

Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 1, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** January 23, 2023
From: Councillor Dave Thompson and Councillor Matt Dell
Subject: City of Victoria Alignment with Saanich Protected Bike Lane Network - Shelbourne

There is currently an opportunity to accelerate Victoria's transportation and climate goals due to a confluence in timing of Saanich and Victoria transportation network improvements, increased regional commuting, and the rapid growth of e-bike usage.

Background

The City of Victoria continues to build out our network of protected bike-and-roll routes. The network is far from complete but has shown initial success in supporting transportation objectives of the Official Community Plan (see Appendix), the Climate Leadership Plan, and the Go Victoria mobility strategy. Cycling trips in the city rose 30% from 2017 to 2022 - even as all-mode total trips dropped 15% likely due to COVID and the subsequent work-from-home trend (CRD, Origin Destination Travel Survey). Enabling more people to shift from car trips to bicycle, other micromobility¹ or transit trips (mode shift) means less traffic congestion, climate change emissions, local air pollution, property-damage crashes and casualty crashes.

Also, e-bike use is growing rapidly. Seniors riding e-bikes are now a common sight, as are commuters, parents with young children on cargo e-bikes, and other people. Many bike stores report that e-bikes are half or more of their sales. E-bikes enable longer cycling trips for more people, including regional commuting and other trips.

Employers across [Canada](#) and the [United States](#) are restoring in-office work. This – along with ongoing population growth – is contributing to growth in regional commuting. Current workers transitioning back to in-office work and new workers arriving both provide moments of opportunity for individual commuters to change their mode of transportation.

Although Westshore commuting gets the headlines, twice as many commutes to and from Victoria involve Saanich (Go Victoria, p.101). Saanich is currently building protected bike-and-roll infrastructure on its portion of Shelbourne (from PKOLS / Mount Douglas down to North Dairy Road) as part of its All Ages and Abilities Spine Network.

Victoria's planned protected bike-and-roll network includes north-south routes connecting with Saanich. Shelbourne Street north to the Saanich border at North Dairy Road is identified in Victoria's Official Community Plan (OCP) as part of the future Expanded All Ages and Abilities Network. Ultimately, this will connect Saanich to downtown and the rest of the current Victoria cycling network, via Begbie and the upcoming Pandora East extension, resulting in a continuous cycling-and-rolling connection from Downtown to Mount Douglas, rivalling the E&N Regional Trail.

¹ "Bikes, electric scooters, skateboards are all micromobility vehicles. Other types include golf carts, kick scooters, onewheel, personal transporters, roller skates, segways, unicycles, tricycles, handcycles, mobility scooter, quadracycles, and wheelchairs." (From Wikipedia, "[Micromobility](#)")

Victoria has already implemented painted cycling facilities on Begbie and on Shelbourne south of Haultain Street and north of Hillside Avenue. A gap in the network currently exists between Haultain and Hillside, where people cycling or rolling share a single lane with motor vehicles, transit buses and delivery vehicles next to on-street vehicle parking. The largest difference in road allocation between Haultain and Hillside is the presence of unregulated and resident only parking on both sides of the street, while parking to the south of this area, and to the north and into Saanich, is limited. This section of Shelbourne is also home to a significant number of London Plane Trees, planted as a memorial to soldiers who did not return from World War 1.

Similar to Saanich's section of Shelbourne, Victoria's section of Shelbourne is in need of significant underground utility and roadway restoration which will take multiple years of planning prior to construction. Given the narrow road right of way, and the significant value of the London Plane Trees, completion of the Haultain-Hillside section will need to take place within the existing roadway, necessitating the reallocation (moving and/or removing) of some vehicle parking.

To support the success of Victoria's network, Saanich's complete street investments on Shelbourne, and regional mode shift goals, it is imperative to close the cycling network gap on Shelbourne Street in advance of the completion of Saanich's cycling network improvements to the north. Quick build methods and some re-allocation of parking space should be utilized to realize these improvements while minimizing capital spend on structural changes that would need to be removed in the future during complete street works.

The feasibility of this motion has been reviewed by Engineering Staff, who have confirmed that a quick build solution is suitable to close the existing cycling network gap on Shelbourne Street.

Recommendation

That Council directs staff to:

- Complete the Shelbourne cycling network connection between Haultain and Hillside, prioritizing sustainable travel modes over motor vehicle parking, using quick-build methods prior to Summer 2025.
- Add the Shelbourne/Begbie Corridor to the priority AAA bicycle network and upgrade as soon as possible in coordination with necessary road and underground asset renewal.
- Provide a verbal update to Council within 6 months of this motion on timing of the above and other upcoming AAA network improvements.

Respectfully submitted,


Councillor Thompson


Councillor Dell

Appendix

City of Victoria, Official Community Plan (from Section 7, Transportation and Mobility)

“The transportation and mobility policies of this plan collectively address seven broad objectives:

7 (a) That travel modes function effectively together as a system where road rights-of-way are designated, designed and managed to give priority to pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, shared mobility and commercial vehicles over single occupancy vehicles.

7 (b) That a regionally coordinated Vision Zero program prioritizes human life over ease of mobility and convenience at both the local and regional scale.

7 (c) That rapid, frequent, and local transit service collectively outperform the automobile's convenience and speed in a more affordable, sustainable and convenient way by connecting neighbourhoods to each other, the Urban Core, Urban Villages, employment areas, regional destinations and points of entry including Victoria International Airport and the BC Ferry terminal at Swartz Bay.

7 (d) That connected active transportation networks provide safe, convenient, and enjoyable travel options for people of all ages and abilities.

7 (e) That Victorians have access to low carbon and accessible mobility through road space allocation, incentives, electrification infrastructure, shared mobility services, and transportation demand management initiatives.

7 (f) That curb space is valued and managed to ensure the highest and best use through parking and loading zone changes, re-allocation, configuration, pricing, and other incentives.

7 (g) That travel is made safe with asset renewal and replacement and made seamless through the integration and management of data and technology.”