



Report on the Operation of the Horse-Drawn Carriages in Victoria, B.C.

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in Victoria, B.C.

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Recommendation:

Amend the Vehicles for Hire Bylaw to phase out commercial horse-drawn carriages in the City of Victoria by no later than Dec 31st, 2017.

1) Introduction:

Victoria has been home to horse-drawn carriages for over a century. For some, it is childhood nostalgia and for others it is tourist attraction that gives Victoria a unique Victorian era aesthetic. There are also a significant number of citizens and visitors who are deeply concerned about the presence of the horse-drawn carriages in our city. From collisions, questionable care for the horses, and irresponsible operation by those who are charged with responsibility for these animals while they traverse our city's streets, there is good reason for their concern. However, each viewpoint – whether in support or against the horse carriages – is tainted by perspective. In this report, I present eyewitness evidence that has been documented to provide an account of the operation of the horse carriages. I will argue that given the evidence, it is not possible to balance the value of nostalgia or perceived tourist interest with that of neglect, safety issues, and the ethical weight of animal exploitation. I also consider the impact of a post horse-carriage era in Victoria. Opportunities for phasing out the horse carriages are detailed with action plans and alternative business and public use potential are put forward and examined. In conclusion, this report finds that the horse-drawn carriages are a drain on the city of Victoria's potential to modernize, its revenue stream, and continues a tradition of animal exploitation that leave it behind many leading cities the world. I submit that the most responsible solution is phasing out the horse carriages at a date that may be considered a natural end and I urge the City to take steps to assert a commitment to this opportunity.

2) Background: Collisions, Injury, and Safety:

The term "collisions" has been used in place of "accident" to emphasize responsibility. It is the responsibility of the carriage companies and drivers to maintain control and the wellbeing of the horses in their care. Horses are vulnerable in these situations, despite the common argument that horse carriages are like any other vehicle on the road. Horses are not machines; they are living sentient beings who are forced to perform this task for their care. Therefore, repeated examples that demonstrate a lack of responsible direction of these vulnerable animals in a precarious environment is a failure to meet the requirements for their wellbeing. If it is the case that these "accidents" are unavoidable, then this acknowledges that there is an inability to predictably navigate traffic, as any vehicle for hire must, to maintain its integrity in the eyes of the public. If we consider how we would react to an analogous situation in which a cat or dog is placed in harm's way publicly and consistently, we will realize that this industry does not belong in our modern society. While a horse can be trained as any other animal to work in traffic, it does not justify its forced labour and exposure to injury to do so.

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Between 1995 and 2015, a span of 20 years, there has been at minimum 22 collisions, injuries, safety incidents, or threats related to the horse-drawn carriages in Victoria. This does not include any property damage, collisions, or personal injury caused that was not reported to Victoria Police, the City of Victoria or covered by the media. It also does not include the dozens of complaints submitted to the City of Victoria about over this same period of time. All of this information has been pulled from freedom of information (FOI) requests to the City of Victoria and the Victoria Police Department, as well as local news media reports.

May 3rd, 1995:

- Runaway coach struck and dragged a pedestrian with two horses while they were crossing the sidewalk.
- Related Business: Tally-Ho Carriage Tours

July 25th, 1997:

- Horse spooked and carriage tipped over on Wharf and Broughton St.
- Related Business: Carriage Tours Victoria

Aug 7th, 1997:

- Horse out of control on Empress hotel front law. Bride and groom thrown from the carriage.
- Related Business: Unknown

July 22nd, 2002:

- Horse spooked and bolted with one tourist in carriage, striking a vehicle.
- Related Business: Black Beauty Lines

Jan 16, 2003:

- Horse runs into tree, several people injured.
- Related Business: Tally Ho Tours

Sept 15th, 2003:

- Three injured when horse carriage spooked in Beacon Hill Park due to noise from a grass trimmer.
- Related Business: Victoria Carriage Tours

Aug 24th, 2004:

- Horse spooked and out of control, property damage.
- Related Business: Black Beauty Carriages

May 6th, 2005:

- Horse carriage struck by vehicle after being parked at Government and Belleville Intersection
- Related Business: Carriage Company Unknown

Aug 15th, 2005:

- Horse spooked and bolted, throwing passenger from the carriage.
- Related Business: Tally Ho Tours

Sep 10th, 2005:

- Horse spooked and bolted hitting vehicle, horse injured
- Related Business: Victoria Carriage Tours

Aug 04th, 2006:

- Horse out of control along Dallas Rd, horse injured

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- Related Business: Carriage Company Unknown

Aug 31st, 2006:

- Horse carriage spooked and carriage tipped over.
- Related Business: Carriage Company Unknown

May 24th, 2008:

- Collision Damage Under \$1000
- Related Business: Victoria Carriage Tours

Dec 4th, 2008:

- Collision Damage Under \$1000
- Related Business: Victoria Horse Carriage Tours

March 6th, 2009:

- Horse Carriage Horse Collapses on Government St.
- Related Business: Black Beauty Line Ltd.

July 19th, 2010:

- Assist Public report: Horses out of control
- Related Business: Victoria Trolley and Carriage Tours

Aug 22nd, 2011:

- Horse Carriage Tipped Over In Beacon Hill Park
- Related Business: Tally Ho carriage tours

Aug 1st, 2012:

- Traffic Other report: Horse and carriage out of control
- Related Business: Tally Ho carriage tours

May 23rd, 2014:

- Collision Damage Over \$1000/Runaway Horse
- Related Business: Tally Ho carriage tours

July 3rd, 2014:

- Vehicle Hit and Run
- Related Business: Tally Ho carriage tours

Oct 13th, 2014:

- Horse Carriage Operating At Night Without Lights On
- Related Business: Tally Ho carriage tours

August 9th, 2015:

- Report of horse carriage collision on Dallas Rd. from several sources.
- More information sought from the community.

It should be apparent from these incidents that there is an average of one incident each year and that there is a precedent for this trend to continue with no significant changes to the operation of the industry since 2009, which has not alleviated any actual threats to the safety of the horses or public as the frequency of incidents has not decreased. It is unbelievable that an industry that publicly exploits vulnerable animals can continue to operate with the City's blessing. It is not only public interest groups such as Victoria Horse Alliance that have concerns; the BCSPCA, who worked with the City on establishing the 2009 regulations also has concerns based on our work.

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3) BCSPCA Concerns:

In early 2015, I submitted a backgrounder to the BCSPCA for it to consider in relation to making a specific position statement on the horses used in the horse carriage industry. This paper was also sent to Mayor and Council in the fall of 2015 and is readily available on the Victoria Horse Alliance website. <http://banhorsecarriagesvictoria.org/report-to-the-bcspca/>

Based on this backgrounder, the BCSPCA added the following to their position statement on *Animals In Recreation, Sport, and Entertainment*:

Whenever animals are on display or made to perform, they face risks to their physical and psychological well-being. Such risks concern the ways in which they are bred, raised, housed, trained and transported, as well as the activities themselves. For instance:

*When animals such as horses are used for site-seeing tours, they face – among other challenges – extreme weather conditions, of which heat stress is only one example. Carriage rides are typically purchased by tourists, and tourists tend to travel during the summer months when temperatures are high. Horses pulling heavy loads on hot pavement are at risk of overheating, which may be exacerbated by high humidity, as well as infrequent watering, poor access to electrolytes, obesity, poor conditioning or illness (**Reference Image 1 in the Appendix**)*

This statement sends a message of caution about the need for awareness of the physical and psychological risks to animals that are used in the entertainment industry. Furthermore, with the horses' most intense time of use being in the summer months, there is significant concern of them overheating. This was discussed in the previous backgrounder that was sent to you and can still be referenced as the link above.

4) Finances

a) Carriages

Currently, the City of Victoria rents the spaces on the corner of Belleville and Menzies St. monthly to two carriage companies for a fee of \$1,170 each, including applicable taxes, as per January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2017 (Vehicles For Hire Bylaws, Schedule C, Horsedrawn Vehicle Parking Stands).

If we consider the current rate of a street occupancy permit at \$20/day per parking stall and the space of 25 metre length granted to both carriage companies, approximately four vehicles could fit into those spaces (if we are generous with their average size – 4.5- 4.8 metres – with parking room at six meters each: 6 x 4 = 24 metres). This results in \$80/day per side for a total of approximately \$2,000/month each if Sundays (which have free parking) are deducted.

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Currently, the City charges the carriage companies \$20/day per 13 metres² space. This rate nets approximately \$1,200 per month, which results in a missed opportunity of a minimum of \$800/month considering the spaces' proximity to downtown and tourist attractions. An analysis of substantial further lost revenue is provided later in the report.

Pricing:

The actual cost to ride in a horse-carriage is prohibitively expensive to the general public as a service and offers a lackluster value to tourists. Current tour rates as posted on the Tally Ho Tours websites are as follows:

Short and Sweet: 15min - \$55	Waterfront: 30min - \$100	Beacon Hill Park: 45min - \$145
Deluxe: 60min - \$185	Premiere: 90min - \$225	Romance: 100min - \$250

In a city as dense with history and heritage as Victoria, there is certainly no need for people to pay such inflated rates for minimal value. In 15min you can walk past the legislature, the museum, The Empress, all the way to the Maritime Museum or along the waterfront to Market Square, all while being able to poke into the stores along these streets. Walking tourists are able to spend more money in the various shops along Government St. and elsewhere if they are going at their own pace. However, there are also alternatives that I will discuss in more detail, but there are certainly more affordable, employable, and people-powered methods of tourism that could be promoted in place of horse-drawn carriages.

b) Trolleys

For the past several years, the Downtown Victoria Business Association has paid to have horses pull trolleys carrying upwards of thirty people through the city streets during the month of December in the downtown core.

Pricing:

While I did make inquiries about the amounts paid to the horse carriage company regarding this special event, the DVBA declined to provide any information regarding these expenses.

However, this information was obtained from one of the horse trolley drivers, who could be overheard, while we walked beside them during one of Victoria Horse Alliance's Trolley Walks. This cost was reported to be \$300/hr by the trolley driver. I contacted the DVBA for confirmation of this amount and their representative declined to comment.

Trolleys operate for four weekends, for four hours on Saturday and for 3 hours on Sunday, usually the last weekend of November and the first three weekends of December. Based on these numbers we can estimate a cost of \$8,400 to operate these trolleys for the 8 days they are present downtown. It is uncertain whether there is additional time charged for time spent loading and unloading, travel time in and out of the city, etcetera.

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The cost to the City of Victoria itself is minimal. Because of the status of the DVBA as a non-profit, the fees associated with shutting down parking spots at a cost of \$20 per spot are waived. This was confirmed by the Victoria Traffic Engineering department. It was estimated that six spots were removed from parking during the events for a combined eight days. The lost revenue may be calculated: $\$20 \times 6 \text{ spots} = \$120 \times 8 \text{ days} = \960 potential revenue lost. However, four of these days are Sundays, on which the City grants free parking, so the actual lost revenue would be half of that total, or \$480.

While the DVBA is not directly run by the City, it is given approval to operate as a 'business improvement district' by the City. However, the horse trolleys are not part of the local carriage company's regular business. These trolley rides are a "special event" and must receive a permit for the event from the City of Victoria in order to operate. Therefore, if the City of Victoria had reason for concern regarding the operation of the horse trolleys, it could reject the permit application. There is no evidence to suggest that the horse trolleys "enhance" the downtown core, or that they bring shoppers. There is evidence that the horses were not properly cared for during this event in 2015 and that trolley drivers were acting irresponsibly during their operation of this event as will be shown in this paper.

5) Irresponsible Horse Trolley Operation:

Horse drawn trolleys are not a separate entity from the horse carriage companies that operate year round in Victoria. Horse trolleys are classified as a "horsedrawn wagon" and are pulled by two horses. The City's Vehicles for Hire bylaw states the following:

"horsedrawn wagon" means a horsedrawn vehicle that is (a) pulled by two horses, and (b) has seats for a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 20 passengers.

During the months of December 2014 and 2015, Victoria Horse Alliance walked alongside the horse trolleys holding signs denouncing the event and documenting the operation of the horse trolleys. It was not unusual during horse trolley events for us to witness a trolley being loaded over its allowed capacity of 20 passengers, with upwards of 30 passengers (reference **Image 2 in the Appendix**). Drivers often encouraged as many people to pack on as possible with seemingly no awareness of or concern for the bylaw restrictions on passenger capacity. Due to the already unwieldy design of the trolleys and their slow speed during one of the busiest times of traffic in the downtown core, this presents a safety concern for both the passengers and the horses. When the trolleys are more heavily loaded, they cannot react as fast and are therefore more vulnerable to collision.

Trolley drivers also took great liberties in their operation of the trolleys, putting themselves, the public and the horses at risk: trolley drivers were seen on multiple occasions jumping on trolleys while they were in motion, in the middle of the street. On one occasion, as two trolleys passed each other on Government St. just south of Johnson St., an employee of the trolley company jumped between two trolleys as they passed one another. Irresponsible behaviour

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also included encouraging passengers to act irresponsibly by picking them up at non-designated pick-up locations and encouraging them to get off on the traffic side of the trolley rather than the sidewalk side. This, along with two incidents where people were temporarily left behind by the driver, including a child that was separated from their mother when they jumped off the trolley to retrieve a toy they dropped (reference **Images 3-5 in the Appendix**)

Horse trolleys are already a difficult vehicle to manage due to their extended length and width – this is without careless operation further endangering those riding. Horse carriages are not granted permission to operate in the downtown core during the week, except during the for safety reasons and so as not to exacerbate traffic congestion. These concerns are very much still relevant on the weekends in the downtown core as a number of collisions have occurred, traffic is dense, and there is much potential for issues. This, coupled with the evidence that the trolleys are even slower than expected due to them being overloaded beyond their maximum legal capacity, are being operated with a disregard of traffic bylaws and public safety, is only further reason to deny a permit for their continued seasonal operation.

Once again, these documented actions exhibit that the horse carriage companies and drivers are irresponsible and should not be operating within the City limits. For the basic safety and interests of the citizens, tourists, and horses being used by this industry, horse carriages should not be operated in the City of Victoria.

6) Inadequate Care:

a) General Horse Care:

Horse carriage horses must work on hard pavement for several hours at a time in an unnatural environment where they are constantly in the fray of loud, mechanical, motorized vehicles. This is an unenviable situation for any individual, horse or human. However, we may consider horses more vulnerable as they are *forced* to work in the middle of traffic – humans are able to choose to do so. For this reason, we should require that if a horse is going to be forced to operate in these conditions, it should at minimum be given the highest care possible to perform for its own safety and integrity. We may also expect that a horse operating in such conditions be as free as reasonably possible from discomfort or pain. Unfortunately, there is evidence that this is not the case for the horses pulling carriages in Victoria. While some of these concerns have been brought to your attention previously, new evidence may prove more compelling to those who believe these animals belong in the city streets and that their wellbeing is a priority for those who care for them.

It is important to remember when considering these horses' care that the evidence is not necessarily directed at the care the horses receive while on the farm or stabled. It is about the conditions of the horses when they are put to work on the road. As we often cannot speak to the treatment of an animal when it is not in the public eye, we must base our findings on what the evidence suggests when they are in the public.

b) Foot Care:

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For four weeks last November and December, Victoria Horse Alliance walked along the horse trolleys as they toured downtown Victoria. During this time, we consistently witnessed what appeared to be poor shoeing of the horses' feet and poor foot health, so we documented this. We had had citizens describe to us their concern about the horse's feet, so this was an important part of our being present on the trolley walks.

What we found was disturbing considering the horse carriage industries claims that their horses' health is a priority. However, I will allow an email from a certified farrier communicate what she saw in the pictures taken over a period of four weeks.

*These photos are quite shocking, it's pretty clear that the person who did the work on the feet doesn't know what they are doing. Not only do the shoes not fit the horse's feet, they are trimmed and fit so badly that it's causing obvious damage. Some of the horse's feet are completely mismatched, with some much longer than the others on the same horse. The shoes are fit so badly it's causing the wall of the foot to collapse over top of the shoe where it was fit too tight. Some of the feet are wedged up in bizarre angles which can cause serious joint pain. Many of the feet are becoming cracked and deformed. It's more than bad work done by an unqualified person, it could cause permanent damage to the feet and legs. Working on roads is hard on the horse's legs and having to work on unbalanced, badly fit shoes can cause long term lameness issues. The problem is that there are no laws requiring horse owners to hire a certified farrier to work on the horses feet, farriers are not required to take formal training. That being said, if these horses are working in the City of Victoria, maybe proper foot care by a certified farrier is a standard that could be set so that the horses are not being injured and disposed by the carriage companies. I would recommend reporting this to the SPCA to see if they can do anything about it (reference **Images 6-8 in the Appendix**).*

*Marley Daviduk
American Farriers Association Certified Farrier*

This second email regarding the same images was from an instructor of the Farrier program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University:

...I am not very well acquainted with those horses but from the pictures some of the hooves look less than ideal, that does not mean the hoof care is not appropriate though. The underlying conformation of the leg and hoof and the type of shoe being used will have a large influence on the overall picture...

....Ideally, the shoeing cycle for horses in this type of work should not be more than six weeks, and for some individuals it should be closer to four weeks. The farrier should be one who holds Certified Journeyman Farrier level of training with the American Farriers Association, or higher.

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*Gerard Laverty A.W.C.F.
Instructor Farrier Program
Cloverdale Campus*

Both these messages were forwarded to the BCSPCA Animal Cruelty Reporting team. They were received and an investigation filed with the following response:

I sent the photos along for veterinarian feedback. The vet will be performing her bi-annual herd examination before the end of the month and will pay extra attention to the condition of the herd's feet, gait and any signs of lameness. She will advise me of her findings and recommendations at that time.

She also mentioned the lack of qualified farriers in this region willing to work on draft horses. That said she believes one has just recently been found and his services retained to work on carriage horses.

*Erika Paul,
Senior Cruelty Investigations Officer
BCSPCA*

If we were able to witness this type of poor foot care for four weeks consistently, than there is good reason to believe that this has been going on for a great deal longer, but because the industry is essentially self-regulated no one even document the daily care of the horses being used. Much of this is due to a faulty assumption that the carriage industry has an interest in making sure that the horses in their care receive the best care possible. In fact, having a certified farrier regularly do the shoeing would likely be prohibitively expensive for the carriage industry. This was taking place just a few months ago; yet, when CHEK News covered our demonstration, they reported at the same time that "officials dismiss suggestions the rides cause any harm to the horses." It appears the City has no awareness of the actual wellbeing of the horses, until an issue is brought to their attention through the investigatory processes initiated by public interest groups such as Victoria Horse Alliance or the BC SPCA

c) The Bit

A common response from people when asked why they support the horse carriages is that as long as the horses are well cared for, not in discomfort, and not in pain, they don't see anything wrong with it.

So far, I have shown that there is reason to be concerned about the care and comfort of the horses used in this industry due to regular traffic incidents and collisions, improper foot maintenance while working on hard pavement and lack of proper maintenance of the carriages these horses pull. It may come as little surprise then that there is evidence these horses are in constant pain as well.

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The following is from the Summary of a paper by Dr. W.R. Cook regarding the bit.

Dr. W.R., The Effect of the Bit on the Behaviour of the Horse.” School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University, 200, Westborough Road, North Grafton, MA 01536, USA:

The survey demonstrated that the bit is responsible for at least 50 problems. The four most frequently cited effects were to instill fear, to make the horse fight back, to trigger a flight response, and to cause facial neuralgia (headshaking). These and other behavioural effects were associated primarily with oral pain. However, the responses were not limited to the oral cavity, for they included a whole cascade of systemic effects. Predominantly, these involved the nervous system and resulted in adverse behavioural responses (58%). Musculoskeletal system effects interfered with locomotion (26%) and respiratory system effects caused dyspnoea (16%). It was concluded that a bit is harmful to the health and safety of both horse and rider, and an impediment to performance.

Dr. Cook is not an activist veterinarian against horse riding; however, he does oppose the use of the bit as a communication tool because of the pain inherent in its design and use. It only takes a walk to the corner of Menzies and Belleville St., where the horse carriages are parked to find horses with bits in their mouth (reference **Image 10 in the Appendix**). The bit works by putting pressure on a sensitive region of a horse’s mouth to induce pain, thus forcing the horse to obey the rider or driver in this case. Because of the precarious nature of having horses working in the city streets, the bit is used to control the horses with greater intensity, especially if they become spooked. An analogous situation would be using a choke collar on a dog, where pain is used to “communicate” obedience.

If it is true that carriage drivers and horse riders use bits to induce pain as a method of communication, then it may make us ask why this is the case. Simply put, practices that harm animals, but that are generally accepted as ways the animals are treated within an industry are protected under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act; unless, specifically cited as a standard industry practice that constitutes cruelty. This is from the BCSPCA’s own website regarding “generally accepted practice” and the Dairy Code: “*Anyone causing distress to an animal while conducting a ‘generally accepted practice’ is exempt from prosecution for animal cruelty.*”

The bit is entrenched in an industry that uses pain as a means of behaviour modification to make an animal into a malleable machine for profit. The City of Victoria must take action as it is unconscionable to subject animals to this pain. Citizens and visitors of the community you represent share this disdain.

7) Wheel Maintenance on Carriages

While the primary focus of this report is on the horses’ wellbeing, the carriages to which they are harnessed are important to scrutinize. One area of particular concern is the wheels of the carriages. It is necessary that these wheels be in optimal condition when carrying a load and

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pulling tourists through busy downtown streets. However, there is evidence to suggest that the maintenance of these wheels is lacking and that awareness of this potential hazard is limited by the carriage companies.

The picture (reference **Image 9 in the Appendix**) was taken May 24, 2015. It was posted on social media as evidence of the lack of proper maintenance of the carriages to the public. An employee of one of the horse carriage companies posted the following on a thread to Facebook:

“You'll be relieved to know that the small bump in the rubber you see here doesn't affect the carriage's performance in the slightest, nor does it make the vehicle difficult to pull. If any of you folks have questions about the horses or the carriages, feel free to come talk to us. All of us professional equestrians (sic) really do love the ponies!”

“That is exactly what I'm saying (smile emoticon) and believe me I'm not trying to be antagonistic in the slightest. I made sure to check with our head of maintenance by showing him this picture that is something that would - strangely - hold up just fine, it's just a bit aesthetically displeasing.”

Because of this response, I contacted two members of the Western Canadian Wheelwright's Association to get an unbiased opinion of the condition of the wheel. These are their responses:

Email #1:

From what I can see. It looks like a broken wire in the tire.

Check to see if there is a rock between the rubber and channel. But most likely a wire let go. It should be repaired before you use it. If not the rubber can fall off then you will ruin the channel iron making a bigger job.

Replacing the wire isn't too big a job usually. Depending on how rusty the old wire is in the rubber.

Randy Kirschner

Rafter K Wheelwright

Email #2:

It appears that one of the two wires holding the tire on has broken. I wouldn't call it a safety issue and it won't affect the wheel's ability to carry a load but i wouldn't drive on it as it's only a matter of time until the rubber comes off the wheel. The rubber needs to be removed and reapplied or possibly replaced depending on the condition of it.

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*Terry Bailey
Alberta Carriage Supply*

Both wheelwrights express a concern about the condition of the wheel and yet the carriage driver and the maintenance person both disregard any issues with what could be a problematic wheel and safety concern.

While a concern like this may be deemed acceptable in rural spaces, it is not the standard that should be set for city streets. As businesses that are already using an unpredictable and easily compromised animal to pull their vehicles, adding an unreliable foundation (the wheels) is a poor business practice and one that must be addressed by Mayor and Council for compromising the safety of citizens and visitors alike.

8) Parking/Traffic Concerns:

a) Costs of leasing:

First of all, it should be pointed out that no alternative business is necessary for the current space occupied by the horse carriages. Returning the space to parking stalls would add to Victoria's limited supply of parking stalls in an area that is heavily used by tourists and locals alike. This would generate income for the city of approximately \$49,000 a year based on six day a week use (free parking Sunday) and the standard \$20/day/per stall ticketing of 4 stalls per side.

Parking Revenue

\$80 per side = \$160

\$160 x 312 = **\$49,920**

Horse Stall Revenue

\$1170 per month x 2 = \$2340

\$2340 per month x 12 = **\$28,080**

Currently, horse carriage stall rentals bring in \$28,080 per year combined. Transitioning back to parking spaces would by this account generate an extra \$21, 840 in revenue for the city. It also provides a useful public service, instead of a private service that provides no apparent public value. However, I am not aware if the city currently gets significant revenue that would be equivalent to this from business taxes, licensing, etc. of the two businesses.

b) Hindrance to Traffic:

Another issue in regards to effects on traffic is the speed of the horse carriages. As is stated in the Travel Lane section for Street Occupancy Permits:

Impacts to travel lanes on arterial roads are not permitted based on time of day and direction. Inbound lanes from 6-9 a.m. and Outbound lanes from 3-6 p.m.

While the horse carriages do not operate prior to 9 a.m., they do operate during peak hours of traffic from 3-6 p.m. These parking stands do not necessarily inhibit the flow of traffic from James Bay through Menzies St. onto Belleville to a significant degree. However, the horse carriages do appear to slow the flow of traffic once they are in it.

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Horse carriages are not well suited for operation in city traffic. They are slower than any other vehicle on the road and their design makes them unwieldy for maneuvering amongst fast moving and more agile vehicles.

To provide evidence of this hindrance to traffic, I documented the speeds of vehicles along two common thoroughfares taken by the horse carriages. Speed observations were taken along both Belleville St. in front of the Legislature and Government St. in front of The Empress between the hours of 11am and 1pm of both motor vehicles and horse carriages. I used a speed measurement app that provides reliable data if used consistently over observations between subjects. Eight observations were made of each vehicle type in each location and the average speed, or mean, in km per hour is provided below.

As expected, the data showed a significant difference in the travelling speeds between horse carriages and motorized vehicles.

	Horse Carriage	Motor Vehicle	Difference
Belleville St.	4.56	22.2	17.64 km/hr
Government St.	5.37	39	33.63km/hr

This data is important in an analysis of the operation of the horse carriages because vehicles that can barely maintain a quarter speed of the motor vehicles around them will undoubtedly cause frustration, as it hinders the movement of traffic to an unreasonable degree. This further endangers the safety of the horses, other drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians when it happens.

9) Further Considerations:

a) What about the horses?

One of the first questions often posed to me when speaking on the topic of horse carriages is "What will happen to the horses?" While I am not the horse caretaker and am not aware of the horse carriage companies' policies in-terms of horse retirement after service, there is no reason to believe the horses will go to slaughter. Having communicated privately with people who work for the horse carriage companies, I have been told that no horse has ever been sold for slaughter directly from one of the carriage operators. However, that does not mean that horses are not sold to other people. Because of the nature of the horse breeding and use industry, horses are commonly bought and sold like commodities. This has nothing to do with the horses not working carriages. It is the nature of an industry that creates animals for use and profit. Unfortunately, like all industries that breed animals in this way, there are often more animals than can be adequately cared for and since they come with a significant care cost, options for re-homing are limited. This is further exasperated due to issues of rural development and fewer farms.

Yes, there is a home for the horses if need be. In reality, if someone is unable to care for an animal, including for financial reasons, they may surrender the animal to the BCSPCA for care

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and rehoming. It is a heavy burden on a non-profit system, but it is likely that any horses that were to be surrendered would end up being adopted out. There is also the option of sanctuaries; however, they are already very full and primarily exist out of province, so it may be difficult to rehome all of the horses from the industry into a sanctuary even if one was found to be suitable.

There are no easy answers, but only one right answer: continuing to support the horse carriage industry in Victoria only further supports the exploitation of the horses involved and enables the cycle of breeding and exploiting to proliferate. Victoria Horse Alliance is committed to working with the horse carriage companies, if they are interested. We have reached out to them and received no response, and so are limited in our understanding of what the carriage companies plans would entail if they were phased out. However, any good business should have a contingency plan and not operate under the assumption that things will always continue as usual, especially when the lives of vulnerable animals are involved. However, we are confident that no horses will be sent to slaughter and that adequate homing will be found for every horse currently used in the industry.

b) What about the staff?

Another concern that was brought forward when I first undertook this project was the employment of the staff of the horse carriage companies. It is my understanding the carriage companies have limited full-time staff that operates the carriages because demand through much of the year is minimal. Their prime season is the late spring and summer months with a significant fall off before and afterwards. Many times during the winter months you will not even see the horses setup as they will only work on a reservation basis.

It is my understanding that it is also not unusual for the carriage companies to hire students to work during the busy months; however, this is precarious employment and not secure full-time or part-time work. It is unlikely the horse carriage industry is growing and has limited potential to grow due to a lack of interest and accessibility outside of the tourist season. Therefore, it provides little in the way of sustainable employment or incentive for transitory drivers to continue working in the industry beyond seasonal bursts.

Without cooperation and information from the carriage companies themselves, I do not have full information on the extent of their employment. Though it is likely that staff will lose their employment, their wealth of knowledge and experience with horses should lead to them having no issue finding work within the equestrian or horse community. Unfortunately, no industry is immune to the effects of downsizing or closing. However, we must remember that the wellbeing and lives of vulnerable animals are the matter at hand, not those people who are able to find employment and opportunity elsewhere.

10) Opportunity

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I would be remiss in this paper if I did not suggest possible opportunities and alternatives I believe are most reasonable. Below are outlined some areas where alternatives exist for transformation and invigoration of Victoria into a “people powered” tourism sector. As well, a possible time frame is set out, which includes opportunities to designate a natural course for the phasing out of the horse-drawn carriage industry in Victoria.

a) Proactive:

Victoria has a rare and valuable opportunity when considering its continued support of the horse-drawn carriage industry. As of December 31, 2017, the City of Victoria’s allocation period for the parking stands for the horse-drawn carriages will expire. Victoria has a choice, prior to renegotiating those spaces, whether to renew or to proactively set the expiration date as the end of a phasing out period of the horse-drawn carriages from our community. Certainly, it is possible to phase out or ban the horse-drawn carriages at an earlier date, but this pre-set date would be a tremendous opportunity to allow a natural transition to a post horse-carriage era.

Another way for the City of Victoria to take positive action on the horse carriages is to deny any permits for special events over the phasing out period, if accepted or even if it is not. Special events, such as the horse-drawn trolleys through the downtown core of Victoria work to cement the practice of horse-carriages as acceptable in the public’s mind. By choosing to promote people powered business promotion in the downtown core during the holidays such as scavenger hunts, flash mob caroling, and walking tours, the City could distance itself from the horse carriage industry while still offering a positive alternative to the public.

b) Reactive:

As mentioned above, having a defined date would be a more positive action than further complaints, collisions, injury, forcing the City to take a reactionary stance of banning due to incident. However, other cities have waited until accidents that caused public disapproval forced them to pull support for the horse carriage industry in their cities. However, as is the case in cities like New York, where all of the conditions are being met that one would hope would bring an immediate end to the horse-drawn carriage industry (this includes horses dying in the street, horses being sent to slaughter, animal cruelty charges, and dozens of accidents per year), this is not happening. Because of the horse carriage industry’s political connection in New York, this industry still prevails.

Victoria is not New York, in size, density, or traffic; however, it is not a question of if, but when, the incident that is the catalyst for the City of Victoria to act will take place. Will that be another injured tourist or horse? Will it be another spooked horse that runs rampant through the city? Will it be the death of a citizen, visitor, or horse? Perhaps the more important question is: “Is the cost worth the wait?”

Arguments are often made that cars cause injury, damage, and death on a regular basis, but we don’t outlaw them on our streets, so why should we outlaw the horses. However, we would be

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severely misrepresenting the issue at hand if we compared one mode of transportation which is generally accepted and does not compromise the safety or integrity of another animal in its operation to the horse-drawn carriage. It is precisely the fact that they are not merely another machine on the street – they are living sentient fleshy beings, and deserve greater consideration than the hard metal of cars and trucks. They constitute more than just practical operation, they demand interpersonal care and it is with this ethic in mind that we must frame our values for their wellbeing and not the elite few that can afford to ride upon their strength in vanity.

11) Alternatives:

Alternatives to the horse-drawn carriages are limited only by our imagination. However, in undertaking this report I had to consider Victoria and the DVBA's current interest in promoting and developing a "sustainable" and "green" business community. Many of the options I provide are within this vein of thinking. Due to the size of the spaces, there may be limited opportunity for significant business development, but an effort was made to put forward possibilities regardless should an entrepreneurial member of the community take interest in the conversion.

Whatever consideration is given to an alternative to the horse carriages, it should certainly be the case that we implement what I call a People Powered Tourism policy. That is, an understanding that further tourist sector development should constitute a commitment to only promoting and licensing businesses that do not use non-human animals for their profit generation or appeal. This would hinder the potential opportunity for further development of industries in Victoria that exploit non-human animals for profit and create an undue strain upon public interest groups that must work in opposition to these business practices. This would also positively frame the phasing out of the horse carriages as a phasing in and promotion of the creativity and ingenuity of what our local people can do.

a) Sustainable Business:

Something seldom considered by supporters or opponents of the horse carriage industry is its environmental impact. As is evidenced by the evidence I can present to you, phasing out the horse carriages would also be an opportunity for the city to contribute to a sustainable, people powered tourism industry. As opposed to energy intensive industry like the horse carriages which require horses to be brought into and removed from the city on a daily basis from as far as Brentwood Bay and Central Saanich.

Some of you may be aware of the tremendous quantities of water, food, and resources involved in animal agriculture. A horse resting in pasture consumes 30-40 litres of water per day; a working horse can consume up to 10 times that much. At the low end of 200 litres of water a day, a working horse would consume 73,000 litres of water in a year. One of the carriage companies alone has 13 horses that they work; although, they never appear to work them all in one day. At an average of two horses per side/per day, just the working horses

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consume on the low end 292,000 litres of water per year with those on the farm not being accounted for. If we figure the remaining horses in at 10 per company and an average of 40 litres of water a day, consumption would amount to another 379,000 litres of water per year. Combined, this amounts to 671,000 litres of water per year. These are very low estimates and do not take into account that many of the horses will consume more due to being worked, as well as the considerable amount of food, 15-20lbs of hay per day, cleaning, etc. required to maintain the horses weight and energy.

None of the other businesses or options discussed compare because they do not have to add these kinds of inputs to another animal to operate. People already consume a great deal of resources and there is no need to place further pressure on our vulnerable water resources by using another animal for something we can do ourselves or simply without.

b) Bicycle Parking:

If the city was willing to sacrifice the potential revenue gained from the conversion to parking stalls, the city could turn the spaces into public uses spaces in an area that would be ideal for social development.

Like the public sitting space on Fort St., this could be a central meeting place for tourists and resident alike to gather and collect themselves while enjoying this transitional part of the city. It also already has the benefit of trees which would provide shade, and could have a watering station for dogs, and bicycle parking to promote both nearby bicycle rental tourism, and local use.

c) Walking/Pedicabs/Bicycle tours:

Currently, there is one pedicab company, Victoria Pedicab Company in the city from my research. It is also my understanding that there is another pedicab company currently seeking to start operating in the near future called Trikes Tours. With the advent of this further development of the pedicab industry, it would be ideal to create space for these businesses to flourish by granting them parking space in a central tourist location. There is no reason these business could not pay a similar fee system as is currently in place with the horse carriages, so the city would not be losing any money in the regard.

Also opening this year is The Pedaler, a guided and self-guided bike tour business. It will be opening just down from the current horse carriage stands, 321 Belleville St., and I'm sure would benefit greatly from the boost in business it would receive by having the ability to operate out of an even more visible location. It also promotes Victoria as a city with a sustainable conscious and a place that is traversable. We have more cyclists in Victoria per capita than any other Canadian city. We should be proud of this and promote it through tourism that reflects the cities values and way of life.

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There is also one walking tour company in Victoria, Discover the Past. They offer informative tours that allow tourists to actually engage with Victoria's rich history at a leisurely pace. At a very affordable \$15 for 90min, it is accessible to the general public and educates people about the city they visiting. From my experience walking with the horse carriages, they spend a significant amount of time talking about the horses, because that is what they know, but offer little valuable insight into Victoria's history.

All of these options provide eco-friendly business alternatives in place of an eco-intensive one in the horse carriages. They are also much more accessible to the public with rates that are much more affordable and all are people powered.

Base Rates For Victoria Tour Businesses

Bike Rental: \$10/hour

Walking Tour: \$15/90min

Bike Tour: \$50/2 hour

Pedicab tour: \$54/90 min

Carriage tour: \$55/15min

d) Food Truck Zone:

Victoria has a mixed history with food trucks. They have a dedicated following in Victoria, but are generally not overtly visible, save for a few locations. Currently there is a congregation of food trucks in a lot behind the Royal B.C. Museum, which is all but invisible to the general public. Victoria has a desire to maintain its appearances by not having food trucks all over the city, but with real estate being very costly in downtown food trucks are an attractive option for those looking to affordability.

There is a great deal of potential for the stands where the horse carriages are currently located to become a food truck designated operation location. First of all, this would greatly increase the exposure of the food trucks which often have a great deal of character and vibrancy. It would also attract more people to what is an otherwise visually appealing, but substance lacking location in the city. This means that it is primarily a tourist/hotel zone and does not have a great appeal to drive locals towards it unless they are cutting through to get to James Bay.

Food trucks combined with situated public sitting space, as mentioned previously similar to Fort St., would be a benefit to the area, promote local business, and give locals a reason to congregate with positive culture.

e) Electric Car Tours:

When activists of NYClass (New Yorkers for Clean, Livable, and Safe Streets) in New York took to work banning the horse carriages from their city, they developed the idea that they needed a suitable and appealing replacement for the carriages as well. They invested in the past, that

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didn't include animal exploitation and delivered a beautiful vintage electric car as a tourist option in a post-horse carriage era.

In a city that is ripe with vintage cars, Victoria could find new appeal in the past by choosing to support a business venture that employed a "horseless e-carriage." It could easily be more affordable, accessible, and would be much more functional in traffic. A recharging station could also be a downtown installation for public electric cars to recharge as well. It would show visitors who come to our city that we are progressive and care about sustainability and are committed to innovative alternatives to eco-intensive industry.

While the business currently doesn't exist, there is no reason this could not become a tremendous tourism and investment opportunity. There is also no reason why with several vintage cars, employees of the horse carriage companies could not potentially find work within.

12) Conclusion:

This report has presented evidence on the horse-drawn carriages of Victoria, B.C. that condemns this industry based on its own merit and operation. I have provided opinion to contextualize the position from which I presented the evidence; however, I do not argue that I know all the details of the operation of the horse carriage industry. It is concern for the well-being of the animals used in this industry that is the catalyst for this report, and from my consideration of the evidence that concern is well founded.

Documented incidents involving the horse-drawn carriages include collisions, safety concerns, and bylaw violations. This is a precarious business that operates under the false apprehension of control over vulnerable and excitable horses. There is no doubt from the numbers presented that the trend of a yearly incident will continue regardless of what further regulations the city may consider implementing.

Beyond the concern of Victoria Horse Alliance, the BCSPCA has also publicly expressed its concern for horses used in this industry. It must be made clear that the BCSPCA, although empowered to enforce the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* has limited powers to intervene in the horse carriage business. Therefore, it is in the hands of the City to act on behalf of the interests of its vulnerable animals, the horses, rather than wait for the non-profit it has traditionally taken the lead from.

There is evidence that Victoria is losing a significant sum of revenue through the operation of this business and would benefit greater from its absence and the transition of the horse carriage stalls to parking spots open to public use (or another land use that the City considers appropriate). Also, considerable sums of money are being spent on seasonal horse carriage related events that provide no evidence of enticing shoppers or promoting downtown business – this is contrary to Council's efforts to revitalize the downtown business area.

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This report has presented evidence that should be at the forefront of consideration of this report: the operation of horse-powered vehicles is irresponsible and the horses used in the industry exhibit poor foot care (which is an extremely important aspect of a horse's health and wellbeing). Yet these types of business practices, involving vulnerable animals, continue to be framed in a positive light by City representatives. I trust that the evidence presented may shift the City's attitudes and statement on this issue. Furthermore, any subjective assumptions that the horses operate in comfort and without pain must be dismissed based on the evidence of the bit and its method of communication.

Consideration has also been given to the impact of this report if its conclusion of a necessary phasing out of the horse carriages is heeded. There is no requirement that the City of Victoria or the Victoria Horse Alliance compensate the horse carriage companies for loss of income, nor are they obligated to find suitable homes for the horses retired from this industry. However, the City may phase out the industry knowing that the horses have homes, and will be homed, and that carriage staff are capable of finding, in many cases, less seasonal and less precarious employment elsewhere.

The City of Victoria may phase out the horse-drawn carriages, ending on the natural date of the end of the current rental agreement with the City. It would be a missed opportunity that seldom presents itself for the City to not engage in a process of proactively initiating the steps necessary to distance itself from this industry and reclaim its authority to act in the interests of its most vulnerable animals I strongly encourage this proactive approach over the reactionary alternative.

The report presents possible alternatives for the city to embrace in a post horse-carriage era. These alternatives are diverse and extend beyond what I have put forward, and they are only limited by the potential of the people who power the ideas behind them. Regardless, all of the alternatives presented are more affordable, accessible, and sustainable than the current operation of the horse-drawn carriages, and they present greater opportunities for revenue and better reflect the City's values and heritage.

Until the time that City of Victoria no longer finds horse-drawn carriages and trolleys operating in its streets, there will only be a greater supply of evidence to condemn this industry. I urge you to reflect on the information provided, put yourself behind the eyes of the animals caught up in the middle of this struggle, put yourself in their shoes, and imagine the difference on your body and emotions between the pavement and metal vehicles, and that of an open field with no harness, no blinders, no bit. Based on which you would choose for yourself, I encourage you to choose for others. This is why I am urging you to pass a motion to phase out the horse-drawn carriages by no later than Dec 31st, 2017.

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13) Appendix of Images:

Image 1: Horses worked for several hours during the trolley walks, sweating heavily, with only brief opportunity to refresh at the driver's discretion.



Image 2: This trolley is loaded with approximately 25 people if not more unseen. City bylaws state 20 is the maximum capacity.



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Image 3: Carriage operator jumping on moving trolley in traffic.



Image 4: Child briefly left behind trying to get back on while trolley in motion.



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Image 5: Trolley riders getting off on the traffic side of trolley.



Image 6: People being loaded onto trolley at non-designated stop.



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Image 7: Poor foot maintenance 1



Image 7: Poor foot maintenance 2



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Image 8: Poor foot maintenance 3



Image 9: Poor wheel maintenance.



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Image 10: Carriage horse with bit in their mouth. A noseband is employed to keep the mouth closed due to discomfort caused by the bit.

