200 were still traffic free. Government Street was never fully closed to traffic and has remained successful. The following best practices and lessons learned from successful pedestrian malls include:

1) Build on existing foot traffic. Successful malls aim to work better for the people who are already using the street rather than attempt to attract new people to the street.

- 2) Served a diverse range of activities, programs and people day and night rather than having a single focus of shopping.
- 3) Cause minimal disruption to the level of traffic on surrounding streets and allow for cross movement. Short rather than long blocks, like Government Street, helps.
- 4) Limit vehicular closures to a single or partial block, or to a timed and seasonal closure. Some, like Government Street, maintained all vehicles.
- 5) Keep the street well maintained and programmed. An agency that is responsible for their funding, maintenance, and program can help.

References:

- Who's afraid of the pedestrian mall? Alexandra Lange, September 30, 2019
- Revisiting Pedestrian Malls, Jessica Schmidt, 2010
- Why Was the State Street Pedestrian Mall a "Failure"? John Greenfield, March 11, 2013
- Yonge Street Mall: The fun and failure of pedestrianizing Toronto's iconic strip during the 1970s, Daniel Ross, March 16, 2017.



Mall pedestrian treatment under construction along 900-block, circa 1970s, CVA Mo9926_141



Mall pedestrian treatment under construction along 900-block, circa 1970s, CVA Mo9927_141

Heritage Best Practices and Standards

The Parks Canada Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada should be consulted before undertaking interventions to historic sites. Interventions should be based upon the information outlined in the Standards and Guidelines, which are conservation principles of best practice. The following should be considered before carrying out any work to an historic site, such as the Government Street landscape.

Standards For All Conservation Projects

- Conserve the heritage value of a historic place. Do not remove, replace, or substantially alter its intact or repairable character-defining elements. Do not move a part of a historic place if its current location is a character-defining element.
- Conserve changes to a historic place, which over time, have become character-defining elements in their own right.
- Conserve heritage value by adopting an approach calling for minimal intervention.
- Recognize each historic place as a physical record of its time, place and use. Do not create a false sense of historical development by adding elements from other historic places or other properties or by combining features of the same property that never coexisted.
- Find a use for a historic place that requires minimal or no change to its character-defining elements.
- Protect and, if necessary, stabilize a historic place until any subsequent intervention is undertaken. Protect and preserve archaeological resources in place. Where there is potential for disturbance of

archaeological resources, take mitigation measures to limit damage and loss of information.

- Evaluate the existing condition of character-defining element to determine the appropriate intervention needed. use the gentlest means possible for any intervention. Respect heritage value when undertaking an intervention.
- Maintain character-defining elements on an ongoing basis. Repair character-defining element by reinforcing the materials using recognized conservation methods. Replace in kind any extensively deteriorated or missing parts of character-defining elements, where there are surviving prototypes.
- Make any intervention needed to preserve character-defining elements physically and visually compatible with the historic place and identifiable upon close inspection. Document any intervention for future reference.

Additional Standards Relating To Rehabilitation

- Repair rather than replace character-defining elements. Where character-defining elements are too severely deteriorated to repair, and where sufficient physical evidence exists, replace them with new elements that match the forms, materials and detailing of sound versions of the same elements. Where there is insufficient physical evidence, make the form, material and detailing of the new elements compatible with the character of the historic place.
- Conserve the heritage value and character-defining elements when creating any new additions to a historic place and any related new construction. Make the new work

physically and visually compatible with, subordinate to and distinguishable from the historic place.

- Create any new additions or related new construction so that the essential form and integrity of a historic place will not be impaired if the new work is removed in the future.

Accessibility

The Hidden Mobility Disabilities Alliance Ltd. has identified the following best practices for accessibility and accommodation.

These guidelines for public spaces address the four main areas of challenge that can hinder the full and effective participation in society guaranteed in the Canadian Human Rights Act:

1. Limit distance to be walked – one way:

- 35 feet from a main entrance to on-street parking near that entrance.
- 50 feet from a main entrance to off-site lane parking.
- 35 feet from a main entrance to at least one universal rest room.
- 20 feet from an elevator to the driver's door in handicapped parking stalls.
- 35 feet from a seated waiting area to the service window in a government office.
- 35 feet from public parking to out-of-doors public amenities such as water- fronts, parks, viewing sites, etc.

2. Address terrain:

- Provide a short distance alternative to having to navigate a slope (which puts stress on knee joints), such as a ramp.
- Provide a smooth, stable, even terrain so that walking is as effortless as possible.

3. Provide alternatives to standing and waiting:

- Where access to a public service requires standing in line, provide a ticket number dispenser at the entrance with seating for people waiting their turn.
- Where individuals are expected to stand using service kiosks, provide a seated alternative.
- Where possible, provide online alternatives for accessing public services from home.

4. Provide resting opportunities on benches or chairs during pain episodes:

- For individuals waiting for elevators.
- At intervals of least every 35 feet for:
- Buildings with entrances set back from the street more than 35 feet
- Corridors longer than 50 feet
- Shopping malls
- Public viewing sites

Source:

www.HiddenMobilityDisabilities.com
alliance@hiddenmobilitydisabilities.com



Entrances along Government Street.

Streetscape Best Practices

The Downtown Public Realm Plan identifies the following five best practices for streetscapes and public realm that are relevant to this project:

Identify of Place

Create public spaces with authentic character and identity.

Diversity of Use

Provide a mix of varied public spaces to support the diversity and uniqueness of the precincts and to meet the needs of current and future populations.

Community Focus

Ensure public spaces engage the local community and contribute to community health and wellbeing.

Sustainability

Design a public realm that improves environmental, material, financial and social sustainability.

Accessibility

Incorporate universally accessible design into the public realm to allow barrier-free access.