



# Ground Transportation Strategy

*Victoria Airport Authority*





## *VAA Ground Transportation Strategy*

We live on an Island in the Pacific, but we are not isolated. A 15 minute flight from the Victoria International Airport takes you to Vancouver, the largest commercial centre in British Columbia. A few more hours in the air, and you can step off the plane in Toronto, Calgary, San Francisco or a whole list of other destinations. And it all starts at Victoria International Airport, our connection to the world.

Connectivity enriches our lives. Who doesn't want to visit family members in another part of the country or the world? Who doesn't enjoy a vacation in the sunny south? But connectivity is more than

that; connectivity is key to a community's economic prosperity. And our Airport plays a major role. It is The World's Gateway to Victoria and Vancouver Island.

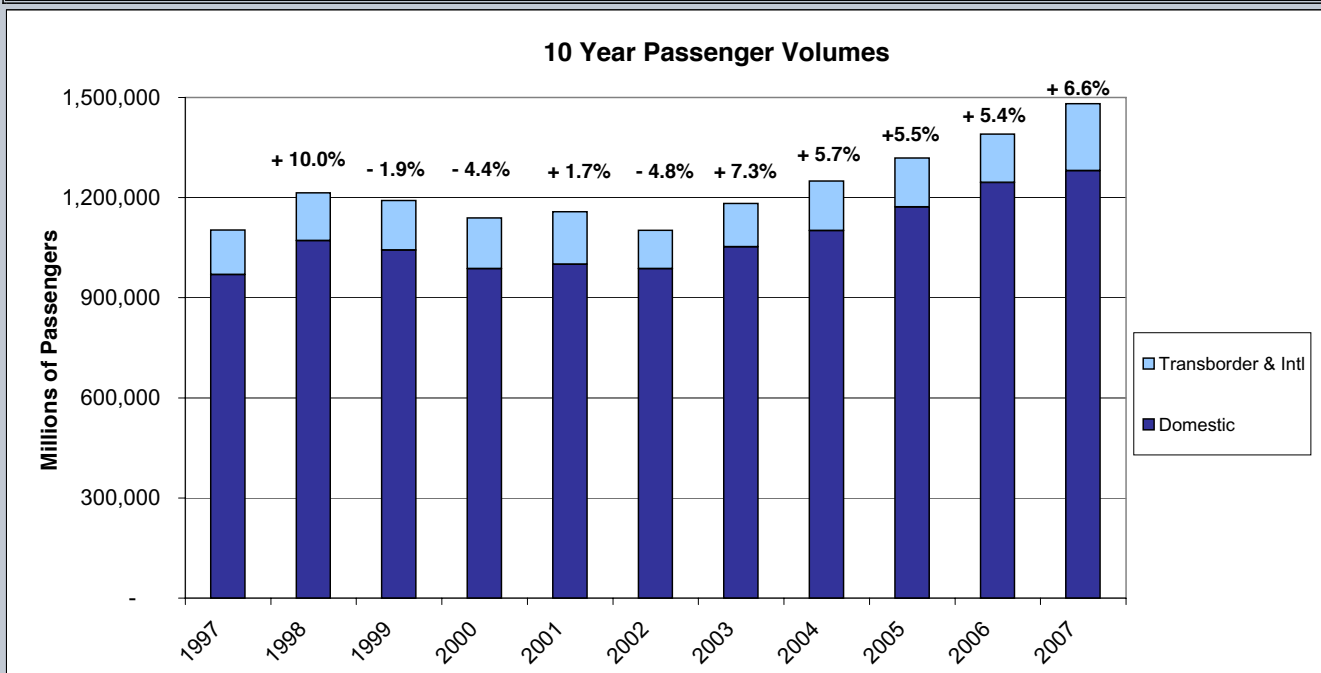
Tourism and high technology sectors, in particular, rely heavily on air transportation. The new United Airlines daily return flight to San Francisco is a good example of how well industry can be served from Victoria. The list of daily non-stop flights includes Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Kelowna, Seattle, Abbotsford and Vancouver. Very soon we hope to add overseas destinations to that list.

# The Ground Connection

When people think of airports, they naturally think of airplanes. But an airport is more. It is a multi-modal connecting point, enabling travelers to move between land and air, and back again. Ground links, are a key element in air travel. For example, on shorter flights the journey to and from the airport consumes a large portion of a passenger's total travel time. If there is any part of this that the VAA can make more convenient and efficient, we want to do that. Other dimensions we must consider are the issues of green house gases and constantly increasing fuel costs.

The VAA Master Plan responds to anticipated air travel growth rates of 2.8 percent annually through 2025. In that year, the total number of passengers flying in and out of Victoria is projected at 2.3 million. This increase in air travel will increase demands on ground links between the Airport and surrounding communities. We need to plan wisely. And because we are located on an island with limited road access, we need to be certain that nothing is overlooked. Key ground strategy recommendations of the Master Plan include expansion of the surface parking area, realignment of Willingdon Road and, ultimately, an airport parking structure.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Domestic	969,007	1,071,361	1,042,942	987,439	1,000,503	987,367	1,052,831	1,101,502	1,171,939	1,245,515	1,280,300
Transborder & Intl	134,006	142,868	148,532	151,823	157,610	114,880	129,990	148,474	146,456	144,613	201,306
<b>Total Passengers</b>	<b>1,103,013</b>	<b>1,214,229</b>	<b>1,191,474</b>	<b>1,139,262</b>	<b>1,158,113</b>	<b>1,102,247</b>	<b>1,182,821</b>	<b>1,249,976</b>	<b>1,318,395</b>	<b>1,390,128</b>	<b>1,481,606</b>





**Traffic coming to the Airport.**

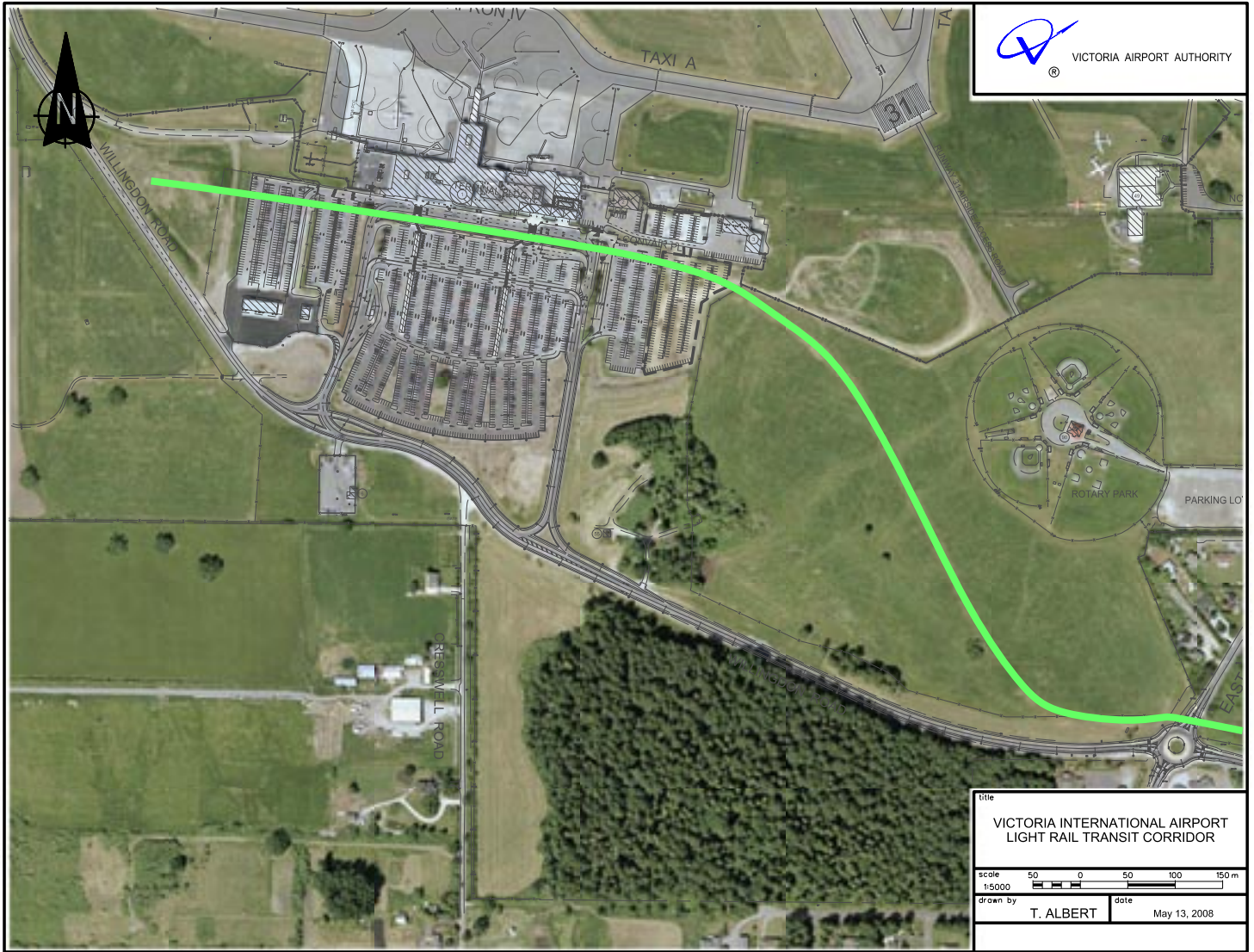
## *Pat Bay Highway*

Road links between the Airport and Victoria city centre have not kept pace with Airport improvements. Traffic leaving the Airport passes smoothly through the new roundabout at East Saanich Road and along Canora Road, until it reaches the stop sign at McTavish Road. This is an increasingly congested and dangerous intersection. Driving to the Airport from Victoria city centre is equally problematic. During peak hours, airport bound traffic backs up in the left turn lane on Pat Bay Highway at the McTavish Road intersection. This line of slow moving or stopped vehicles often extends into the left passing lane, which is already clogged with fast moving vehicles heading north to the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal. The VAA continues to work with the Province to advance the priority for a new interchange at this location, and has

resolved to offer \$3 million as its portion of the estimated \$13 million project.

The Pat Bay Highway not only serves communities on the Saanich Peninsula, but it is the area's main route to the Swartz Bay Ferry Terminal and the Airport, making it Vancouver Island's major ground connector to the mainland.

One day conventional passenger vehicles and buses will be unable to meet the increasing demands for environmental friendly transportation to the Airport. Recognizing this, VAA has reserved a future right-of-way on Airport property to accommodate light rail. At present, this right-of-way is just a line on paper, but it is a line that will help secure our future.



**This map shows the route of a proposed future light rail corridor to the Airport.**



**The entrance to the Airport White Spot Restaurant.**

## *Parking*

Consider that by 2025, the passenger terminal area will need to be 55 percent greater than it is today to accommodate traffic. This increase will affect demands on parking space as well. In 2006, VAA expanded the parking lot by 575 spaces, using a design friendly to the environment. Instead of conventional catch basins and culverts to manage rain water, we constructed rain gardens and swale ditches to collect run-off from paved areas. This system filters out pollutants from parked vehicles, before the storm water is released back into the drainage system.

But we have already outgrown the 2006 parking expansion. This is most evident during peak travel times such as during the Christmas season. A 2008 expansion project will increase parking by another 135 spaces, but this is clearly a band-aid solution and it will not come close to meeting the needs of 2015.

In the long term, parking space availability must increase by 70 percent. This means we need to increase from 800 to 1,400 parking spaces. To facilitate this expansion, in 2009 VAA will commission a conceptual design for the realignment of

the Willingdon access road, and a multi-year surface parking expansions. But even this is not enough. At some point prior to 2025, a parking structure will be required. Designed with future expansion capability, the structure will provide convenient access to the terminal.

We must also consider ground links to the general aviation and commercial customers at the north side of the Airport. Construction of additional groundside access from Mills Road to this area is proposed.

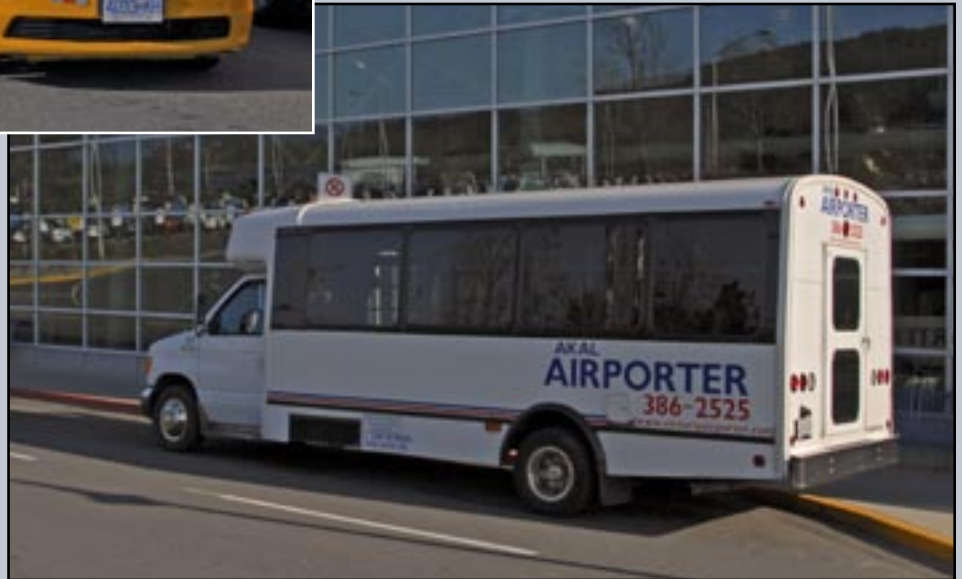
The Board has also looked at parking rates to help manage demand, and has decided to increase rates in the daily lot, while decreasing short term parking rates. Daily parking rates, currently \$12 for the first four days and \$4 a day thereafter will increase to \$15 for the first five days and \$7 a day thereafter. Short term parking, however, will decrease from two dollars to one dollar for two hours. People parking in the short term lot and spending \$10 at any airport food outlet will have the one dollar parking cost taken off their bill.



**These modern hybrid taxis provide safe and environmentally friendly ground transportation to Airport customers.**



**VAA is undertaking a review of public transit service to the Airport.**



**AKAL Airport Express provides half hour service, seven days a week.**

## *Taxi Service*

Long ranks of taxi cabs are a familiar sight at every airport in the world. Recently, VAA signed a four year contract with Yellow Cab of Victoria (City and Country Taxi Service). The agreement extends through March, 2012. A minimum of 90 taxi cabs are available during normal operating hours, and approximately 70 percent of the taxis are environmentally friendly hybrid vehicles. Regular taxi service is available between the hours of 05:00 a.m. and 00:30 a.m.

## *Hotel Shuttle*

A new license with AKAL Airport Express Bus Link Ltd. is valid for seven years, extending to October 31, 2013. Part of the agreement includes an AKAL commitment to replace all buses used in the Airport service with new ones. Shuttle service is available between the Airport and city centre every half hour from 4:00 a.m. to midnight, seven days a week. Pick up and drop off points include downtown hotels, and McTavish Park and Ride.

## *Public Transit*

Victoria Regional Transit System provides regular frequent service to the Airport from locations throughout the CRD. To better understand demand and increase ridership, VAA will undertake a review of public transit service to the Airport during the summer of 2008.



**Airport CEO Richard Paquette arrives at the Airport.**

## *Bicycles*

Aware that more and more people want to bring their bicycles when they fly, VAA has made it easier. Flying cyclists will find a dedicated bicycle assembly station located just across the road from the departure area of the terminal building. The covered station includes an air pump and a bicycle rack.

Cyclists planning to travel by bicycle after arrival can access a bike lane leaving the Airport and connecting with Lochside Regional Trail, which

runs the length of the Saanich Peninsula. Once on the trail, they have a choice of riding north to the Swartz Bay Ferry terminal, or south to Victoria. Those choosing the southern route will connect with the Galloping Goose Regional Trail, which opens up the whole of Vancouver Island for their vacation. In 2008, VAA will also be constructing a bike path to extend along Mills Road at the north side of the airport. The Airport CEO and other employees cycle to work on a regular basis. The VAA encourages Airport staff to follow this example when possible.



**The new car rental facility has vastly improved traffic flow at the Airport.**

## *Auto Rentals*

The majority of car rental business in Greater Victoria originates at the Airport. To serve this industry better, the Victoria Airport Authority has constructed a four bay Car Rental Service Facility south east of the Terminal Building. This strategic location improves

the efficiency of car rental operations and reduces vehicular traffic in front of the Terminal Building. This results in a reduction of fuel usage, reducing green house gas emissions from vehicles being driven off airport for servicing.



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