

CANADA LINE

RAPID TRANSIT | Construction is on schedule as concrete is ready to pour and tunnel boring will begin soon



BILL BOEI
VANCOUVER SUN

Concrete will be poured for the first segment of the Canada Line tunnel later this week or next week as work on the \$2-billion rapid transit project begins to hit its stride.

A giant tunnel-boring machine that will burrow under downtown Vancouver from Second Avenue to Waterfront Station is due to arrive this spring and should be in the ground by June.

"We're pretty well into it," InTransitBC public affairs vice-president Steve Crombie said Monday. InTransitBC is the company being used by SNC Lavalin and its partners to build the Canada Line.

Concrete forms have been built near 29th Avenue in the massive trench being dug along Cambie Street and the first tunnel segment will be poured "when the time is right and the weather is cooperating," probably within days, Crombie said.

When the concrete sets it will shrink slightly and the forms will be pulled forward for the next segment, and so on. The process is called a construction train.

At Second Avenue on the west side of the Cambie Street Bridge, "the tunnel entry pit is being excavated right now," Crombie said.

"We're expecting the tunnel-boring machine to arrive here in late April, early May. They'll finish assembling it and hopefully it will be in the ground by June."

The machine will be assembled on the site and will likely be given a name and christened with a bottle of champagne before it descends into the hole and starts burrowing northward.

On south Cambie, between 54th Avenue and Marine Drive, traffic will be diverted around the end of this month to the west side of Cambie to allow construction to begin on the east side. By early July, Cambie from King Edward to the Fraser River will have traffic on the west side only.

In Richmond, the dedicated bus lanes on No. 3 Road have been closed to allow work to begin there and the B-Line buses are now sharing space with regular traffic. Utility relocation work starts in the next few days along No. 3 Road between Granville Avenue and Westminster Highway, where a major hydro duct, among other utilities, has to be moved.

Utility relocation has also started in the Bridgeport area of Richmond, and pile-driving will begin soon in the north and middle arms of the Fraser River for Canada Line bridges.

The first concrete section of the elevated guideway for the above-ground portion of the line was poured last week. Preliminary work is also being done on Davie Street between Hamilton and Pacific in Vancouver, where the Yaletown Station will be located.

Utility relocation, pile-driving and column construction have begun on Sea Island, the site of Vancouver International Airport.

And in case you were wondering, "Yes, we're on schedule," Crombie said.

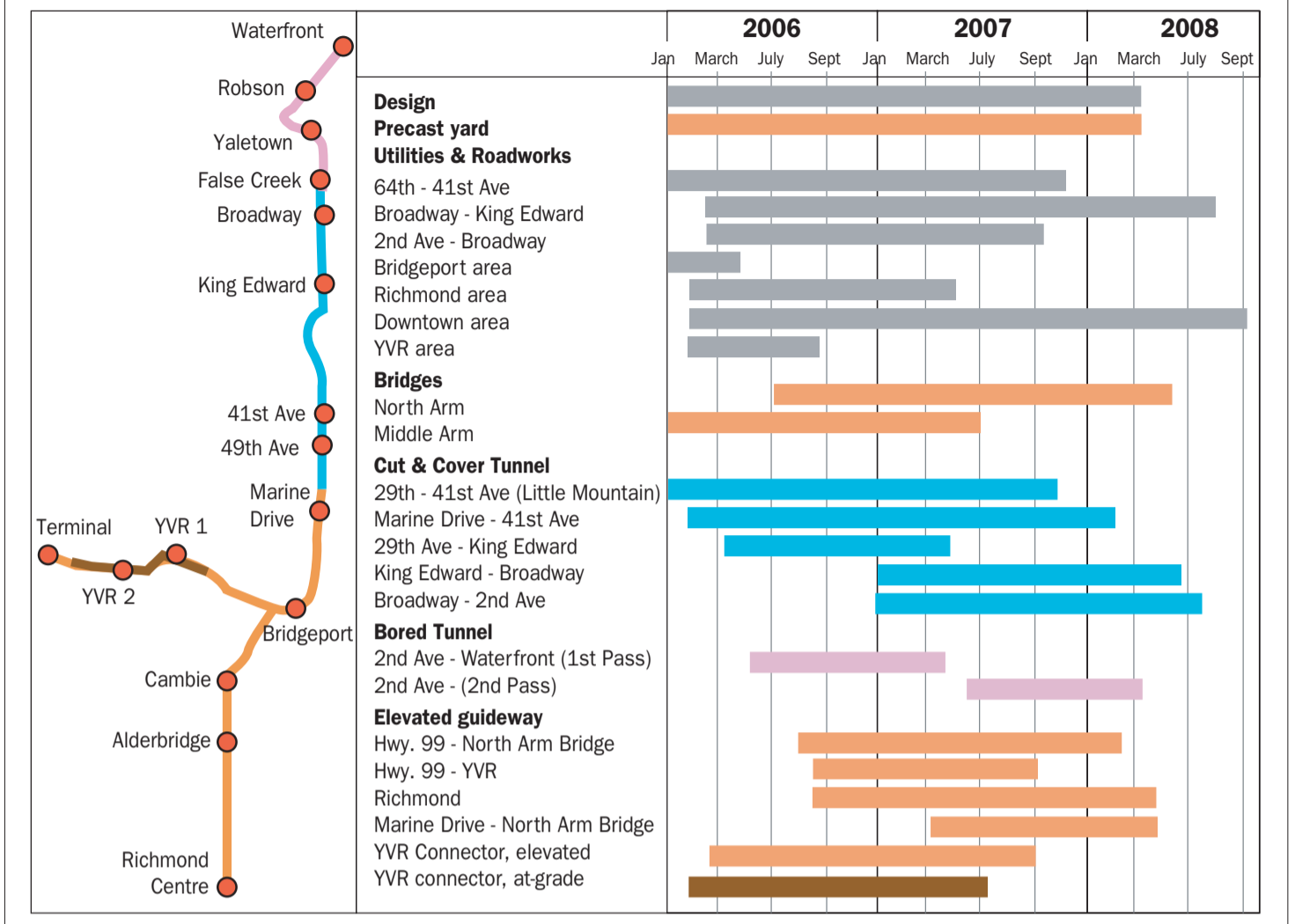


IAN SMITH/VANCOUVER SUN

Workers lay concrete reinforcing bars on the foundation floor near Cambie and 29th. The orange structures are forms for the tunnels that the trains will run in.

IS ON TIME

Canada Line, anticipated construction schedule



IAN SMITH/VANCOUVER SUN

A truck carrying concrete (left) backs into the second section of a cut-and-cover tunnel that will run up Cambie Street. The tunnel is being lined with reinforced concrete to stabilize the walls. Workers (below) lay the concrete reinforcing bar that will form the bed of the new cut-and-cover tunnel under Cambie Street.

