

DOWNTOWN Victoria

Downtown Victoria Business Association
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May 22, 2019

Mayor Lisa Helps & City Council
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, B.C.
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Dear Mayor Helps and Council,

Re: Motion to phase out horse-drawn carriages

At last week's Council of the Whole meeting a motion was introduced to phase out horse-drawn carriages by 2023; the Downtown Victoria Business Association does not support this motion as it does not seem based in fact but rather emotion.

The carriage companies are amongst the longest-operating businesses downtown (Tally Ho Tours was founded in 1903) and they add greatly to the heritage atmosphere enjoyed by tourists in Victoria. We are strong supporters of animal welfare – as are the carriage operators who run these companies. The 70 – 80 horses owned by carriage tour companies in Victoria are checked by veterinarians at least twice a year; the SPCA investigates the stabling to ensure good conditions; carriages are restricted to less-congested areas and do not run during rush hours. This is because these horses are valued highly by the tour operators.

Draught horses are heavy working horses that have been bred for calmness and pulling capacity. They can pull a dead weight for up to 8 hours a day and a team of horses can easily pull more than 5000 kg. All horses require regular work or free exercise daily or they will not thrive. Phasing out the carriage industry would simply condemn these horses to death. The suggestion of e-carriages is interesting but likely impractical; the selling price of a single e-carriage is between \$150,000 to \$175,000.

Yours sincerely,



Jeff Bray
Downtown Victoria Business Association Executive Director