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New Pothole Finder Uses AI to Smooth the Road Ahead

VICTORIA, BC — To keep Victoria’s roads safe and smooth, the City is piloting a new pothole finder software that scans roads for damage to help locate and fix potholes as they develop.

Data from the new tool builds on city-wide road condition assessments conducted every three years and has significantly increased the number of potholes detected and repaired in Victoria. The pothole finder tech complements increased paving and road upgrades supported by additional funding to road maintenance over the last few years.

“Whether you cycle, take the bus or drive, safe, resilient and quality roads are a priority for the City,” said Philip Bellefontaine, Director of Engineering and Public Works. “Last year we paved more than any other year in the City’s history and are set to pave even more in 2023. We are always looking for innovative ways to increase efficiency and better prioritize our road repairs and this new software suite is another tool we have to keep our road network in good shape.”

All 279 kilometres of Victoria’s paved roads are monitored and assessed year-round to prioritize upgrades, repairs and replacements. Road upgrades are coordinated with other road safety, accessibility and mobility improvement initiatives as well as the repair and replacement of underground infrastructure to streamline upgrades and reduce costs and impacts to traffic. Nearly all road repairs use 100 per cent recycled asphalt from the City’s own asphalt plant to reduce costs, carbon emissions and the reliance on newly extracted material sources.

Potholes occur when asphalt is weakened by the freezing and thawing of water in the roads and cracks under the weight of moving traffic. Seasonal road damage coupled with more frequent and extreme high temperatures and the age of much of Victoria’s road network has negatively impacted the overall condition of roads.

In 2022, the City also modernized and increased funding for its crack sealing program which extends the life of roads by preventing water from getting into cracks to reduce future potholes. The public is encouraged to report potholes to Public Works by calling 250.361.0400 or emailing pw@victoria.ca.

Learn more about how Victoria’s road network is maintained at victoria.ca/roads.

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