

VICTORIA COMMUTER TRAIN: *Closer than you think*



THE CHALLENGE

The Capital Regional District is growing and its fastest growing area is on the West Shore.

Traffic congestion is increasing in Greater Victoria, the most significant bottleneck being the “Colwood Crawl”, between the West Shore and Victoria city centre. Transportation investments are being implemented and considered to accommodate the 22% population growth expected in the region by 2038. The Province recently invested \$85 million to construct the McKenzie Interchange which will be operational in 2019; BC Transit has studied options for light rail that cost upwards of \$1 billion and is at least a decade away.

THE OPPORTUNITY

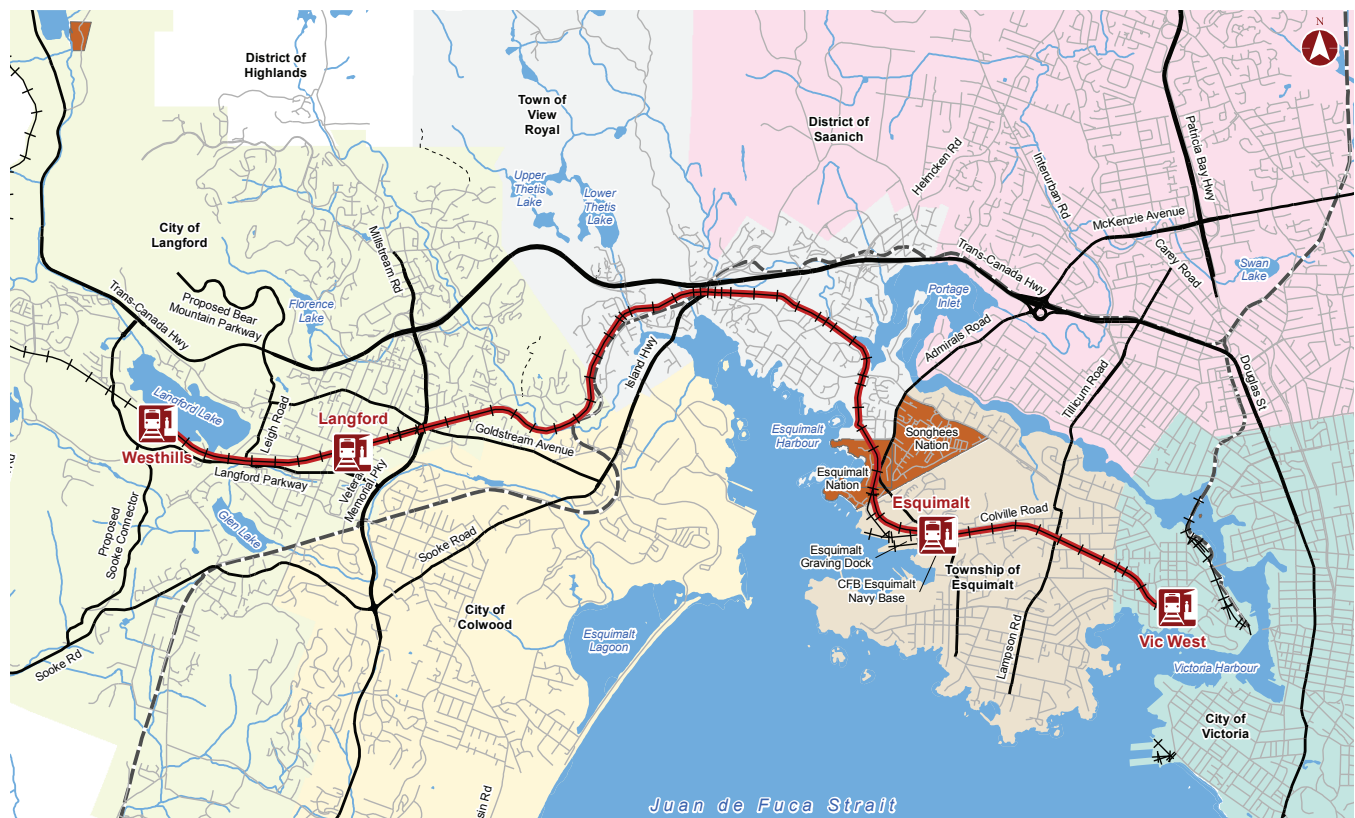
There is a unique opportunity to develop a 15 km commuter train service on the southern section of the existing E&N rail line. It would connect Westhills in Langford to the roundhouse in Victoria at a very affordable cost.

In 2016, the mayors of Langford, Victoria, View Royal and Esquimalt said they would “welcome a proposal for commuter train service from Langford to Victoria”. Business leader Ken Mariash, owner of Bayview Place, with support from Westhills

Developments, has formed and funded an experienced team of transportation and governance experts to develop an affordable, realistic plan.

The plan envisions stations at Westhills, Langford Station Avenue, CFB Esquimalt, and the roundhouse in Vic West, ideally fully integrated into BC Transit’s service plan. Westhills to Vic West is an estimated 20-25 minute journey.

FIGURE 1: PROPOSED VICTORIA COMMUTER TRAIN ROUTE

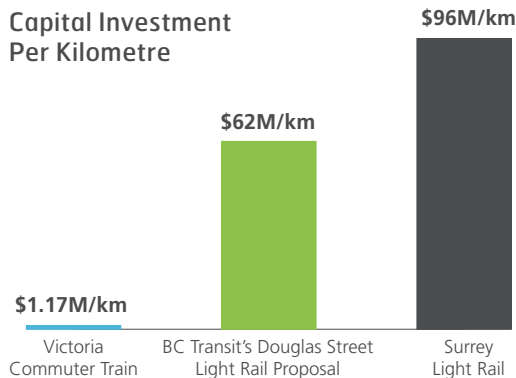


LOW, GROW AND GO

An independent transportation study by the Victoria Transport Policy Institute and an extensive business plan conclude that the Victoria Commuter Train is realistic and doable. In fact, it's closer than you think:

- LOW Operating and Capital Costs** By utilizing the E&N corridor, the project has a substantial headstart. Acquiring a dedicated right-of-way and constructing a rail line in today's real estate market makes light rail a very costly proposition that would cost hundreds of millions of dollars. This 15 km portion of the E&N corridor only requires an estimated \$5.5 million in railbed upgrades to be train-ready.

Overall, the project requires an estimated \$17.7 million in capital investment, which is about \$1.17 million per kilometre. That compares to an estimated \$62 million per kilometre for Douglas Street LRT¹ and \$96 million per km for Surrey LRT².

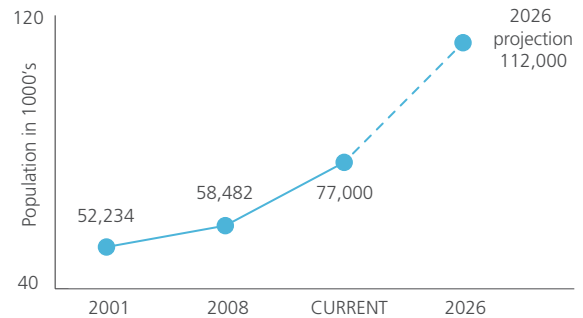


The annual net operating cost to operate peak-hour service between Langford and Victoria is an estimated \$355,000 dollars. The low operating subsidy is due to strong cost recovery, a relatively short distance (15-km) and a limited debt load.

- GROWing Communities** The region is growing, especially on the West Shore. Capital Regional District (CRD) Planning reports that the West Shore population growth rate was 12% from 2001 to 2006 and increased to 17.4% from 2006 to 2011. The growth rate has been over 10% for the past 5 years.

West Shore population is now estimated to be over 77,000 and is forecasted to be 112,000 by 2026.

West Shore Population Growth: 2001–2026



Conservative estimates project ridership growth in the initial years of service. Commuter rail service provides an impetus to communities to enable transit-oriented development near stations.

Train service on a dedicated corridor will complement, not compete with existing BC Transit service and help meet the needs of the region's growing population.

- Ready to GO** This proposal is uniquely nimble. The corridor is dedicated and railbed upgrades would take less than one year to complete after governance and funding is complete and regulatory approvals are obtained.

Rolling stock is available for purchase. An experienced rail provider, Southern Railway, is able to operate the service once a service agreement is negotiated. The amount of capital investment required, in the context of major projects, such as the CRD wastewater project or highway expansion, is relatively low.

A new commuter rail service connecting the West Shore and Victoria could be implemented by the end of 2017, easing chronic congestion and impacts from the McKenzie Interchange construction.

1 - Victoria Regional Rapid Transit Project: Linking Victoria with the West Shore - May 2011

2 - City of Surrey Corporate Report - March 3, 2016