# Visions

# of

# Land Use Change

# in

# the Shelbourne Valley

A Discussion Paper

prepared by Peter Spurr
as a contribution to the
Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan Stakeholders Committee

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## Introduction

This is a discussion paper, a consolidation of factors and visions concerning land use change in the Shelbourne valley in 2011.

The District of Saanich is undertaking a study entitled the Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan (SCAP) that will address transportation and land use matters along Shelbourne Street and 500 metres adjoining this street, from Hillside Centre to Feltham Village (Saanich diagram appended). The purpose given for the Action Plan is:

> *"The purpose is to create a comprehensive vision and plan for the Corridor. It will focus on the link between land use, mobility and the creation of a more balanced transportation system ...".*[1]

This Discussion Paper has been prepared as a personal initiative, with several purposes. This paper is directed to:

- provide a consolidation of information available through various official sources about population, land use, traffic and other matters in the Shelbourne valley;
- suggest elements of a methodology for developing land use change proposals along the valley; and
- offer some visions of land use change for the consideration of people and groups interested in the Shelbourne Valley, such as the Mount Tolmie Community Association, the Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan Stakeholders Committee, and the general public.

## Key Elements Associated with Land Use Change

### A. Basic Local Elements

1. **Topography and Setting** The Shelbourne corridor is essentially a four kilometre linear valley with Shelbourne Street running along the valley bottom. It is more aptly termed the Shelbourne Valley. The slopes of the hills to the west and east of Shelbourne are quite slight near Hillside shopping centre at the south end, then they rise more abruptly at the valley core near Cedar Hill X Road. Continuing to the north, the hills gradually decline, then re-emerge near Feltham Road.

2. **Current Land Use** The valley is generally a neighbourhood of low density houses bisected by a strip of increased density and land use mix along Shelbourne Street. Commercial uses are limited to the four urban centres defined in Saanich's Official Community Plan (Hillside Centre, Shelbourne Valley Centre, University Centre and Feltham Centre). Higher residential densities occur in 2-3 storey apartment-type buildings and in some clusters of row housing. The greatest nodal concentration of housing is in the Shelbourne Village area around Cedar Hill X Road.

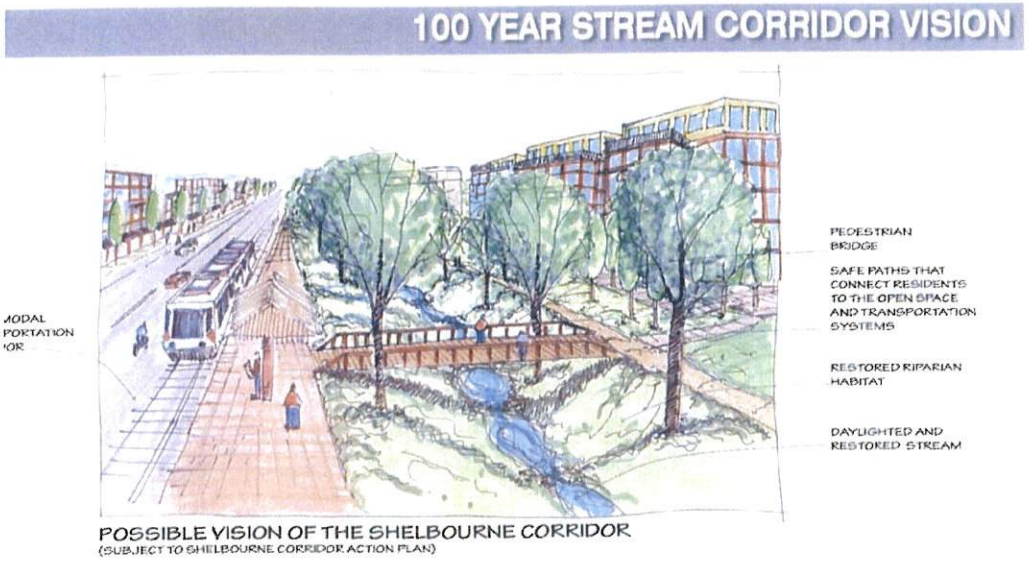
3. **The Effected Area** Saanich has defined the corridor as being an "area of influence" 1,000 metres wide, centred on Shelbourne Street.

[1] District of Saanich, *Draft Terms of Reference, Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan*, May, 2009.

Topography, land use and transportation factors make the actual area of influence more variable. The influence probably extends out from Shelbourne Street for the full 500 metres at the three main urban centres. However, in the Feltham Village Centre area the influence is probably more like 250 metres. Between Hillside and Shelbourne Village, the effected zone probably extends from Richmond Street to Cedar Hill Road.

4. **Population** The District of Saanich and the Mount Tolmie Community Association both generated estimates of the size of the population in the Shelbourne Valley corridor, based on the 2006 Census. Each calculated proportions of four Census Tracts that are crossed by the corridor. The MTCA estimate is about 8,300 people and the Saanich estimate is 12,000. This range constitutes 8-10 percent of Saanich's population. The average proportion of seniors in Saanich is 18 percent. Twenty-three percent of the population in these Census Tracts is seniors and it is likely that the proportion of seniors in the corridor area is even higher. The Shelbourne corridor contains a vital component of Saanich's population, both a significant share of the total city and an important concentration of Saanich's elderly citizens.

**Bowker Creek** Bowker Creek is the original, natural drainage of the Shelbourne Valley. The creek originates on UVic land, flows west to the Shelbourne Corridor near McKenzie, then turns south and follows the valley bottom to the Hillside area. At present, it is piped from the UVic border to Knight Avenue, then "daylighted" south to North Dairy Road.



POSSIBLE VISION OF THE SHELBOURNE CORRIDOR
(SUBJECT TO SHELBOURNE CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN)

The Bowker Creek Initiative is a collaboration between local governments (the municipalities of Saanich, Oak Bay and Victoria, as well as the CRD Board), community groups, post-secondary institutions and private citizens to improve Bowker Creek and its watershed. In 2003 these supporting partners approved the Bowker Creek Watershed Management

Plan with objectives of creating a "corridor of interest" along the creek, with greenways and further daylighting of the creek where possible.

In 2007 the Master Drainage Plan was approved, and in September, 2010, the Bowker Creek Blueprint was released. The Management Plan includes a fulltime coordinator.

At two recent community open houses to discuss possible changes in the Shelbourne Corridor, the concept that attracted most interest was the Bowker Creek Initiative sketches showing more daylighting of Bowker Creek north of Browning Park.

## B. Regional Elements

1. **Regional Growth** Land use change will occur as the outcome of growth forces. According to the CRD, between 2008 and 2038 the region will grow by 111,000 residents. This will entail a net growth of the housing stock in the regional core municipalities (Victoria, Saanich, Oak Bay, Esquimalt and View Royal) of 26,455 units.[2] Other CRD planning studies indicates the growth in the core municipalities will be divided between 16,000 apartment units and 10,400 ground-oriented units. The Regional Growth Strategy directs that a large proportion of the growth in the core municipalities should occur in six places where land uses can be mixed and transportation facilities can be optimized. If one-half of the core municipalities' growth occurs in Victoria's Central Business District and another 15 percent occurs in the new "Uptown" corridor, and 10 percent takes place in the Tillicum and Broadmead centres, that would imply that 25 percent of the growth will be at the University and Hillside Centres. This concentration in regional centres will be primarily at higher densities.

   The overall implication for the Shelbourne Valley corridor in these regional projections is that it may be receiving over 4,000 additional apartment units and perhaps 2,500 ground-oriented units over the next 30 years. This implies that <u>each year an average of about 220 housing units will be constructed in the valley corridor</u>.

2. **Transportation** The corridor serves as a transportation vector to several key regional locations.
   - It conveys daily commuter traffic from Gordon Head and the peninsula north of Mount Doug southward towards the Victoria CBD. This traffic is mostly in private cars, although there are some cyclists and commuters on public transit. In the busiest part of the Corridor (between McKenzie and North Dairy), there are 23,000-27,000 vehicle movements daily[3], with slightly more traffic in the two southbound lanes than in the two northbound lanes. This is a greater traffic volume than is carried on other busy corridors within the Capital Region such as Esquimalt Road, Bay Street or Quadra Street.

[2] See Urban Futures, *A Context for Change Management in the CRD,* (Victoria: CRD) August 2009, p.51

[3] Traffic information from Transportation Planning Section, Capital Regional District.

Shelbourne's traffic volume decreases by about one-half south of Hillside, indicating that substantial traffic enters and leaves the Corridor in the Hillside/Landsdowne/North Dairy area.

- UVic is the region's second largest employer, and is the daily destination for about 27,000 students and staff. It results in north/south traffic flows through the corridor and east/west flows along McKenzie, Cedar Hill X, and other alignments. The traffic on McKenzie plugs this arterial during rush hours. The #26 bus on McKenzie has the region's 2nd highest ridership. Bicycle commuters cross the corridor at McKenzie, at Mortimer and at Cedar Hill X Road.
- The #27/28 bus routes along Shelbourne to downtown is one of the region's busiest. The #14 bus route between UVic and downtown along Richmond Road has the CRD's largest ridership.

3. **Comparative Advantage** The Shelbourne valley has significant advantages over many parts of the Victoria region. It is proximate to the region's major work locales (Victoria CBD and UVic) and connects with other parts of the region (through north-south and east-west transportation arterials). The Shelbourne Valley Centre alone has a remarkable array of nearly 2,000 multi-family residential units close to over 150 services and about 25 professional offices.[4] The proximity of this array of services to the multi-unit residences is supportive of a modern, healthy community that is less dependent on private automobiles, and is suitable for a population with higher proportions of elderly and students. There is no other node in the Victoria region with such an integration of services and medium density housing within a compact area.

4. **Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan Survey** As part of the Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan an extensive survey of community views was conducted in 2010, producing 797 completed surveys. At the two public events in the community, the concept that attracted most interest was the sketches displayed by the Bowker Creek Initiative, showing more daylighting of Bowker Creek in the Shelbourne area (sample above). Some of the main survey findings associated with land use change are:
   - 702 comments that the valley must be made **more walkable**;
   - 551 comments strongly agreed that a **balanced transportation system** is important to their vision of the corridor;
   - 219 comments concerned cycling on Shelbourne Street, mostly seeking **safe bike lanes**;
   - 157 comments would like a more attractive Shelbourne valley, with **more green space**;
   - 132 comments would like more of a community/village feeling along parts of the corridor, and **more meeting places;**
   - 127 wanted **improved sidewalks** (sidewalks created where there are none, improvements for elderly, impaired);
   - 95 wanted **transit improvements;**
   - 92 wanted **improvements for vehicular traffic**.

   There were many other visions provided, concerning stores, density, affordable housing, public safety, community gardens, farmers' market.

[4] Outlined in MTCA paper "*Background Paper - Shelbourne Corridor*", July 2009

## Land Use Change Potentials and Concepts, by Segment

This section provides a summary of factors affecting land use change, and change concepts, segment by segment. It describes main implications seen in the assembly and integration of information about the corridor, and particularly the information about each individual segment.

### Shelbourne Street, Transportation and Land Use

Public policies are now in place that call for a different type of transportation corridor than exists on Shelbourne Street.

Saanich's 2008 Official Community Plan (OCP) directs that there will be balanced transportation along major arteries like the South Link. In practice, Shelbourne does not meet these policy objectives.

- Saanich's published "Bikeway Network" dated October 2010 defines all of Shelbourne as a "commuter" street. There are no bicycle lanes in the corridor section of Shelbourne Street.
- Balanced transportation requires proper bike lanes and sidewalks that are suitable for pedestrians and strollers, scooters and wheelchairs. The narrow asphalt sidewalk on the west side of Shelbourne from Rowan to North Dairy is only adequate for the most rudimentary pedestrian uses.

Both of these transportation elements have to be addressed to meet Saanich's bikeway goals and the OCP requirements.

In redeveloping sections on the Shelbourne Street frontage, it is important to recognize that this is an arterial road, moving large proportions of our community on a daily basis. It is part of the signature or our community, and it is not a very suitable signature today. It warrants more deliberate development than an ordinary residential street.

The prevalence of an RS-6 single-family zone along the South Link frontage is no longer appropriate. This is a well-serviced, busy arterial which warrants more dense housing forms, such as the multi-family residential seen a few blocks to the north in the Mid Link. The South Link frontage is not ideal for young children, and shifting up from a family housing zone to a zone that suits students and other adult households, would be more appropriate. Land use mix should also be encouraged, to provide more convenient services for this growing community

It would produce a more attractive streetscape if utilities were undergrounded. Also, it would improve the efficiency of constructing and servicing utilities on this major route if they were located in one or two single, well-designed trenches. The investment in efficient treatment of utilities on the frontage will open up the adjacent land for better quality redevelopment.[5] Undergrounding produces a more attractive and functional

[5] It has been observed that undergrounding hydro is quite expensive, perhaps $1000 per metre. Other factors bear on the financial feasibility of undergrounding, which accounts for the reality that widespread undergrounding is done in cities across Canada, regardless of soil conditions. Utility companies secure overall financial advantage from underground utilities because they perform better and have lower maintenance costs than overhead utilities, even if their materials/installation costs are higher. BC Hydro provides 1/3 of the cost of the underground utility as a grant. Synergies can be obtained through locating multiple utilities in a single trench.

streetscape, which in turn results in higher property values, benefiting landowners and the tax base.

Three other elements should be considered when reviewing the Shelbourne streetscape.

- The Shelbourne sidewalks are particularly significant in the context of making balanced transportation a reality. The Shelbourne Valley has a larger than average elderly population who walk, use wheelchairs and electric scooters, and cycle, needing full sidewalks. Also, it would be useful to have a few rest stops along the length of the South Link connector, to accommodate this population;
- In order to allow increased development along the segment, yet maintain a effective flow of traffic, no left turns should be allowed along Shelbourne except at controlled intersections.with turning bays and turning arrows;
- After World War I there was a memorial planting of great London Plane trees along Shelbourne Street from Bay Street to Mount Doug. These beautiful trees still exist ends of the corridor, north of Feltham and South of Hillside. Along the SCAP "Shelbourne Corridor" all of these trees were cut, although it is said there was a political undertaking that they would be replaced. When rebuilding Shelbourne, it would be wonderful if this memorial could be restored, by replanting London Plane trees as a standard part of the streetscape.

**Segments of the Shelbourne Valley**

It is important to recognize that from the perspective of land use the Shelbourne Valley comprises a series of connected segments. While transportation planners may see it as a homogeneous place, from a land use perspective it is not useful to attempt to generalize along this lengthy, diverse valley. Six distinct segments can be identified:

- North Dairy Road to Pear Street (South Link)
- Pear Street to Christmas Avenue (Shelbourne Valley Centre)
- Christmas Avenue to Garnet Street (Mid Link)
- Garnet Street to Glencraig Place (University Centre)
- Glencraig Place to Feltham Road (North Link)
- Feltham Road area (Feltham Neighbourhood Centre)

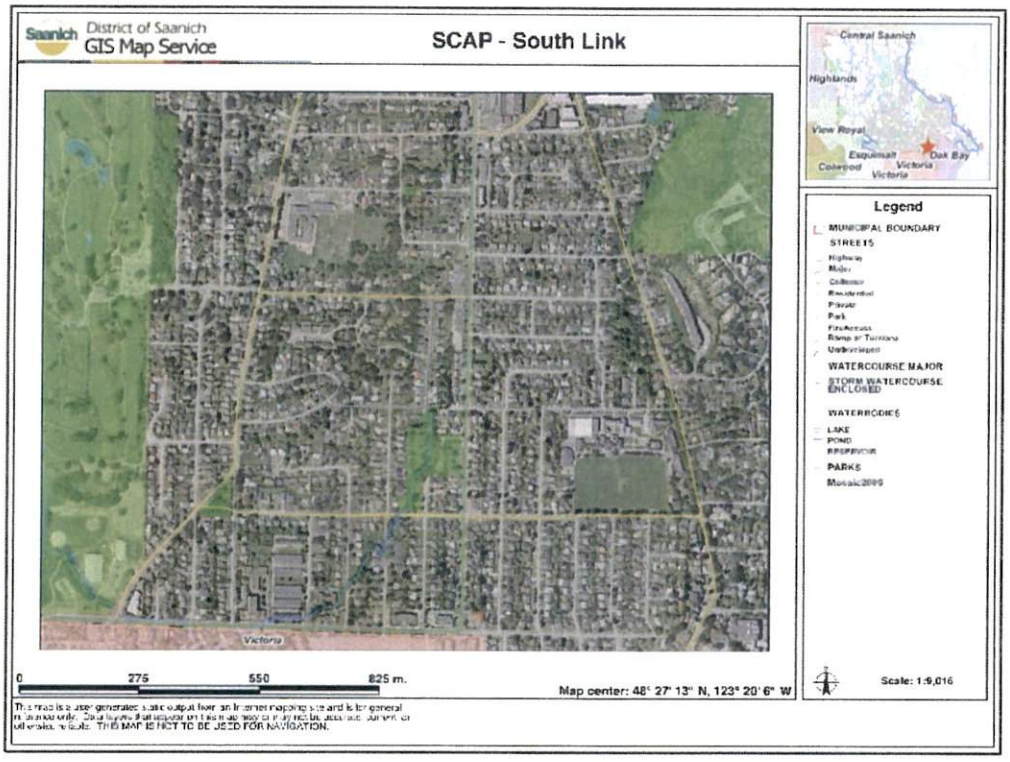
In addition to these segments along the valley floor, there are distinct neighbourhoods on the valley slopes to the east and the west.

In order to consider land use change, it will be useful to examine a number of characteristics and qualities within each segment:

- Present Land uses
  - General physical assessment
  - Land use and occupancy
  - Zoning
  - Sample photographs
- Roadway and sidewalks
  - Road cross-sections
- Redevelopment factors
  - OCP goals
  - Capacity in existing zoning
  - Relevant survey findings

### The South Link – Along Shelbourne Street from North Dairy Road to Pear Street

**General** As seen in the overall map of the South Link below, north of Hillside Mall Shelbourne Street is surrounded primarily by low density housing until it reaches the Pear Street area. This is the home to a large number of people, however there is little open space in this residential precinct other than the small park that fronts on Shelbourne, Browning Park. There are large green spaces to the west and east of the South Link but both are highly restricted in use (west is the Cedar Hill Golf Course, and east is the difficult terrain of Mount Tolmie). The open space at St. Michaels University School (SMU) is private property and is not available to the public. There is some open space to the northwest, at Doncaster school. There is a need for more public open space in the South Link area.




It is notable that Bowker Creek becomes open at Browning Park and continues open as it flows in a southwesterly direction along the Bowker Creek Greenway, then passes under Hillside Mall. This natural open space is an attractive and healthful amenity that contributes to the strength and value of this neighbourhood.

## Limitations of Shelbourne Street in the South Link

### Sidewalks

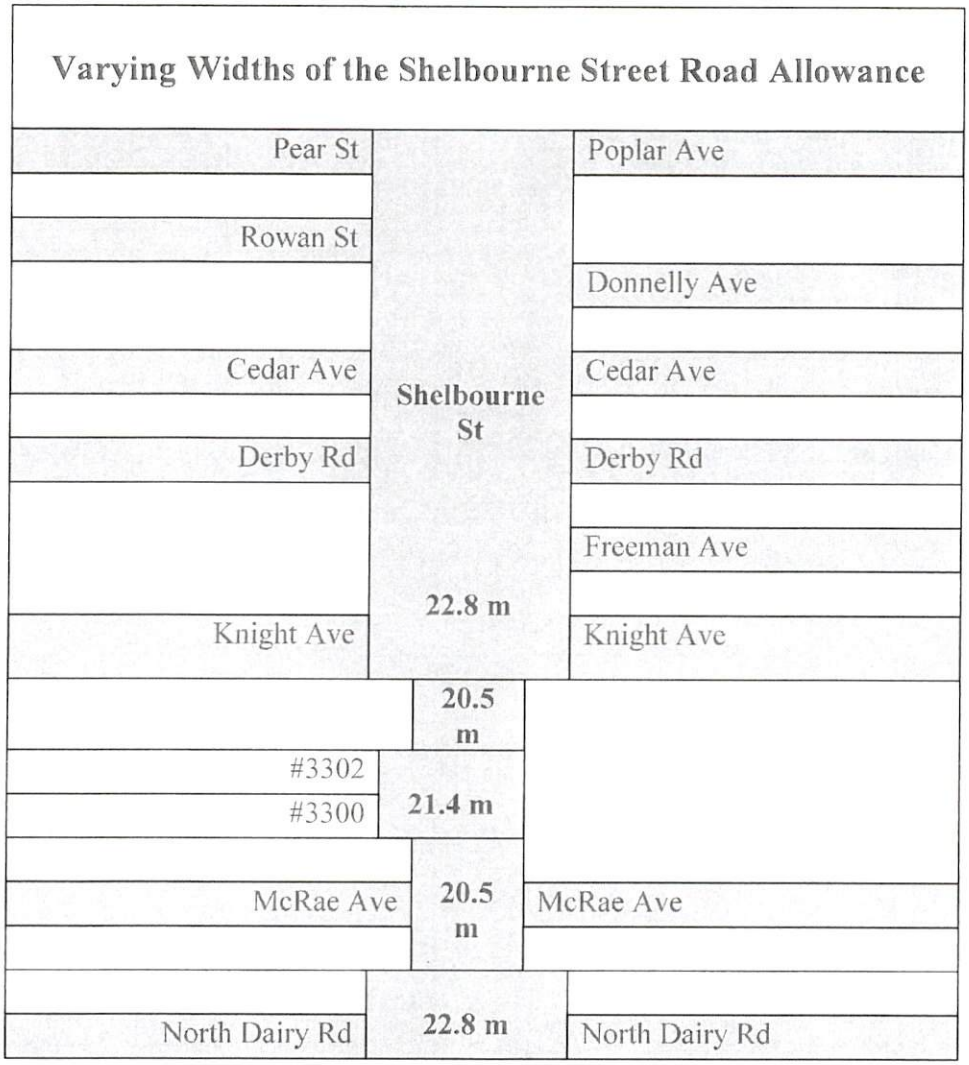
The sidewalks along Shelbourne Street in the South Link include many sections that are are cracked and deteriorated asphalt, narrow, and involve problematic barriers at intersections. Following are some images of sidewalks along the South Link that exhibit each of these characteristics:

**SIDEWALKS ON WEST SIDE OF SHELBOURNE - SOUTH LINK**


Top Left – narrow sidewalk running S from Rowan; Top Right – problem curbs and narrow sidewalk along duplexes N of Knight; Bottom Left – narrow sidewalk in front of Browning Park; Bottom Right –cracked and narrow sidewalk S of McRae

### Road Allowance

The road allowance on which Shelbourne Street is constructed varies in width, particularly along the segment between North Dairy Road and Pear Street. At its widest it is 22.8 m, however, as seen in the following schematic, between Knight Avenue and North Dairy Road the road allowance becomes more narrow.




The implications of these varying widths will be further discussed in sections dealing with the individual segments.

### Interaction of Road Allowance Width, Zoning and Balanced Transportation Requirements

The road allowance south of Knight Avenue does not have sufficient width to provide space for all three functions required for balanced transportation.

A 22.8 metre road allowance has some capacity to be improved for 4 traffic lanes, plus bike lanes, at Saanich's standard of 3.3 metres per traffic lane. This assumes a .65 metre buffer on each side of the traffic lanes to separate vehicles from the bike lanes, and 1.5 metres for each bike lane. This would leave 2.5 metres on each side for a curb, a small setback from the curb, and a sidewalk. The result would provide for balanced transportation on a very compact road allowance. This use of a 22.8 m road allowance is illustrated by the cross-section that follows.

| Cross-Section of a 22.8 Metre Road Allowance Providing Balanced Transportation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sidewalk | Planter Strip | Curb | Bicycle Lane | Painted Divider | Traffic Lane | Traffic Lane | Painted Divider | Traffic Lane | Traffic Lane | Painted Divider | Bicycle Lane | Curb | Planter Strip | Sidewalk |
| 2.0 m | .5 m | .1 m | 1.5 m | .65 m | 3.3 m | 3.3 m | .8 m | 3.3 m | 3.3 m | .65 m | 1.5 m | .1 m | .5 m | 2.0 m |

There are drawbacks to this configuration. These on-road bike lanes would be barely sufficient for bicycle commuters and fast-moving recreational riders. However, such narrow bikeways right beside speeding vehicles would not be suitable for children or inexperienced adults, or other unsteady cyclists. Its narrow sidewalks would be suboptimal, and this would be undesirable in a neighbourhood where many elderly people use wheelchairs and electric scooters (that need plentiful space to pass other pedestrians, and each other). Also, the sidewalks would be quite close to the curbs, presenting a nuisance when it rains and an element of hazard. There would be minimal space to locate utility easements outside the curbs, or to access roadside utilities.

An alternative that was mentioned at the SCAP Stakeholders Committee is that the 22.8 metre road allowance could be reorganized as single north and south lanes on either side of a changeable express lane for commuter traffic.

| Cross-Section of an Alternative 22.8 Metre Road Allowance Providing Balanced Transportation | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sidewalk | Planter Strip | Curb | Bicycle Lane | Painted Divider | Traffic Lane | Painted Divider | Overhead Light Controlled Express Lane | Painted Divider | Traffic Lane | Painted Divider | Bicycle Lane | Curb | Planter Strip | Sidewalk |
| 2.8 m | 1.1 m | .1 m | 1.5 m | .65 m | 3.3 m | .8 m | 3.3 m | .8 m | 3.3 m | .65 m | 1.5 m | .1 m | 1.1 m | 2.8 m |

Express lanes controlled by overhead signals are widely used in other cities, notably in Vancouver at congestion points like the Massey tunnel, the Burrard and Lions Gate bridges. If a generous 3.5 metres was used for each traffic lane, and the vehicle traffic was separated by a .65 metre buffer from 1.5 metre bicycle lanes on each side, there would still be 3.9 metres available outside the curbs. This would allow for a wider

sidewalk and more separation from the curb for pedestrians, and more space for utilities. It would suit bicycle commuters and would not be appropriate for less steady riders.

**Expanding the Shelbourne Road Allowance – Two Alternatives**

In order to meet the OCP requirement for balanced transportation an expansion of the road allowance will be needed between Knight Avenue and North Dairy Road.

The expansion of the road allowance might be acquired on both sides of Shelbourne, or just on one side (either the east or west side).

- The east side of Shelbourne between North Dairy and Knight has 22 residential properties and one commercial property. The road now has curbs and there are barely-adequate concrete sidewalks. Along the shoulders are about 16 trees, including three large trees between North Dairy and McRae, and a few other big trees between McRae and Knight. Some houses between North Dairy and Knight appear to be close to the minimum allowable setback.[6]
- The west side of Shelbourne between North Dairy and Knight has 17 residential properties and Browning Park. It has curbs, a narrow asphalt sidewalk, and about 14 trees. There are two large trees between North Dairy and McRae. The trees on the west side are smaller than the trees on the east side. Some houses between North Dairy and Knight appear to be close to or exceeding the setback.

It would be inefficient to acquire additional road allowance from 37 properties on both sides of the road, and to cut 30 trees and demolish two sidewalks, if the option exists to deal with one half the numbers of acquisitions, trees and sidewalks. The concrete sidewalks on the east side appear serviceable while the sidewalks on the west side require rebuilding. The eastern trees are more numerous, larger and more valuable than the western ones. There are fewer private properties on the west side, and this side includes Browning Park. There are homes on the west side that appear to exceed the setback minimum. The combination of these factors indicates that it would be more efficient to widen the road allowance on the west side alone.

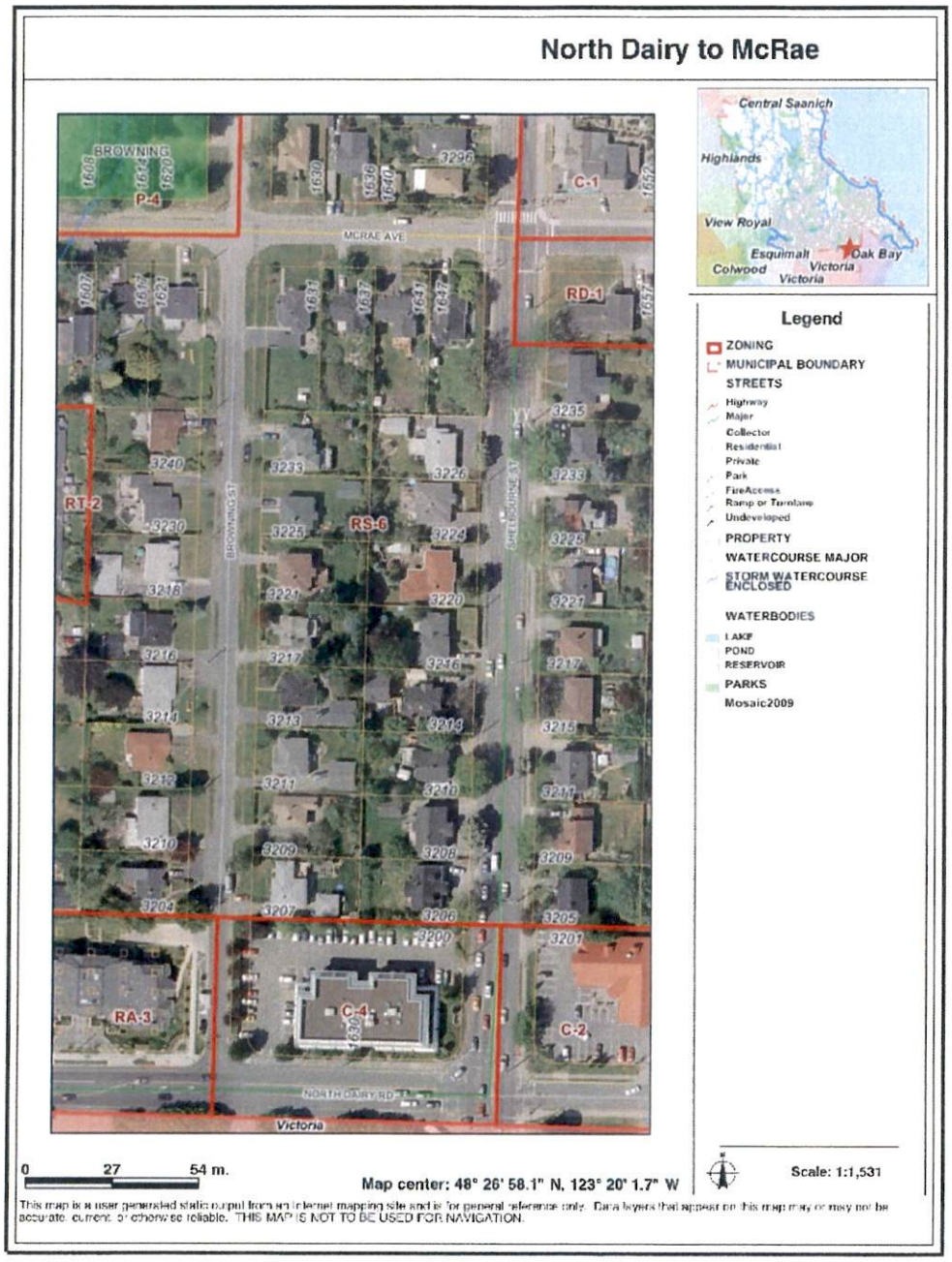
**Blocks in the South Link - North Dairy to McRae**

The south end of this block begins with commercial properties on both sides of the street at the North Dairy corner, and a full 22.8 metre road allowance. Then it changes to older detached houses on both sides, and the road allowance narrows to 20.5 metres.

This section of Shelbourne cannot accomodate bike lanes and proper sidewalks unless the road allowance is widened. A widening by 2.3 metres on the west side would expand the road allowance to the standard, for Shelbourne, of 22.8 metres. This implies that the two large trees and six other trees along this frontage would be removed. Such a widening might cost $300,000. and it would result in many aging houses located too close to the property line and the busy roadway.

[6] The housing along Shelbourne's South Link is zoned either RS6 (single family) or RD1(two family). In the RS6 zone, the minimum setback is 6 metres (Zoning Bylaw 210.4), and in the RD1 zone it is 7.5 metres (Zoning Bylaw 301.4).

An air photo of this section follows, for reference.



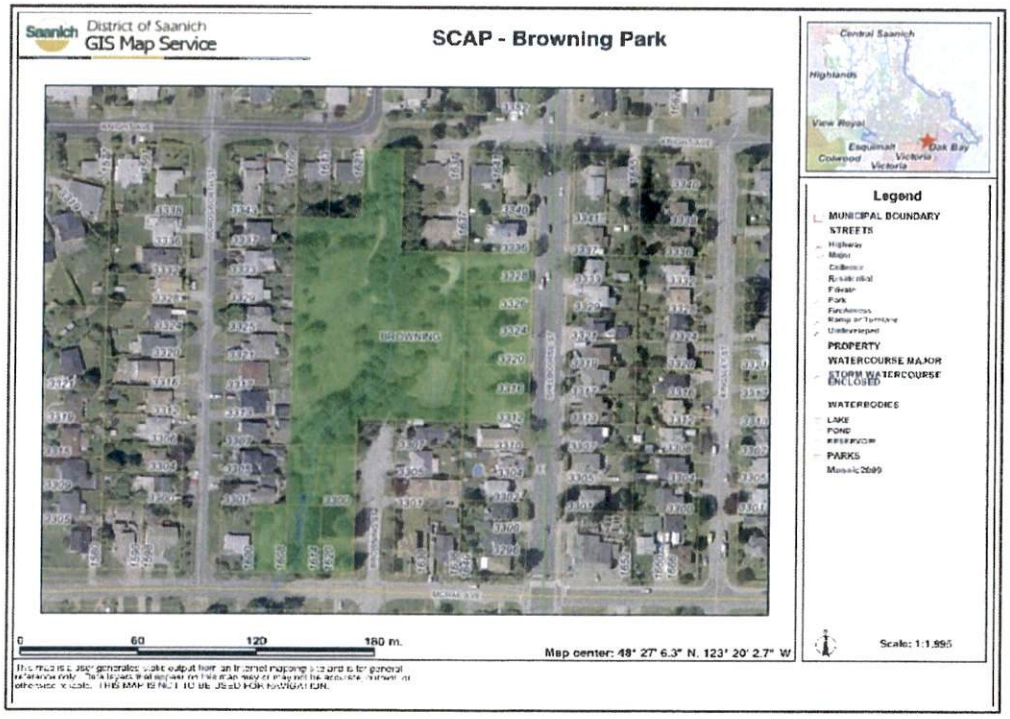

Under the existing zoning, there is capacity in the commercial property at the North Dairy corner for further development to add another 21 percent to its space.

While the road widening is needed along this block, perhaps a better approach would be for the municipality to acquire all the residential properties along the west side of the block, rezone and reconfigure this land, then sell it by tender for development as intensified, mixed residential/commercial use. The block would become a needed transition from the higher densities that will be emerging in the Hillside development node. The revenue from the sale of the rezoned land would repay the costs of the acquisition, as well as the widening and redevelopment of the street. For example, if the site could be assembled and cleared for under $4 Million, after the widening of the road allowance the site could be subdivided as two 30 metre by 100 metre parcels. If they were zoned for redevelopment at a medium density, it is likely that each parcel would be worth over $2.5 Million, which would repay costs and contribute to the physical rebuilding of Shelbourne Street.

## Blocks in the South Link - McRae to Knight (Browning Park)

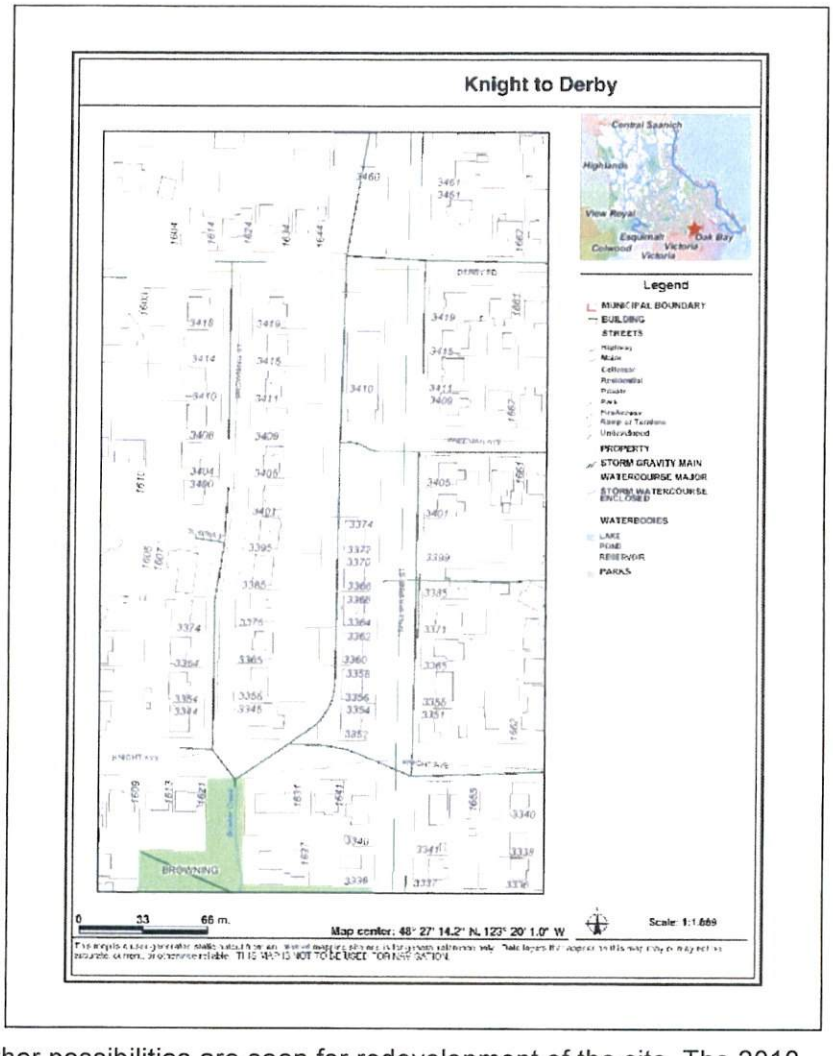
The block from McRae to Knight also requires a widening in order to reach the needed 22.8 metre road allowance. A widening on the west side could cost perhaps $160,000 and implies the removal of 6 trees as well as leaving aging houses too close to the property line. The cost of purchasing the whole block, expanding Browning Park from Bowker Creek to Shelbourne Street, could be in the $8.0 Million range.

The expanded park space would allow the creation of a multi-use park facility needed by the community and sought in the 2010 survey.



## Blocks in the South Link - Knight to Derby

There is a different situation between Knight and Derby, where a large part of the block is the St. Michaels University school bus yard, zoned P1. The rest of the Shelbourne frontage is residential two-family buildings. As seen in the plan below Bowker Creek is in an underground pipe north of Browning Park. The Bowker Creek Initiative has a long-term plan to "daylight" more of the creek.

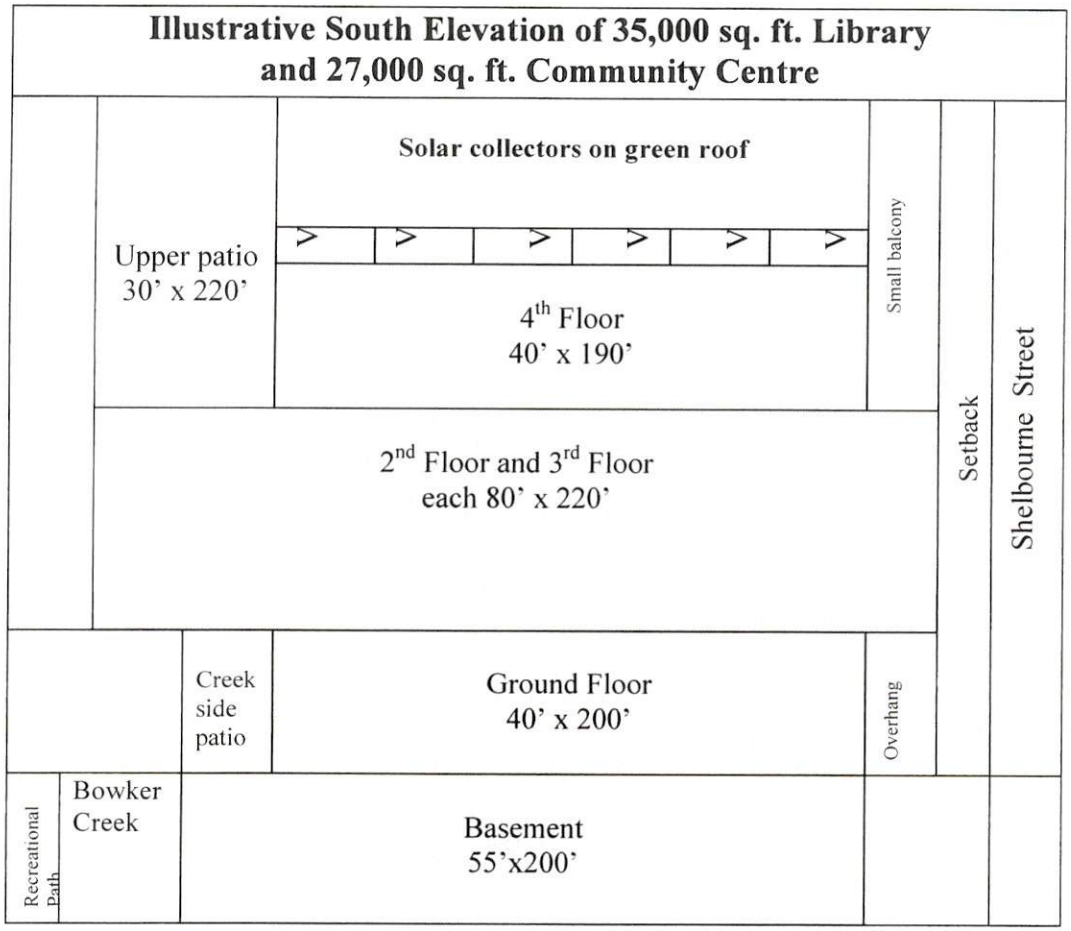



If all the residential land was purchased (costing perhaps $3.6 Million) and the rear 8-10 metres was used to open the creek and extend the greenway, that would leave about 20-22 metres for redevelopment. The 115 metres along the frontage could be up-zoned and redeveloped to recoup costs. Although this would be a long, narrow building site, it could also be a high amenity location, with the improved Shelbourne Street on its frontage and the daylighted creek behind it.

If the entire block was purchased, the creek could be re-opened all the way north to Derby, and other possibilities are seen for redevelopment of the site. The 2010 survey found that people want community facilities in this area, and it has been mentioned that it would be desireable to have a library located closer to the more densely populated part of the Shelbourne Valley.

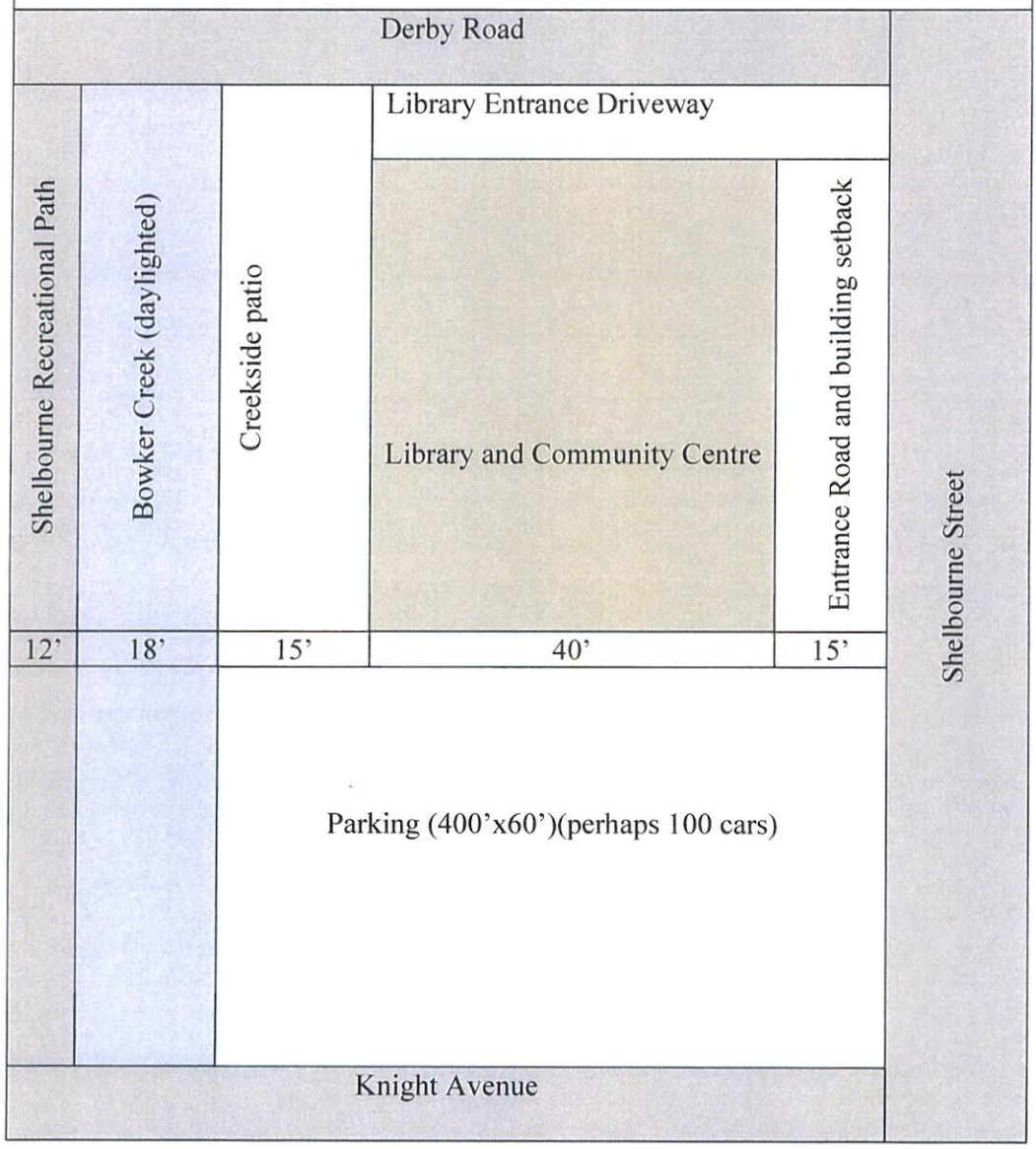
The replacement of Nellie McClung library is the 3rd priority in the Facilities Plan of the Greater Victoria Public Library, dated January 2010. A 35,000 square foot facility is required. Relocating to the Shelbourne/Derby site would shift the 2.5 km library service area to include Ten-Mile Point, and it would remove some of the present overlapping of Nellie McClung's service area with those of Emily Carr and Bruce Hutchison branches. The replacement budget for Nellie McClung library has been estimated at $12.5 Million.

This long, shallow parcel between Knight and Derby could be developed as an attractive, seniors-oriented community centre incorporating a replacement McClung library. This would be similar in concept to the successful Monterey Centre in Oak Bay but designed to better interact with both the street and the open creek space. It would be on a good transportation corridor, and a walkable distance from the centre of the Shelbourne Valley. Parts of the facility could enfold the creek, as a patio or a small pond, and parts could overhang the daylighted creek. Also, this site could become a central component of the off-Shelbourne north-south route that now exists for recreational cyclists and pedestrians (further discussed below). Following are illustrative diagrams of a potential site plan and building for this location, involving a daylighted Bowker Creek and a recreational pathway, 35,000 square feet of library space and 27,000 square feet of space for a community centre.




The building would have an outdoor orientation, with several large sun-oriented patios, some of which are protected by overhangs. It could be a model "green" building to give meaning to Saanich's sustainability goals and show leadership in our community.

**Illustrative Site Plan of 35,000 sq. ft. Library and 27,000 sq. ft. Community Centre**




Alternatively, it is conceivable that SMU might collaborate to assist in the realization of the Bowker Creek Initiative's objective, by opening the creek at the back of its land and allowing public access to the creek. It would also have to allow for a road widening. In exchange for these community-building contributions, SMU might be permitted to use its site more intensively.

### The East Frontage on Shelbourne's South Link

Shelbourne Street needs to be undergoing change to better serve its many functions:

- as a primary north-south vector for balanced transportation;
- as a connector between nodes of higher density;
- as a corridor containing services for the dormitory areas on the hillsides behind it; and
- as a new, attractive, functional spine for a vibant Shelbourne Valley.

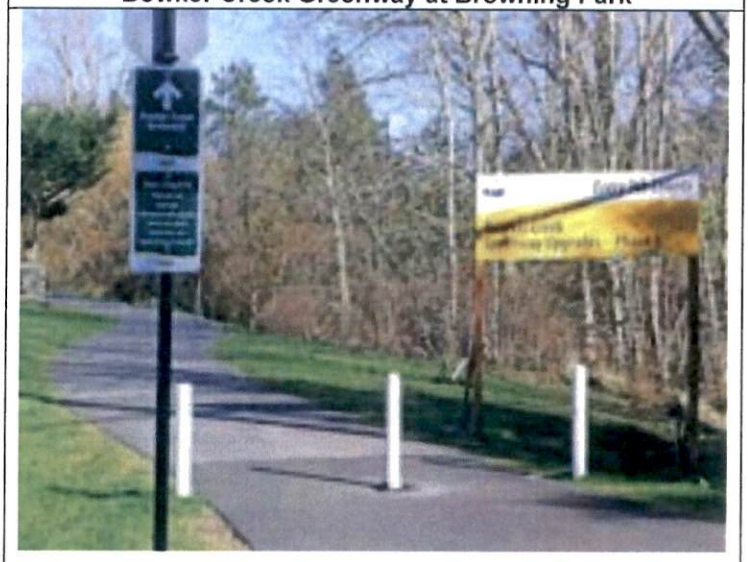
As was discussed in the introduction to the South Link section, the present land use along the east frontage of Shelbourne Street is not really appropriate. A busy arterial is not the right place for single family houses. Homogeneous RS-6 zoning is not the right designation for valuable land connecting two of the Capital region's emerging nodes for intensification and mixed use development.

The redevelopment of this part of the west side of Shelbourne will be designed around maximizing the potential of a unique, natural amenity, Bowker Creek. The redevelopment of the east side should compliment this with mixed land uses and increased density[7] that is oriented around and builds upon the theme of the newly revived amenity. This could be a new, special development district in which a variety of land uses would be permitted if they compliment the existing and emerging neighbourhood, and are within a target zone of increased density. The special district should be at leat a full block deep to include enough land that comprehensive site plans can be produced.

### Shelbourne Valley Recreational Pathway (Expanded Bowker Creek Greenway)

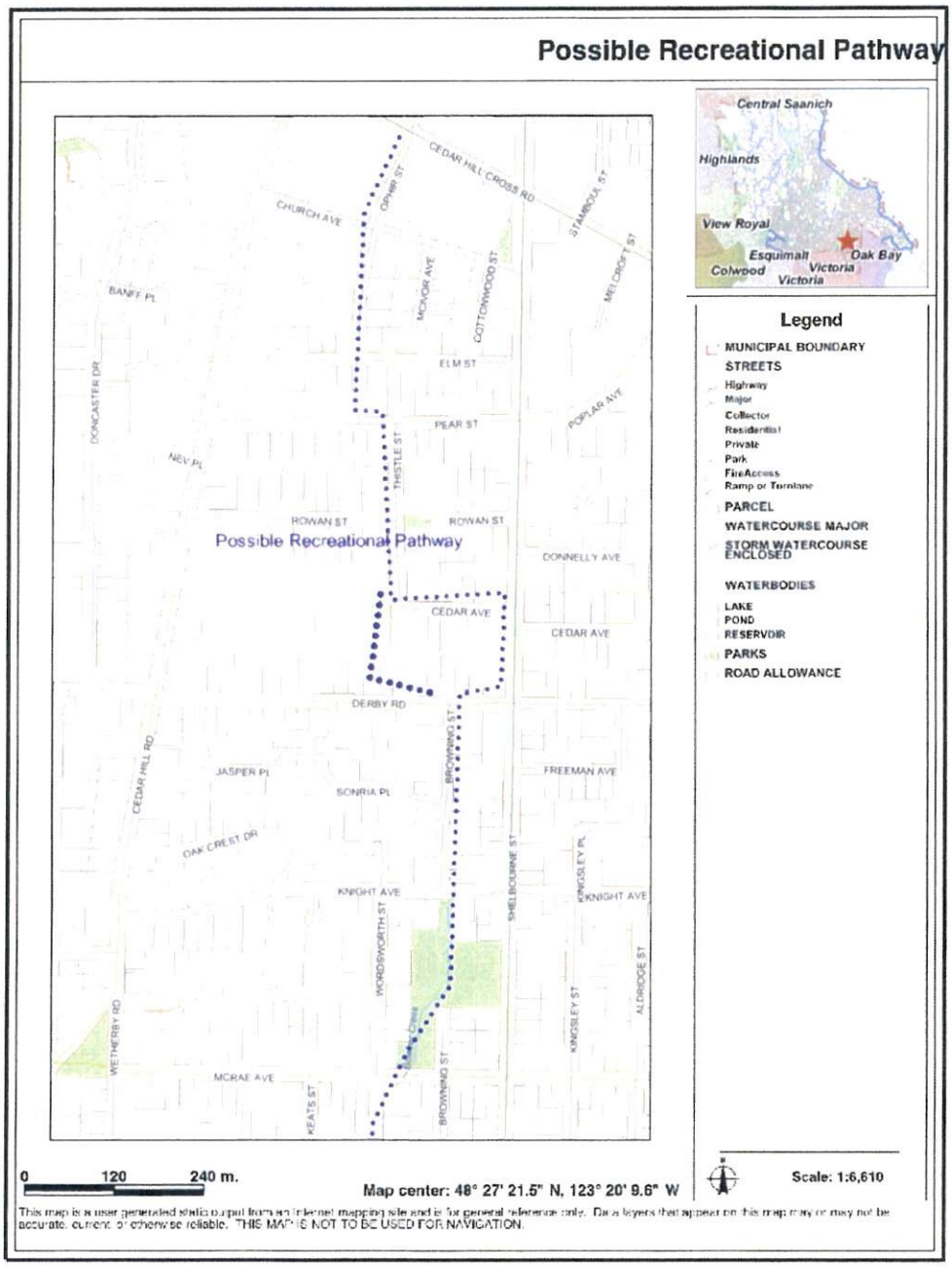
There is potential to create a secondary transportation route for recreational cyclists and pedestrians, connecting the Hillside Mall with Shelbourne Valley Centre. The basics of this route already exist, so a complete recreational pathway connecting the population and services of the Shelbourne Village with the regional commercial centre at Hillside could be realized with a few additional measures.

**Bowker Creek Greenway at Browning Park**



[7] The concept of mixed-use, medium density along revitalized suburban main streets has been a Toronto policy for a generation, initially advocated by Richard Gilbert. See Gilbert, R. "The City of Toronto Main Street Program" in The Intensification Report No. 2, (Toronto: Canadian Urban Institute), 1993. It is a central theme of the new SSHRC study by Patrick Condon et al, Transportation Transformations, (Vancouver: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives), April, 2011. See http://www.policyalternatives.ca/transportationtransformation

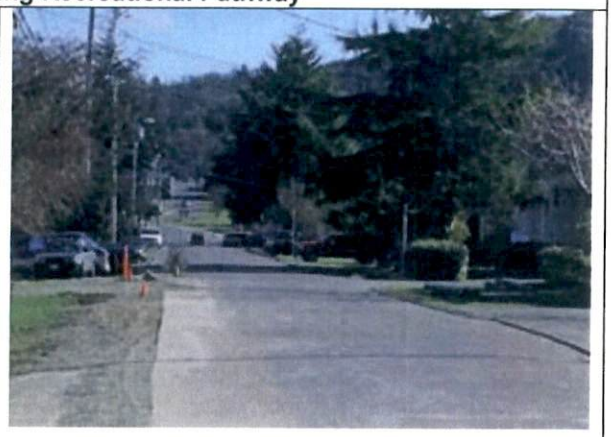
The route begins on North Dairy Road and runs North along Bowker Creek, then continues across Browning Park. This segment, known as "The Bowker Creek Greenway – Phase I" was reconstructed with a $120,000 grant from the Federal Economic Action Plan.



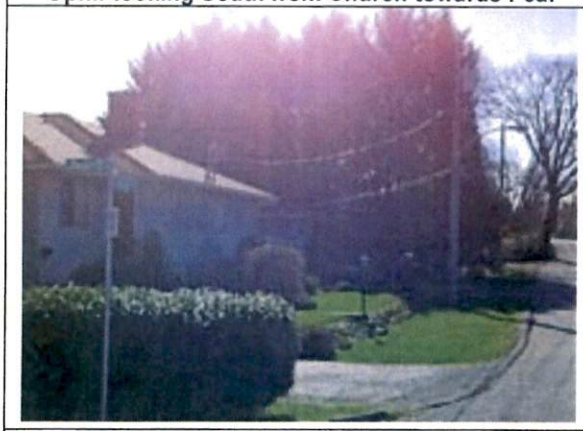
The route then continues north on Browning Street to Derby Road where, at present, it terminates. Travellers must descend Derby to Shelbourne and go north for one block, then proceed up Cedar Avenue to Thistle Street, jog west a few lots at Pear Street and then continue north on Ophir Street to Cedar Hill X Road. The entire route is shown in BLUE on the preceeding street schematic, and some photos along it are also provided.

**Images Along the Existing Recreational Pathway**

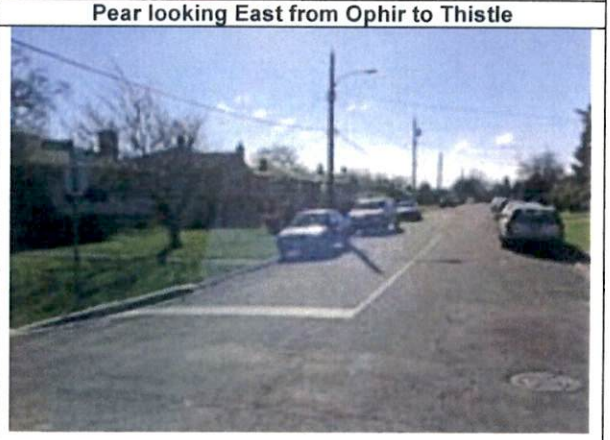

Ophir looking South from Church towards Pear



Pear looking East from Ophir to Thistle



Thistle looking South towards Cedar

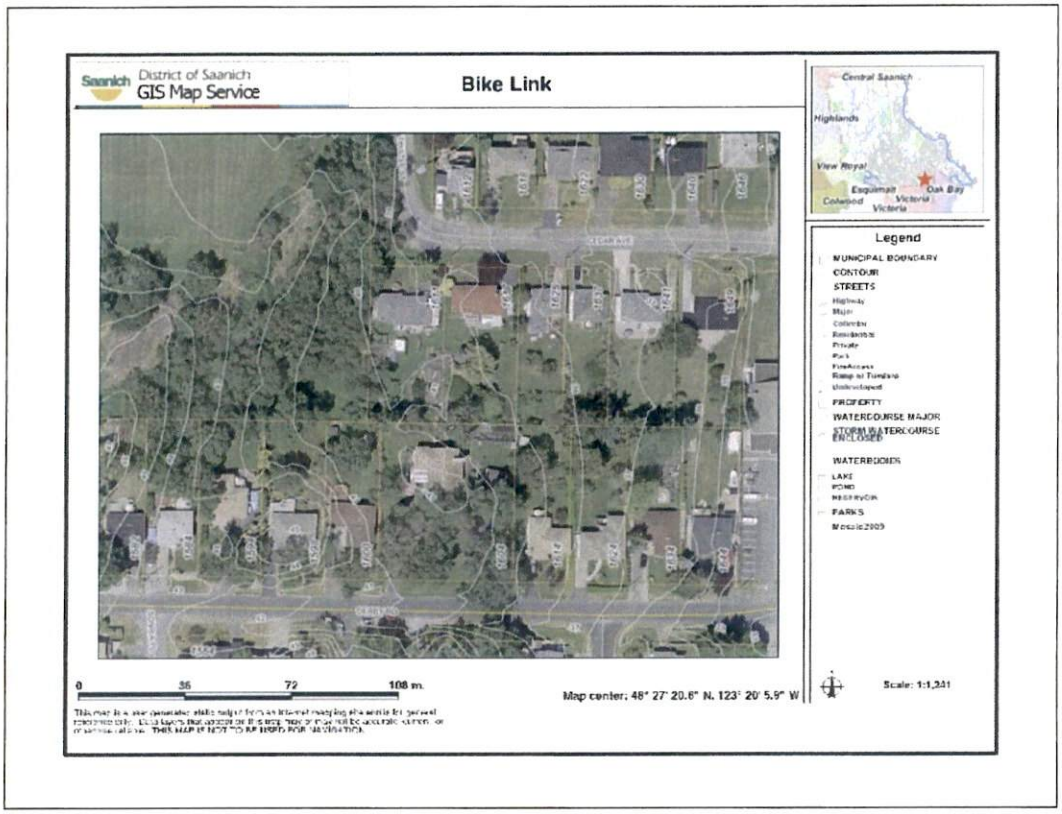


Browning looking South from Derby towards park

- A problem with this route is the fact that it now comprises two segments, south of Derby and north of Cedar. These could become a single, integrated route if property could be acquired on the north side of Derby to connect the segments.[8] Thistle Street abuts Doncaster School, so the path could extend along the Eastern boundary of the school property, and then connect across to Derby Road. The air photo of this section, entitled "Bike Link", shows the location where the potential exists to link the two segments. Contour lines have been added to

8 Some road painting and street improvements would be required along the route, and road crossings would have to be created at North Park, Derby, Pear, Elm and possibly Cedar Hill X Road.

the air photo to identify where the pathway could proceed without encountering steep gradients.




The general location suggested for this connection also includes a bench area which affords a view across the valley bottom to Mount Tolmie. This bench area could become a site for a small parkette overlooking the valley that would also serve as a mid-point for people to pause along the Recreational Pathway. As the entire Pathway would involve some gradient, it would be useful to have a spot midway along for travellers to pause in their journey between Shelbourne Centre and the new library and community centre, or Browning Park or Hillside Mall.

Bench Area on Derby Looking East to Browning Street and Mount Tolmie

**South Link Land Use Change – Summary**

In order to significantly improve the Shelbourne Valley, there should be change in the South Link area. Shelbourne Street should be rebuilt to standard as a multi-modal regional arterial. This is not merely a road rebuilding project. The new Shelbourne Street must be an attractive, multi-functional place that unifies the Shelbourne Valley, supports and improves the residential areas on the hillsides behind it, connects and brings together the development nodes along it, and creates value.

- This requires widening the road allowance between North Dairy and Knight, and this should occur on the west side of Shelbourne Street.
- While the reconstruction might be accomplished by just widening the road allowance, a more comprehensive approach should entail acquiring much of the property along Shelbourne for redevelopment. This will create a transition between the density of the Hillside node and the reconstructed corridor, improve the nature of the valley bottom and the arterial, and the lift in land value associated with the redevelopment would assist the neighbourhood and help cover the costs.
- Browning Park should be expanded to help realize the communities' aspirations for more open/park/green space ;
- There is potential to daylight Bowker Creek for over 220 metres between Knight and Derby, and create a site for the development of an attractive, seniors-oriented community centre and the replacement of Nellie McClung library. This site would also allow for an extended segment of the Bowker Creek Greenway.

- The Bowker Creek Greenway could extend to connect with the Ophir/Thistle alignment to the north, creating a Shelbourne Valley Recreational Pathway.
- Shelbourne Street should be zoned for redevelopment at medium densities, with land use mix to provide convenient services for the increased population.

### The Shelbourne Shoulder Routes – Cedar Hill Road and Richmond Road

While Shelbourne Street is the spine of the Shelbourne Valley, it is supported by parallel, complimenting routes along the valley's shoulders. These roads, Cedar Hill to the west and Richmond to the east, have received much less design attention and investment.

### Richmond Road

**Varying Widths* of the Road Allowance Along Richmond Road**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cedar Hill X Road | **Richmond Road** | Cedar Hill X Road |
| Poplar Ave | | Poplar Ave |
| Pear Street | | Kingsberry Crescent |
| | **20.0 m** | Kingsberry Crescent |
| Lots # 3576 and 3572 | **18.5m** | |
| Donnelly Ave | **17.7 m** | |
| Cedar Ave | **17.5 m** | |
| Derby Rd | | |
| | **18.0 m** | Mayfair Dr |
| Knight Ave | | |
| *St Michaels University School* | **17.5 m** | |
| | | Woodley Rd |
| | **18.5 m** | |
| McRae Ave | | |
| | **20.0 m** | Waterloo Rd |
| | | Ernest Ave |
| | | Argyle Ave |
| *Camosun "S" curves* | **18.0 m** | *Camosun "S" curves* |
| | | *Camosun College campus* |
| Lansdowne Rd | | Lansdowne Rd |

* road allowance widths estimated, using Saanich GIS mapping

Richmond Road travels through a residential area of well-established, 50-80 year-old houses and two major educational institutions. Unfortunately, it is a minimal roadway with a bare two traffic lanes, it often lacks curbs, it has no provision for bicycles and it has inadequate pedestrian facilities. As seen in the following diagram, the road allowance varies in width, but it is primarily 20 metres wide.

### Lansdowne Road to Argyle Avenue

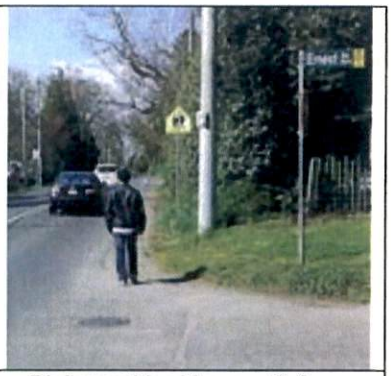
Beginning at Lansdowne, Richmond Road has an 18 metre road allowance as it travels between low density housing on the west side and the 9 ha campus of Camosun College on the east. There are curbs and sidewalks on both sides until it reaches Argyle Avenue.

The interface between Camosun College and Richmond Road is lamentable. This educational institution serves 4500 students, 52 percent of which arrive daily on foot, by bicycle, or on the bus[9] (all of which are mainly served by Richmond Road). However, Camosun's development plan is rebuilding the campus to re-orient itself to the east, to Foul Bay Road, and treat the Richmond Road entrance as a back door. Even though the campus land fronting on Richmond is not built up, the 18 metre road allowance along this segment is 2 metres less than the norm for this street. There are no bus bays so the busy northbound and southbound bus stops that serve as the main transportation portal for Camosun, require that buses stop in the traffic lanes to handle passengers. The problem is worstened because the two bus stops face each other. Shelters for bus passengers were a recent addition to the street. There is no crosswalk.

### Argyle Avenue to Mayfair

The road allowance in this section is 20 metres, but the street improvements are minimal. On the east side from Argyle to Waterloo there are no curbs, and no sidewalks. While people walk along the shoulder of the road, even that is constrained by the encroachment of vegetation that is allowed to grow out to the edge of the traffic lane.

**Richmond looking south to Camosun from Ernest**

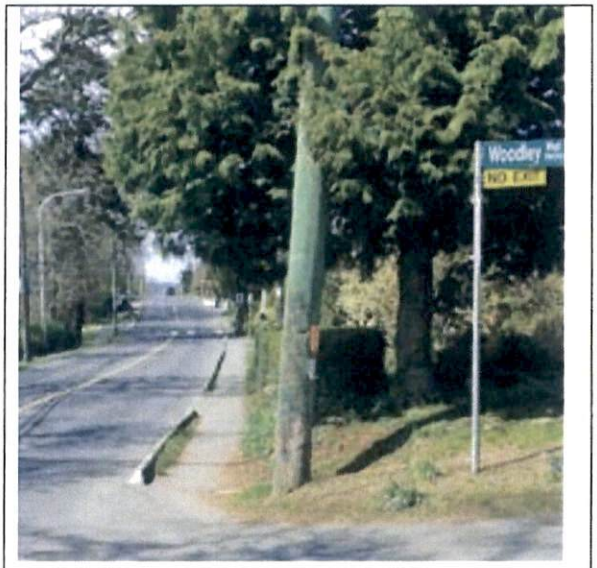


**Richmond looking north from Ernest**

North of Waterloo Road and continuing north from Woodley to Mayfair the east side has a narrow, 18-24 inch crumbling asphalt sidewalk, with intermittent concrete curb strips to control the flow of rainwater.

[9] Information from Camosun College web page – www.camosun.ca.

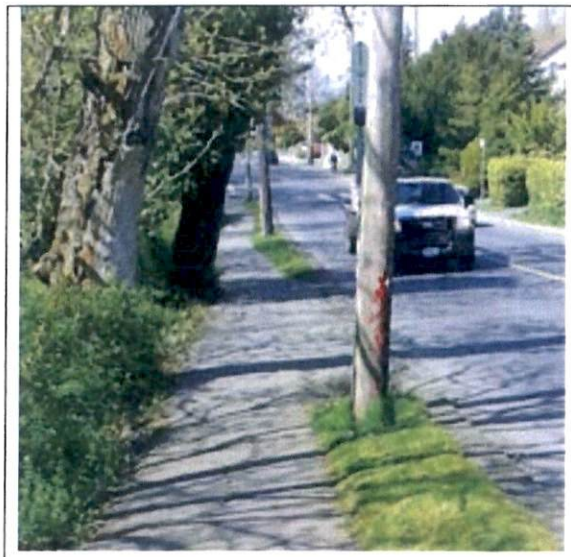
Sightlines are problematic for vehicles entering Richmond from the side streets on the east side, but these are not busy streets and the traffic hazard may be an accepted element of the character of the neighbourhood. Some minimal sightlines are essential for safety.




Richmond looking north at Woodley

On Richmond's west side, from the S-curve at Camosun College to McRae Avenue there is a narrow concrete sidewalk and minimal rolled asphalt curbs to direct the rainwater. This sidewalk is the only provision for pedestrians approaching the college from the north.

North of McRae, Richmond Street fronts on the 7.0 ha campus of St. Michaels University school. The road allowance narrows to 17.5 metres, the least width along the entire length of Richmond. SMU is a K-12 private school with $55 Million in assets and annual revenues of $26 Million. About 930 students attend SMU with 250 living on site, and one half of the resident student come from other countries[10]. These resident foreign students are heavy users of BC Transit.



BC Transit stop at SMUS, looking north along Richmond

The sidewalk is deteriorated asphalt and there are either no curbs or minimal rolled asphalt curbs to control rainwater. There are no bus bays to support the heavy student use of transit, so buses stand in the traffic lanes while passengers get off and on. The only roadway feature on Richmond that accommodates the significant SMU population is a painted crosswalk beside the intersection at Knight Avenue. It is odd that this crosswalk is not near the bus stops, and that the bus stops are not near Knight Avenue where the students access the school property.

After SMU, the Richmond road allowance widens slightly to 18.0 m but the road and sidewalk condition do not change.

[10] Information from SMU's web page – www.smus.ca.

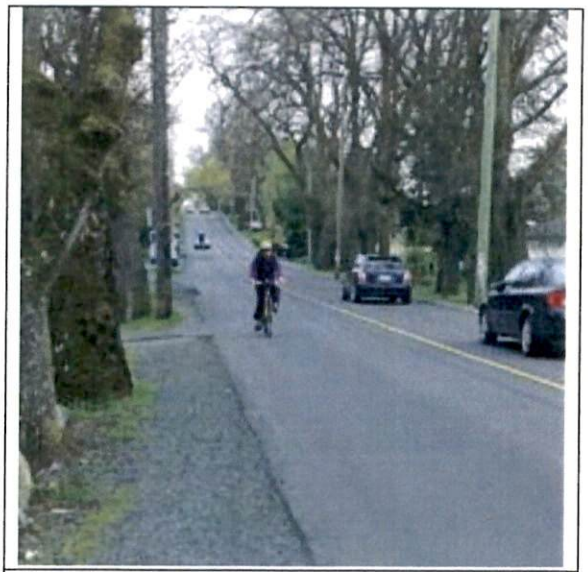
**Mayfair to Poplar**

Richmond looking north at Mayfair

Richmond looking north near Derby

North of Mayfair the road facilities diminish further. The road allowance decreases to 17.5 m at Derby, widens slightly to 17.7 m from Cedar to Donnelly, grows to 18.5 m for two lots north of Donnelly and then is 20.0 metres north to Poplar. On the east side there no curbs or sidewalks for 650 metres north of Mayfair, then good concrete sidewalks and full curbs are along the frontage of the Fraser Tolmie Apartments for 100 metres. On the west side there are rudimentary asphalt sidewalks between Mayfair and Pear Streets, supported by intermittent concrete or rolled asphalt rain curbs.

This is not a welcoming street for cyclists.



Cyclist on Richmond near narrow shoulder in Kingsberry area

Beginning at Pear Street, where Richmond abuts the Richmond Gate condominium, there is a full two metre sidewalk set back from the roadway, full concrete curbs that taper at intersections, street furniture, underground wiring and bus bays. The west side of the block between Pear and Poplar is a model of what Richmond Road could be.

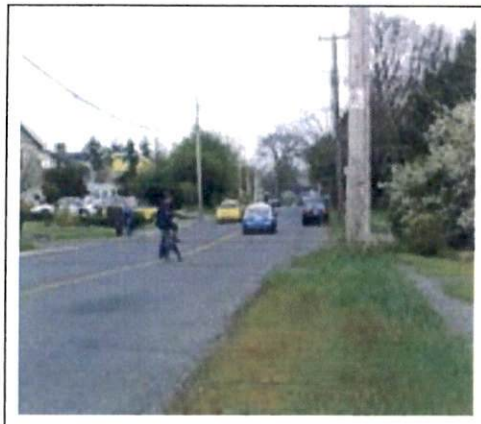
### Cedar Hill Road

Cedar Hill Road passes through a variety of land uses, including a district of older detached housing to the south, two major churches and newer multiple housing forms in the middle area, and more aging detached housing as it approaches the University Heights node to the north. It is the primary access to a large recreational centre, a major elementary school, a large middle school, and a very busy library. It is a minimal roadway with two traffic lanes, no bike lanes, inadequate pedestrian facilities and frequently lacking curbs. It has a road allowance of about 20 metres for much of its length, but unfortunately this is truncated to 14-16 metres in several locations.

The varying widths of the road allowance are illustrated on the next page.

### North Dairy to Derby

The pedestrian facilities in this section are inadequate, particularly because this is the pedestrian approach to the District of Saanich's Cedar Hill Recreation complex.



**Cedar Hill north of Cedar Hill Rec Centre**

**Cedar Hill curve at Wetherby Park**

Beginning at North Dairy, on the west side of Cedar Hill has no curb. Along the frontage of the Rec Centre a narrow asphalt sidewalk is set back a few feet from the road. North of the entrance to the Rec Centre the road allowance narrows to 17.9 metres, then as the street progresses up the shoulder of the valley, the road allowance declines to 15.4 metres, then to 14.0 metres. In front of the homes north of the Rec Centre a deteriorated asphalt sidewalk is tight to intermittent concrete rain curbs. The curbs and sidewalk end at Doncaster.

On the east side at North Dairy there are asphalt sidewalks tight to concrete curbs, and north of the entrance to the Rec Centre the aging sidewalk becomes set back from the curb by a wide grass strip. The curb ends at the Doncaster/McRae intersection and at Wetherby Park a heavy concrete barrier has been placed to protect the sidewalk from the outside of the curving roadway. The road allowance shrinks to 14.0 metres as it passes Wetherby Park, then expands to 20 metres north of the unopened intersection with Wetherby Road.

There are no crosswalks to help pedestrians cross the road safely at the Rec Centre, or where the sidewalk terminates at Doncaster on the west side of the road.

**Varying Widths* of the Road Allowance Along Cedar Hill Road**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| McKenzie Ave | | McKenzie Ave |
| | 20.2 m | |
| Garnet Rd | | Garnet Rd |
| *Cedar Hill Middle School* | **Cedar Hill Road 20 m** | |
| Gregory Pl | | |
| | 20.3 m | |
| | | Mortimer ST |
| | 16.3 m | |
| | 18.4 m | |
| | | Earlston St |
| | 20 m | |
| | 20.7 m | |
| | 16.3 m | |
| Cedar Hill X Rd | | Cedar Hill X Rd |
| | 19.0 m | |
| | 19.2 m | |
| | | Church St |
| | 19.7 m | |
| | 20 m | Pear St |
| | | |
| | | Rowan St |
| | | *Doncaster Elementary School* |
| Derby Rd | | Derby Rd |
| | 20 m | |
| | | Oak Crest Dr |
| | | |
| | | Oak Crest Dr |
| Ocean View Rd | | |
| | | Wetherby Rd |
| | 14 m | *Wetherby Park* |
| Doncaster Dr | | McRae Ave/Doncaster Dr |
| #3242 | 15.4 m | |
| *Cedar Hill Rec Centre* | 17.9 m | #3236 |
| | 21 m | |
| North Dairy Rd | | North Dairy Rd |

* - road allowance widths estimated . using Saanich GIS mapping

North of Ocean View Road there is a rolled asphalt curb at the edge of traffic lane on the west side. There is no sidewalk. On the east side the grass strip ends at Oak Crest and for the next 280 metres north to Derby Road the sidewalk is separated from the traffic lane by a white line painted on the pavement.

There are four bus stops along this 900 metre section of Cedar Hill Road. There are stops for southbound buses at Derby, Oakcrest, Doncaster and North Dairy. Each has a semi-bus bay, created by widening the pavement slightly. Northbound bus stops are at North Dairy, Wetherby Park and Derby, and they have no bus bays at either Derby or North Dairy. The midpoint bus stop at Wetherby is about 450 metres downhill from the stop at Derby, which is towards the upper limit of convenience for transit users.

**Derby Road to Cedar Hill X Road**

The intersection of Cedar Hill Road and Derby is controlled by traffic lights, and is slightly complicated. Both streets are on slopes at the intersection and east of Cedar Hill there are visual obstructions on both sides of Derby. On the south side of the intersection, on Cedar Hill the northbound bus stop is right at the corner. Three sidewalks feed into the intersection – one on the north side of Derby west of Cedar Hill; and the two segments of the sidewalks along the east side of Cedar Hill Road. There is a crosswalk connecting the sidewalks on the east side of Cedar Hill, and another connecting the Derby Road sidewalk with the Cedar Hill sidewalk, and both have pedestrian controlled lights. Pedestrians travelling west on the south side of the intersection or south on the west side have no crosswalks to assist them, and no sidewalks available once they have crossed.

Circumstances can combine to create a hazard at this intersection. The sidewalk on the east side of Cedar Hill is the collector/distributor for children attending Donnelly school, one block to the north. Vehicles travelling westbound on Derby approach the intersection uphill, and have poor sightlines left and right, going into an intersection which is sometimes heavily used by the schoolchildren.

North of Derby, the road allowance is 20 metres until Pear Street and then continues at 19.7 metres to Church Street. It then reduces to 19.0 metres through to Cedar Hill X Road. The west side has no sidewalk except for the last 30 metres beside the Dawson Heights seniors complex. There is an sidewalk in varying condition on the east side along the entire length from Derby to Cedar Hill X Road. The only crosswalk north of Derby is near Doncaster school at Rowan Street.

The curb arrangements vary along the east side. North of Derby there is a concrete curb through to Rowan, and the roadway widens at Doncaster School to allow on-street parallel parking. Parking is a problem at the school, with minimal provision for parking on either Cedar Hill or the side street, Rowan. When the Shelbourne Walkability group met with the Doncaster Parents Advisory Committee in March 2011, they were told:

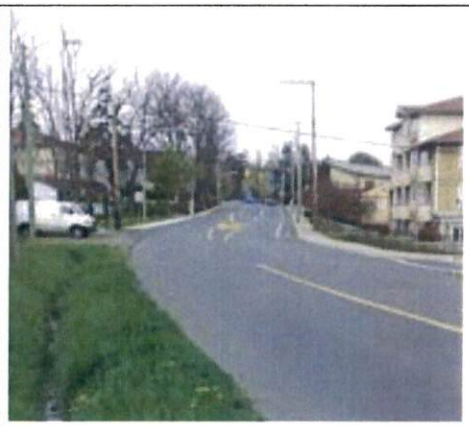
> *"The area around Rowan Street and Cedar Hill Road is a mess during the before and after school rush as cars are parked all over the place and there are no boundaries to indicate the property lines".*

Concrete curb and sidewalk at Doncaster School, no sidewalk on west side

Minimal parking at Doncaster School on Rowan Street

North of Rowan Street there are no curbs and there is a sometimes grassy, sometimes dirt roadside swale, separating the deteriorated asphalt sidewalk from the roadway. The swale ends one lot north of Pear and a curb begins at the property line of the project at St Anthonys Lane and continues to Cedar Hill X.

Cedar Hill with no curb, swale and asphalt sidewalk on west side north of Pear



Cedar Hill with swale and no sidewalk on west side near Church, full facilities on east side

Along the west side of Cedar Hill there is an intermittent rolled asphalt rain curb from north of Derby to the crosswalk at Rowan. Then the curb ends and the shoulder alternates all the way to Dawson Heights between having lawns to the pavements' edge, or swale ditches.

There are northbound and southbound bus stops at Rowan, St. Anthonys Lane, and Cedar Hill X Road, none of which have bus bays. Bike lanes are painted on the pavement for 70 metres south of Cedar Hill X which, dangerously, end abruptly.

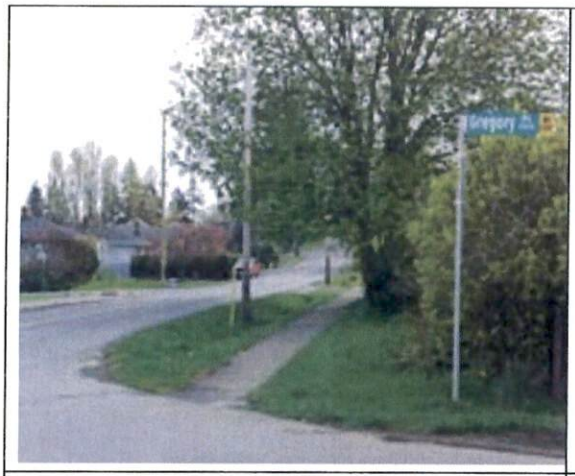
A summary comment on the state of Cedar Hill between North Dairy and Cedar Hill X is seen in another of the observations Doncaster PAC made to the Shelbourne Walkability Committee:

*"There are no continuous sidewalks and bike lanes on Cedar Hill Road. To stay on the sidewalk it is necessary to cross back and forth from one side of the street to the other. The road and sidewalks are not safe for children to use."*

**Cedar Hill X Road to McKenzie**

The Cedar Hill road allowance is between 16.3 and 20.3 metres in the section between Cedar Hill X and McKenzie.

On the east side the pedestrian facilities are problematic. Going north from Cedar Hill X, there is a rolled asphalt rain curb and no sidewalk. People walk along the shoulder and a gravel path has been created, however, two lots to the north vegetation extends out to the edge of the roadway, forcing any pedestrians onto the travelled surface of the road. This is the section where the road allowance is relatively narrow, at 16.3 metres. Although the problem of vegetation encroaching on the shoulder stops at Earlston. the rolled curb continues, with no sidewalk, until Mortimer Street.



**Cedar Hill south of Gregory, with only sidewalk on west side**

**Cedar Hill north of crosswalk at Gregory, sidewalks on both sides, curb on east side**

On the west side there are concrete curbs and concrete sidewalks from Cedar Hill X to Cedar Hill Middle school (at Gregory), then the curb ends but the sidewalk continues on to McKenzie.

Mortimer Street is a designated east-west bicycle route to serve cyclists who are commuting to UVic, and anyone travelling from east of Shelbourne Street to the library and beyond. There is a cyclist-controlled intersection where Mortimer crosses Shelbourne. However, when cyclists have proceeded up Mortimer to Cedar Hill Road they find no cycling facilities (no aids for cyclists at the Cedar Hill/Mortimer intersection, no signage or pavement markings, no bicycle lanes).

From Mortimer to Garnet the east side of Cedar Hill Road has a rolled asphalt curb, a wide grassy divider, and a concrete sidewalk. North of Garnet the sidewalk abuts the curb, with the problems that attend that arrangement.

There is only one bus stop along Cedar Hill Road between Cedar Hill X and McKenzie. This is a northbound stop at Mortimer, and there is no bus bay supporting this stop.

## Summary

In summary, the development of Cedar Hill Road is quite incomplete, with no bicycle facilities, a mish-mash of partial curbs, mixed ditches and piped stormwater drains, and the most basic of pedestrian facilities. It is surprising that it is so incomplete, because it is the primary collector route to a large primary school, a large middle school, and a major recreational complex.

After examining Cedar Hill Road and noting many of its weaknesses the Shelbourne Walkability Committee observed that a nearby street, Henderson Road in Oak Bay, would be a good model for what Cedar Hill Road could be. The photo below shows the range of facilities provided by Henderson Road.[11]

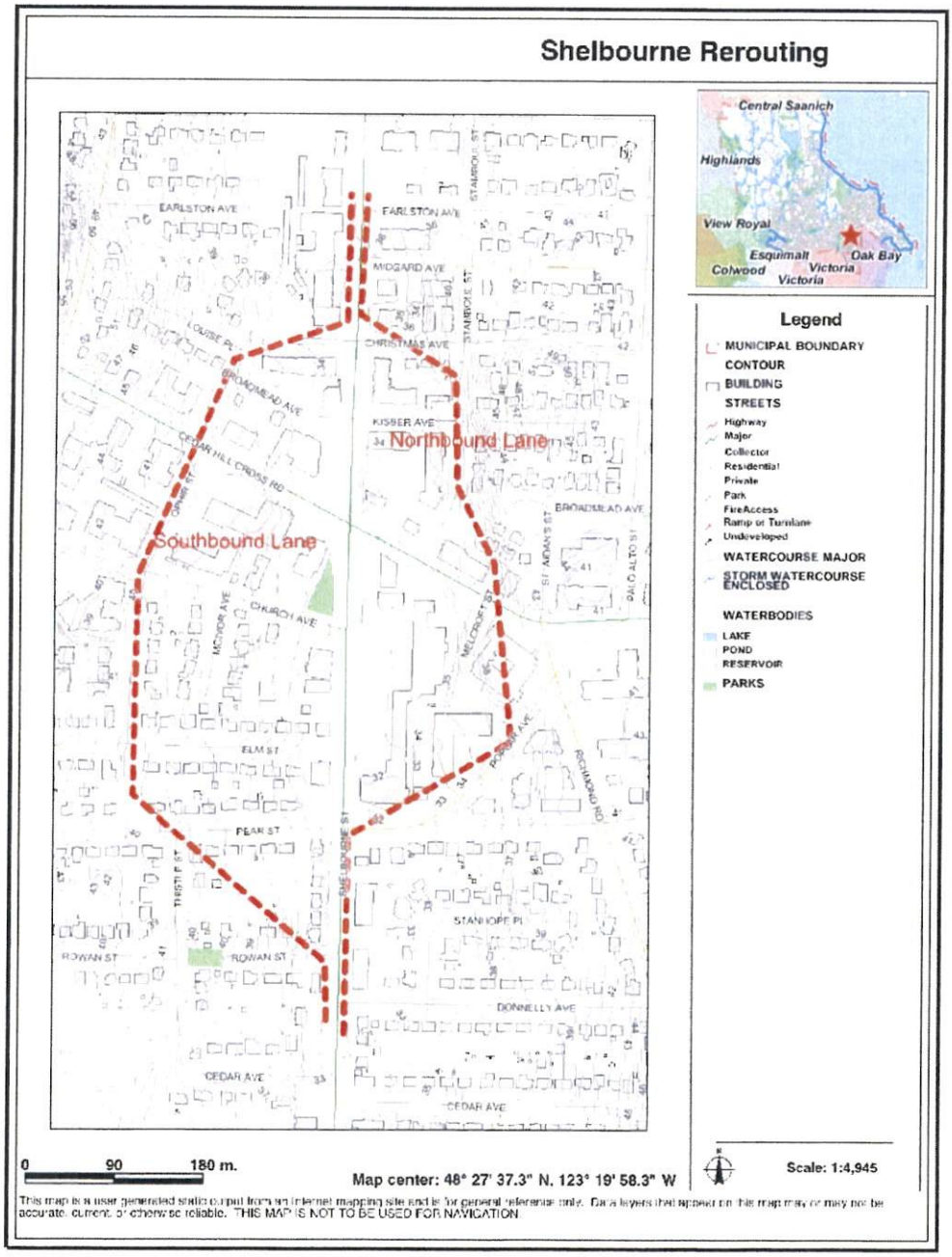
## Shelbourne Valley Centre

It is understood Saanich will contract an urban design specialist to examine the Shelbourne Valley and propose guidelines for land use change, focussing on the growth centres (Shelbourne Valley Centre, University Heights Centre, and Feltham Neighbourhood Centre). When considering appropriate guidelines, it is hoped the specialist will consider and provide for significant changes, rather than merely assuming that growth will be incremental and distributed randomly over locations and time.

[11] It is noted that Henderson also has sidewalks abutting its curbs.

Following are some illustrations of significant changes that could occur in the Shelbourne Valley if there was a will to bring them about:

**Creation of a pedestrian-oriented village** by re-routing the Shelbourne Street traffic around the core area. The following diagram illustrates the concept of re-routing north-south lanes.



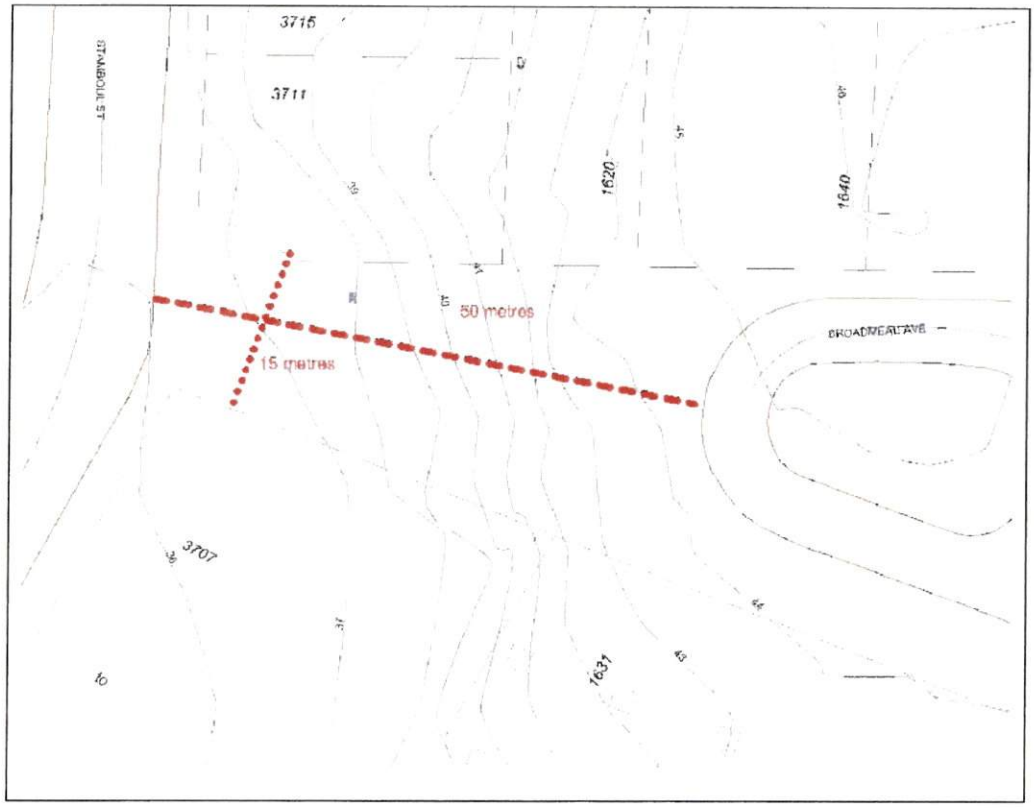
The northbound lane could go behind the village to the east, while the southbound lane could be diverted to the west. Traffic on the east-west axis along Cedar Hill X Road would bypass the village on the rerouted Shelbourne. allowing pedestrians and and cyclists to move around the village core more freely. Businesses could become more open to passing foot traffic, with patios, open air sales displays and temporary markets.

There are now about 450 seniors living in three purpose-built residences immediately west of the village core (Highgate Lodge, Luther Court and Dawson Heights). There are probably 200 more living in the various condominiums and apartments in the same area. All of these elderly people now must cross four lanes of fast-moving traffic to reach most of the village services, that are on the east side of Shelbourne. The simple measure of rerouting the traffic would better serve residents and businesses of this community and create the new heart of the Shelbourne Valley. As the vibrancy of the village core grows, density in this central area can increase commensurately.

- **Resolving the traffic problem in the area called Rendell Green**. This is a triangular parcel of municipal land just to the East of the Shelbourne Valley Centre, that is surrounded by the intersection of five streets – Cedar Hill X Road, Richmond Street, Poplar Avenue, St. Aidans Street and Palo Alto Street. So far, all traffic redesign measures that have been tried at this complex intersection have proven to be inadequate, and the measures that have been suggested do not address all aspects of the situation.
-

The volume of traffic, and the variety of choices that it requires, have exceeded all transportation engineers attempts to find workable control measures. Also, all plans to date have largely ignored the needs of cyclists and pedestrians. The solution that will deal with all traffic movements in this complex intersection, and will serve cyclists and pedestrians, is a traffic circle. This solution was considered by Saanich several years ago but the initiative lost momentum when a particular funding avenue was cut, and some low-cost, suboptimal road signage solutions were put in place. It is widely felt in the community that the present traffic situation in this area is intolerable. The District of Saanich has begun a process of reconsideration of a traffic circle. This solution is needed at Rendell Green.

- **Improving the incomplete pedestrian connection** between the business area of Shelbourne Valley Centre, and the land above it containing residential areas, Horner Park and St Aidans church. At present there is a crude dirt path descending the fall line from the terminus of the pavement of Broadmead Avenue on the upper land, down to Stamboul Avenue behind Tim Hortons. The path is on municipal land – it is an unopened road allowance. The following plan illustrates that part of the hillside, showing property lines, contours and pavement edges. Added in RED are measurements of the longest run and the narrowest point.




A basic, stable ramp or stairway up this right-of-way would greatly improve pedestrian movements. It would provide a direct route for people living in the upper area who want to walk down to pick up some groceries, rent a movie, have

supper or relax with a coffee or a beer. It would connect the recreational opportunities at Horner Park with the population and services down in the valley. It would serve the university students who now climb the hill on Shelbourne and would be a boon to those using St. Aidans church for various purposes.

**Encouraging communications and mobility in the community** A measure that would create a distinctive identity for businesses and residents in the Shelbourne Valley and help unify the district, would be to establish the area as a free Wi-Fi zone. Similar measures have been undertaken in many places, from large areas like downtown Toronto, to districts like downtown Langford and the UVic campus.

A Wi-Fi network is established by wiring a network of access points that broadcast internet signals. The broadcast range is approximately 20-50 metres with clear sightlines. An installation of 6-10 access points serving a compact district, like Shelbourne Valley Centre, might have a capital cost in the range $20,000 -30,000. Individual homeowners and businesses are able to stop using private internet In areas where free public internet is established and is operating reliably, a saving of $150-$500 per household or business, per year.

A variety of different scales of Wi-Fi zones could be considered. It might be localized in a small area, like the Shelbourne Valley Centre. Alternatively, a linear network of hotspots could be established to provide service along the length of Shelbourne Street. Or it might be decided to make a major, iconic decision and establish the entire Shelbourne Valley as a free Wi-Fi zone.

A free Wi-Fi would provide a valuable utility, encourage people to congregate in public places and socialize, and it would have an iconic quality that would serve to promote the neighbourhood.

- **A special "small retail" zone in the Shelbourne Valley** A special commercial capability could be applied to all low-density residential land uses in the valley, thereby providing a unique, valuable utility. At present there is only one corner store in the entire Shelbourne Valley south of McKenzie Street (Cedar Hill Road and Rowan Street). In order to purchase a litre of milk, a newspaper, a cup of coffee, a bus ticket or a haircut, most residents must travel hundreds of metres to one of the stores in the valley bottom. The zoning throughout residential areas is homogeneous, not permitting even modest retail or commercial uses.

  Many of the residential lots in the valley area could accommodate a small "corner store" land use. The requirements for such neighbourhood commercial uses are slight – enough space in a building to carry out the retail activity, and enough undeveloped land in a suitable position on the lot that 3-4 vehicles can park off the road. A broad zone could be established that would allow any residential owner whose property met these minimum requirements to apply to the municipality for permission to establish a neighbourhood commercial land use. If the municipality agreed that the minimum requirements were met, the proposal would have to go through a process of public hearings that would allow the neighbourhood to consider the idea, and determine whether it met local needs. A special zone like this would contribute to the sustainability of the community.

- **A Shelbourne Valley Icon**

The Shelbourne Valley is a special place. The central area of the valley is bringing together a unique combination of increased density of residences and extensive services that is unique in the Capital region. It is expected that these unique features will be reinforced as the plans for the Shelbourne Valley corridor emerge, and new developments are created in response. In the last few years the valley centre has attracted high quality developments with strong environmental characteristics that can be seen as a movement towards a new focus on sustainability. These developments include, in order of their emergence: Jawl Developments' Highgate Seniors' Residence; the Homewood/Barker Richmond Gate condominium project at Richmond and Pear; the Liu/Barker townhouse and condominium project at Cedar Hill Road and Cedar Hill X; and the Tri-Eagle bank/commercial building proposed for Cedar Hill X.

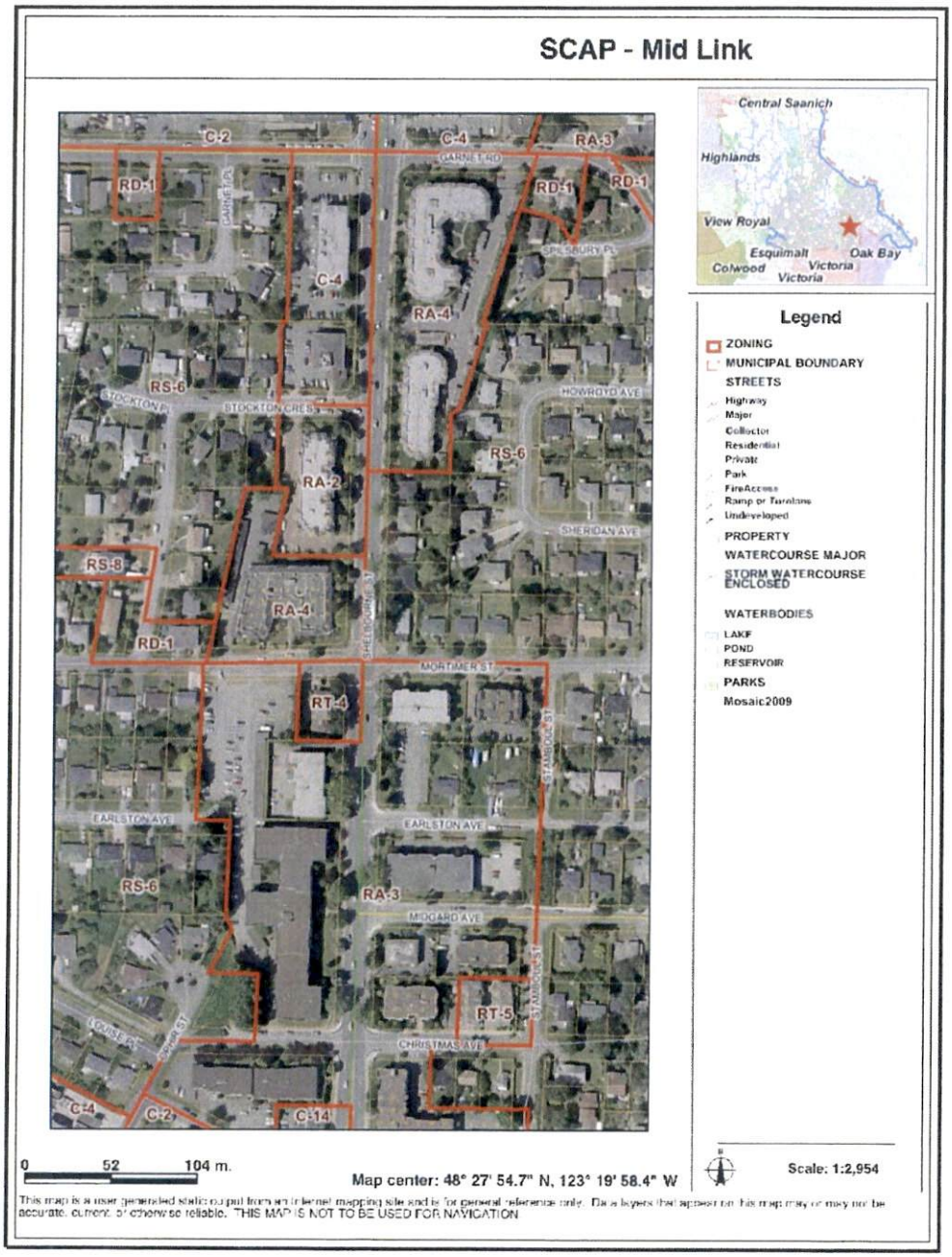
The Shelbourne Valley could identify itself with sustainable development. An iconic feature that could help and lead the process would be to establish some highly visible, major environmental measures at our most prominent location - Mount Tolmie. This rocky hill has an undeveloped southwest face that could be the locale for a bank of solar collectors, and the hilltop could site large, iconic wind turbines. These installations could be earning the money to quickly pay for themselves, while serving as a reminder to all of us in the valley, and many people throughout the region and beyond, that we need to convert ourselves to more sustainable ways of living.

**A Different Kind of Icon**

**Corner of Ansel, Looking Down Midgard (or is it looking up Midgard?)**

The homogeneity of detached housing in the Shelbourne Valley may have constrained alternative land uses. Until recently the opportunity to establish tank rivetments and gun emplacements on residential lots had not been fully explored. Now the model of a nicely camouflaged defensive position within a detached lot has been demonstrated in the neighbourhood, for future emulation.

**The Mid Link, Christmas to Garnet**



### General

As seen in the overall map of the Mid Link, above, this is a sector of apartment buildings located between the University Heights and Shelbourne Village commercial centres. Although this is a populous sector, it has no park space and the nearest open space available is several blocks west at the Cedarhill Public School, or two blocks east at Horner Park.

The largest proportion of the land fronting on Shelbourne in the Mid Link is zoned RA-3, allowing for up to four stories of habitable space. This zone extends on both sides of Shelbourne from Christmas to Mortimer. Saanich's assessment entitled "Potential for Further Development" found that several of the properties along this frontage had capacity for about twice the residential floor space that is now in place. It would be helpful to allow land use mix in this segment, to allow services to locate more conveniently to the population.

North of Mortimer on the east side of Shelbourne is an anomolous RS-6 zone, containing older single-detached houses. As was discussed in the South Link, above, detached family housing is a less suitable land use on this busy street, and a transition to more dense, adult-oriented housing and associated services should be encouraged.

### Shelbourne Street Right of Way

The road allowance on which Shelbourne Street is constructed is consistently 22.8 metres along the Mid Link. In cross-section, it includes: concrete sidewalks along both sides of the street, built right to the raised curbs, and two lanes of traffic in each direction. There are no bicycle lanes on Shelbourne, but the traffic light on Shelbourne at Mortimer has an override for east-west cyclists. The curbs have been rounded and tapered at all intersections (Midgard, Earlston, Mortimer, Stockton and Garnet). There are bus bays on both sides of the street at Mortimer, but the stop on the east side near Garnet has no bus bay.

As discussed above, in the section entitled "Interaction of Road Allowance Width, Zoning and Balanced Transportation Requirements", this 22.8 metre road allowance appears capable of being redeveloped for balanced transportation, including bike lanes. A better street, with sidewalks set back from the roadway, street furniture and complete bus bays, would require some widening of the road allowance.

### Intensification

The Mid Link sector appears to have potential for modest intensification. Several of the older multiple-unit properties in the Midgard/Mortimer area are significantly under-developed relative to their zoning, although they may be difficult to redevelop because they include condominium units in diverse ownership. The sector also includes townhouses that are a lower density land use than is typical of the street, and are not the "highest and best" use of land. Similarly, the detached houses are a low density anomaly along a busy arterial that is mainly apartments.

A logical step would be to rezone or otherwise designate all properties to the dominant density along the Mid Link (RA-3 or RA-4), or the density called for in the Official

Community Plan (up to 7 stories). The zoning should also allow for commercial uses along this segment.

### The Mortimer/Midgard Ambiguity

There is confusion about the function of Mortimer and Midgard, in their role as contributors to vehicle and people movement in the Shelbourne Valley. The two streets are parallel, and pass through single-family neighbourhoods two blocks apart, yet they have significant differences.

Midgard Avenue has some status as a major street, with a new sidewalk constructed along its north side from Shelbourne Street to Gordon Head Road. Its eastern terminus includes a signalized pedestrian crossing of Gordon Head Road to a paved pathway into the University of Victoria. Accordingly, it carries a significant volume of university traffic, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.

Mortimer Street extends from Cedar Hill Road to Ansell Road. At Ansell it connects with a paved pathway to Campusview School, and accordingly it serves as a pedestrian and vehicle collector for children and parents going to that school. At Mortimer's intersection with Shelbourne, there are traffic lights, painted pedestrian crossings, and a traffic signal override for the use of pedestrians and cyclists. Because of this crossing, Mortimer is also a significant conduit for university traffic, particularly bicycle traffic, that crosses over to the Midgard alignment at the eastern end. Mortimer lacks sidewalks although it has a wider right of way than Midgard.

It is unlikely that this ambiguity will cease, as the two streets serve both unique and shared functions. Mortimer should be improved to serve its purposes better, particularly its role as a segment of the east-west bicycle commuting network that serves UVic.

### Pedestrian/Cycle Connections

Two alignments within the Mid Link have great potential to add to the walking and cycling network in the Shelbourne Valley.

#### The Stamboul Connector

There are largely unused portions of the Stamboul Street road allowance between Mortimer Street and Cedar Hill X Road that could be developed to perform important functions:

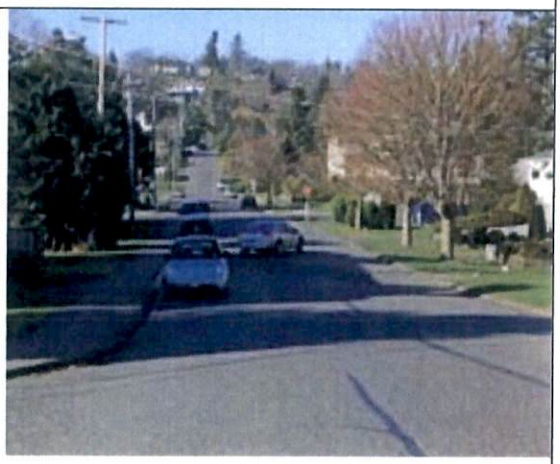
- If the road allowance was opened as a bicycle/pedestrian path from Mortimer to Midgard, it would serve a particularly valuable purpose for commuting cyclists. It would improve east/west cycle commuting to/from UVic by connecting the designated cycle route on Midgard with Mortimer Street and its controlled crossing of Shelbourne.

**Photos Along the Stamboul Connector**

Behind Tim Hortons looking North to Midgard

At Midgard Looking North to Earlston

At Earlston Looking North to Mortimer



At Stamboul looking down Mortimer to Shelbourne

- If the road allowance was better developed south of Midgard, this would improve an interesting and functional walking and cycling connection from Mortimer Street through to Shelbourne Valley Centre at Cedar Hill X Road.

### The Ophir Extention

There is some potential to connect the east/west bicycle route on Mortimer with the north/south route along Ophir/Thistle/Bowker Greenway.

- One link in this connection could join Mortimer with Ophir, along the rear property line of the apartments along Shelbourne (photo below).

| Looking South from Mortimer Towards Ophir Bowker Creek Underground | Looking North from Ophir towards Mortimer |
|---|---|
|  |  |

The location of Bowker Creek, now underground, is below the large parking lots of the apartments facing Shelbourne.

If a connecting right-of-way was acquired, the project might also entail acquiring sufficient property that Bowker Creek could be "daylighted". There may be potential for extending such a daylighting to the south for another block or so towards Cedar Hill X Road, and to the north a block to Stockton Crescent. This daylighting would be a significant development for land use change, as it would introduce an amenity to both the apartments on Shelbourne and to the tier of low density residential properties west of the daylighted creek (perhaps 12-15 properties).

- The other possibility would be to include a crossing of Cedar Hill X, which would have the effect of creating a full, alternate north/south connection for cyclists and pedestrian from Mortimer to Hillside.

**Ophir near Broadmead looking South across Cedar Hill X Road**

That would allow cyclists to travel from the Victoria border at Hillside to UVic without riding on Shelbourne Street.

### Concluding Observations

The Shelbourne Valley corridor is ripe for change. It is home to a lot of people with diverse, contemporary needs, but it still reflects the limitations in land use and transportation arrangements that characterized the postwar era. This paper has re-examined land use in the Valley, stimulated by the realization that what exists here is not is step with the objectives identified in Saanich's new Official Community Plan. There are numerous opportunities, and some basic needs, to make changes in the Shelbourne Valley that will produce important benefits for our community. Some are changes to transform Shelbourne, Richmond and Cedar Hill roads into balanced transportation corridors. Some are changes in zoning and in development activity that will transform the Shelbourne Valley Centre and the links that connect it to University Heights and to Hillside with a new dynamic, and increased density. Some are land use measures to improve other aspects of our community – an improved library, an enlarged park, a significant recreational pathway, a seniors-oriented community centre, a traffic circle at Rendell Green, the daylighting of Bowker Creek, a free Wi-Fi zone, more corner stores and other retail outlets among the blocks of the neighbourhoods, and a pedestrian connection between the valley bottom and Horner Park and the residential areas around it.

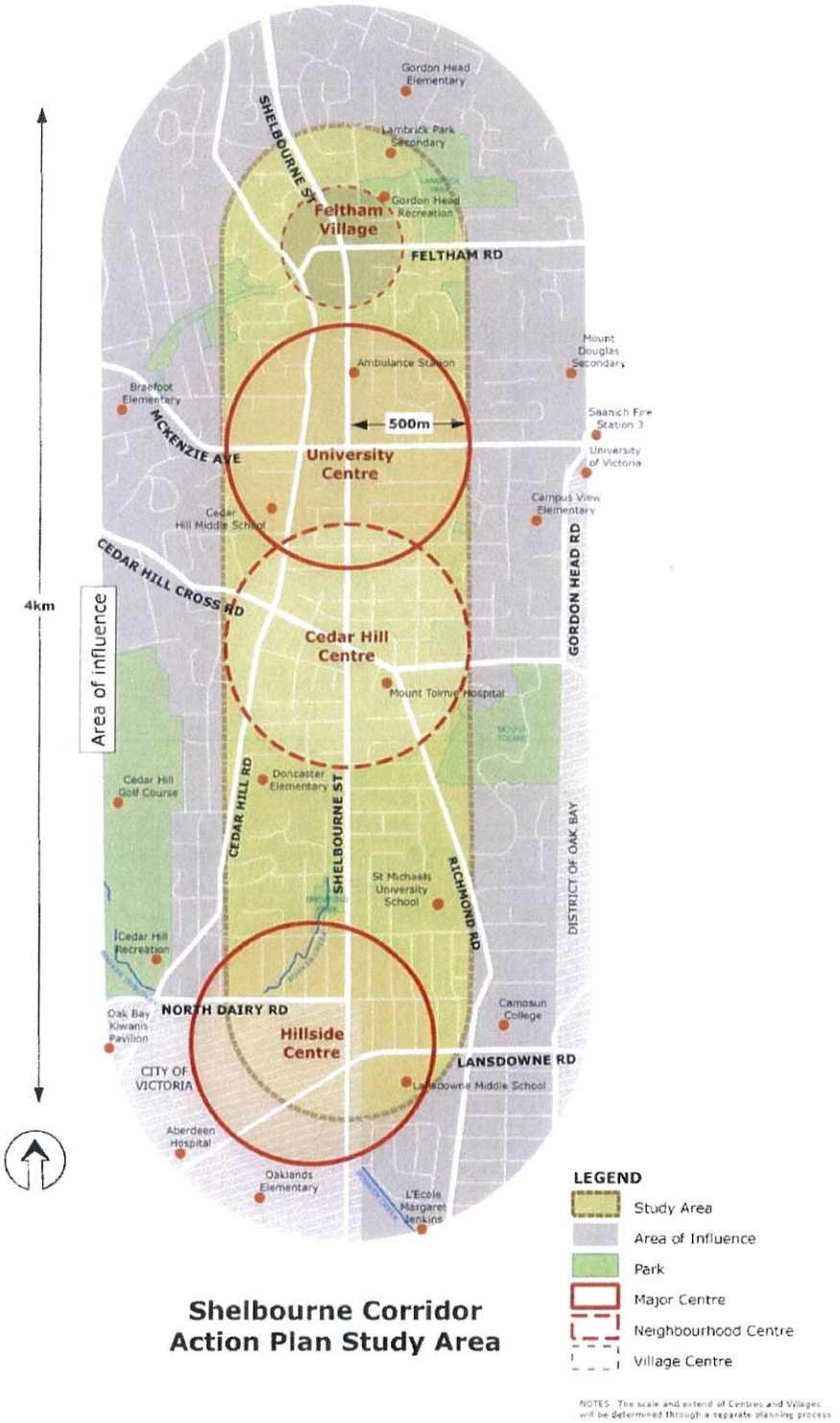
***(This working paper has provided a consolidation of information and concepts relevant to land use change in the Shelbourne Valley. It is intended to suggest a model methodology as a contribution to the Stakeholder Committee for the Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan, and provide a skeleton on which people can add other information and visions that will lead to concrete proposals for land use change.***

***It is expected that examinations of all of the segments of the Shelbourne Valley will eventually be added to the paper)***

## APPENDIX

### Contents


- District of Saanich diagram illustrating the Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan Study Area
- MTCA estimate of 2006 Population in the Shelbourne valley (corridor) area
- CRD Data on Traffic Movements Along Shelbourne, other Major Regional Arterials
- CRD Data on Traffic Within Shelbourne Corridor


Gordon Head Elementary
SHELBOURNE ST
Lambrick Park Secondary
Gordon Head Recreation
Feltham Village
FELTHAM RD
Mount Douglas Secondary
Ambulance Station
Braefoot Elementary
500m
Saanich Fire Station 3
MCKENZIE AVE
University Centre
University of Victoria
Campus View Elementary
Cedar Hill Middle School
CEDAR HILL CROSS RD
GORDON HEAD RD
4km
Area of influence
Cedar Hill Centre
Mount Tolmie Hospital
Cedar Hill Golf Course
Doncaster Elementary
CEDAR HILL RD
SHELBOURNE ST
RICHMOND RD
DISTRICT OF OAK BAY
St Michaels University School
Cedar Hill Recreation
NORTH DAIRY RD
Camosun College
Oak Bay Kiwanis Pavilion
Hillside Centre
LANSDOWNE RD
CITY OF VICTORIA
Lansdowne Middle School
Aberdeen Hospital
Oaklands Elementary
L'Ecole Margaret Jenkins
LEGEND
Study Area
Area of Influence
Park
Major Centre
Neighbourhood Centre
Village Centre
NOTES: The scale and extend of Centres and Villages will be determined through a separate planning process
Shelbourne Corridor Action Plan Study Area
C:\Documents and Settings\dzerbi\My Documents\ARCGIS\Shelbourne\Corridorstudy\Pics\Shelb Cor Action Plan.mxd

| MTCA Estimate of Population – Shelbourne Valley (corridor) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Census Tract | 2006 Population | | | Estimates | |
| | Total | Age 65+ | | Proportion of Tract Population within the Corridor | Population in Corridor |
| | | No. | % of Tract | | |
| CT 123.02 | 3,126 | 685 | 22% | 66% | 2,063 |
| CT 122.0 | 3,537 | 635 | 18% | 66% | 2,334 |
| CT 124.0 | 4,666 | 1,235 | 26% | 60% | 2,800 |
| CT 121.01 | 5,755 | 1,305 | 23% | 20% | 1,151 |
| ST – 4 Tracts | 17,084 | 3,860 | 23% | | 8,348 |
| | | | | | |
| Saanich Total | 108,265 | 19,135 | 18% | | |
| % of Saanich | 16% | 20% | | | 8% |

| Daily Traffic Movements Along Selected Major Corridors (24 hrs) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Date (all data gathered on Wednesdays) | Major Corridor | Daily Traffic Movements by Direction | |
| | | Northbound (away from downtown) | Southbound (towards downtown) |
| 6 Nov 07 | Esquimalt Rd (East of Harbour Rd) | 11,999 | 11,285 |
| 26 Sept 07 | Craigflower (East of Admirals Rd) | 7,300 | 7,334 |
| 21 Nov 07 | Bay St (East of Tyee) | 10,341 | 11,633 |
| 19 Oct 05 | Gorge Rd (West of Harriet) | 8,733 | 7,676 |
| 14 Nov 07 | Quadra St (North of McKenzie) | 11,225 | 9,660 |
| 24 Sept 06 | Cook St (South of Bay St) | 10,003 | 9,045 |
| | | | |
| 28 Nov 07 | Shelbourne St (North of McKenzie St) | 11,156 | 12,061 |
| 21 Nov 07 | Shelbourne St (South of North Dairy Rd) | 12,603 | 14,593 |
| 21 Nov 07 | Shelbourne St (South of Bay St) | 5,651 | 5,702 |
| Source: Transportation Planning Section, Capital Regional District. | | | |

Most traffic in the Corridor is cars and small trucks. During the four-hour afternoon study periods 3,129 cars and small tucks exited from the southern end of the Corridor, and a similar number, 3,293 exited from the Corridor north of McKenzie. At the same time, 83 trucks exited from the two ends of the corridor, as did 94 buses and 122 bicycles.

| TRAFFIC IN THE SHELBOURNE CORRIDOR WEEKDAY AFTERNOONS (2:30 – 6:30 pm) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Location | Type of Traffic | | | | Date |
| | Cars/Small Trucks | Trucks | Buses | Cyclists | |
| SOUTHBOUND (towards downtown Victoria) | | | | | |
| Shelbourne North of McKenzie | 3,167 | 52 | 52 | 51 | Tue.,11 Oct/05 |
| Shelbourne South of North Dairy | 3,129 | 32 | 46 | 64 | Mon., 22 Sept/05 |
| | | | | | |
| NORTHBOUND (away from downtown Victoria) | | | | | |
| Shelbourne South of North Dairy | 2,838 | 34 | 22 | n/a | Mon., 22 Sept/05 |
| Shelbourne North of McKenzie | 3,293 | 51 | 48 | 58 | Tue.,11 Oct/05 |
| Source: Transportation Planning Section, Capital Regional District. | | | | | |