

Transit should run along both curbs

BY BOB TROTTER, TIMES COLONIST DECEMBER 17, 2010

Victoria city council has made the right choice in choosing Douglas Street for the region's first rapid transit line.

But having the transit run down one side of the street and not along both curbs will deprive merchants of the full benefits of rail transit. It will also deprive the city coffers of the taxes on the greater increase in property value that curb running will give.

For 70 years, the automobile has been strangling downtown. Rail transit can bring new life. And curb-running declares transit to be the choice of travel downtown, not just a concession to those who cannot afford a car.

The next rail transit line should connect Dockyard and Esquimalt, through downtown Victoria to Oak Bay, Camosun College and UVic. Note also that

drivers accessing driveways across a side-running rail line will have to deal with twice the number of transit vehicles and they will come from both directions, a real hazard.

If B.C. Transit chooses buses, there will be even more vehicles crossing those driveways.

Bob Trotter
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Transportation changes are always disruptive

BY BRIAN COLLIER, TIMES COLONIST DECEMBER 17, 2010

It is always a challenge when change to our transportation system is suggested. A century ago, the streets of Victoria were dominated by streetcars, horses, pedestrians and cyclists. Since then we have moved to where the private automobile dominates the streets. Yet daily we are reminded of the problems with this transportation model -- the long lineups to creep along our roads.

It has been an interesting exercise watching B.C. Transit trying to enter this minefield with

an alternate solution to the status quo. If the object of the exercise is to move automobiles, then no change should be made.

However, if the goal is to move people, then the suggested change to Douglas Street deserves serious consideration. Personally, I like the provision of a separate transit system and bike boulevard that will not be caught in the current problem of too many cars wanting to use the same road at the same time.

To suggest that changing one

street out of the thousands in our region represents a war on cars is a gross exaggeration. Even the best-case models that have been created by the CRD see our roads becoming increasingly clogged with cars as our population continues to grow.

The proposed rapid transit line on Douglas is a good first step to providing an alternative to the current model.

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