

NEWS RELEASE

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BC TRANSIT UNVEILS POSSIBLE OPTION FOR RAPID TRANSIT IN VICTORIA; OPEN HOUSES FOR PUBLIC INPUT

VICTORIA, B.C. – People in the Capital Region will notice a new style of transit vehicle traveling the roads this month. Today, BC Transit unveiled a possible vehicle option, the Wright StreetCar RTV (Rapid Transit Vehicle) hybrid, for the Victoria Regional Rapid Transit project.

“BC Transit continues to look outside the box at new kinds of transit options to help move more people and reduce traffic congestion as well as greenhouse gases,” said John Yap, Minister of State for Climate Action. “This vehicle is a sight to see in Victoria. It’s exciting that a vehicle that offers substantial environmental benefits is being considered as part of our provincial transit fleet.”

“For some people, the moment they’ve been waiting for has come - we are now at the point where we can begin looking at choices between road or rail-based technology,” said Mayor of Oak Bay, Christopher Causton, Chair of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission.

“As we close in on the final alignment for the rapid transit corridor, it’s important we start to look at technology options,” said Manuel Achadinha, BC Transit President and CEO. “The StreetCar RTV is an innovative option that we think will appeal to the community.”

The Wright StreetCar RTV Hybrid is 61 foot-long (18.7m) and can hold up to 104 passengers. It’s equipped with three doors, two wheelchair positions and two interior bike racks. It’s a hybrid vehicle, so it doesn’t use a lot of fuel, resulting in a low environmental impact.

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Wright Group Business Development Director Jonathan Poynton said, “Each element of the StreetCar RTV has been designed and engineered to the latest standards in public transit, from its hybrid propulsion system, dramatic exterior styling, total rethinking of the driver’s workspace and the transformation of the passenger experience.”

The StreetCar is part of a fleet of vehicles serving downtown Las Vegas and the surrounding area. The RTC of Southern Nevada agreed to loan one of its StreetCars to BC Transit for one month.

The first rapid transit line for the Capital Region, approved by the BC Transit Board of Directors in 2009, will connect the West Shore communities to Victoria. The route follows the Island Highway from Colwood Corners to the Six Mile area, between the Trans-Canada Highway and the Galloping Goose Trail to Uptown, and to downtown Victoria.

The rapid transit route to downtown Victoria is still under consideration. The routes being considered include Douglas Street, or a couplet system combining Douglas with either Government or Blanshard streets.

A connection from Colwood to Langford is being proposed using Goldstream Avenue to Station Avenue.

More information on rapid transit vehicle options and street layouts will be available to the public at BC Transit’s upcoming open houses:

- October 5, 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., Ambrosia Conference and Event Centre (638 Fisgard Street)
- October 6, 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., Langford Legion (761 Station Avenue)

Since the start of the project in late 2008, public consultation has included a series of open houses, presentations to local council and neighbourhood associations, a dedicated website, surveys, and the formation of the Community Liaison Committee, a group that includes representatives from capital region communities, the business sector, transportation groups, schools, cycling and other groups.

For more information on the project, visit www.bctransit.com/vrrt.