

*June 22, 2010*

## **GreenTRIP program ready to roll to support public transit**

*Edmonton...* As part of the province's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the \$2-billion Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP) is ready to give a super boost to public transit. To meet the needs of Alberta's two largest urban areas, \$800 million in funding will be available to the Capital region; \$800 million to Calgary and surrounding area; and \$400 million to other municipalities throughout Alberta.

"GreenTrip will support communities as they plan for the future, give Albertans better access to public transit and reduce Alberta's carbon footprint," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "Encouraging more public transit, including more regional transportation initiatives, will help foster Alberta's growth in a responsible, environmentally-conscious way."

GreenTRIP will provide one-time capital funding that will support new and expanded public transit throughout Alberta. The program will help provide Albertans with a wider range of sustainable public transit alternatives for local, regional and intermunicipal travel, making public transit more accessible. The program will help reduce the number of vehicles on Alberta roads as well greenhouse gas emissions.

"This is a huge investment in public transit and that's why the province has been working closely with municipalities to develop the right plan," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation. "GreenTRIP will be yet another source of provincial support to advance transit projects that will better connect our communities."

GreenTRIP is a multi-year program. Applicants are required to contribute at least one-third of the capital cost of a project, with GreenTRIP providing the balance. GreenTRIP funding does not flow all at once. Funding will be allocated on "paid on progress" basis.

The program is available to owner/operators of public transit services, which may include municipalities, regional entities, non-profit organizations, Métis settlements and the private sector. Submissions for GreenTRIP funding must include a business case that describes the sustainability of the project. GreenTRIP will provide only capital funding assistance for public transit infrastructure and technology, not operating funding for transit service. For additional information on GreenTRIP, go to [www.transportation.alberta.ca](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca).

The Government of Alberta has a clear plan for a strong economic recovery. *The Way Forward* will bring Alberta back into a surplus position in three years by trimming government spending; using cash reserves to protect key programs; continuing to invest in public infrastructure; and ensuring that our province's industries are competitive and continue to attract investment to provide jobs and prosperity.

**Backgrounder: GreenTRIP program**

**Media inquiries may be directed to:**

Tammy Forbes  
Communications, Alberta Transportation  
780-819-5062 (cell)  
780-415-1841

To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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## **GreenTRIP program - questions & answers**

### **1. How was the GreenTRIP program developed?**

The Alberta government announced GreenTRIP in July 2008. Government has used the time since to consult with stakeholders such as the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties; Alberta Urban Municipalities Association; Calgary Regional Partnership; Capital Region Board; Central Alberta Economic Partnership; City of Calgary; City of Edmonton; and the Strategic Transportation Advisory Council (a committee made up of public and private sector transportation representatives who advise Alberta Transportation on transportation issues affecting Alberta's economy). Government also reviewed the transit plans developed by the Capital Region Board and the Calgary Regional Partnership.

The consultations and reviews helped government develop the program details to best serve both the needs of the stakeholders and advance government priorities in meeting Alberta's future public transit needs.

### **2. Which groups are eligible to apply for GreenTRIP funding?**

The program is available to owner/operators of public transit services, which may include municipalities, regional entities, non-profit organizations, Métis settlements and the private sector. (Ineligible applicants include individuals, federal government departments or agencies and First Nations, which are under federal jurisdiction.)

### **3. How will GreenTRIP funding be divided among municipalities?**

The total GreenTRIP fund budget is \$2 billion. For municipalities that make up the Capital region area, the initial reserve will be \$800 million (40 per cent). The initial reserve for municipalities that make up the Calgary region area will also be \$800 million (40 per cent). This allocation is appropriate to meet the public transit needs of Alberta's two largest urban areas, which include many surrounding communities. Other municipalities outside the Edmonton and Calgary regions will have access to an initial reserve of \$400 million (20 per cent) of the total \$2-billion in GreenTRIP funding, and this same pool of funding can also be used for provincial priority projects.

### **4. How will the funding be paid out?**

GreenTRIP is a multi-year program, with funding to be "paid on progress." This means the money will be distributed as a project progresses rather than being provided up front.

### **5. What is the timeline for sending in submissions for GreenTRIP funding?**

There will be two rounds of applications. The first round will be accepted up to November 30, 2010. (It is anticipated that project approvals for the first round will be announced by Feb. 28, 2011). Based on stakeholder feedback, a second round of applications will be held because some stakeholders indicated they may need additional time to prepare their plans and business case. The second round will be called in spring 2011.

### **6. Is there an eligibility date for a project to be considered for GreenTRIP funding?**

Yes. Projects will be considered for funding if they have been tendered or construction has started after July 8, 2008.

### **7. What kinds of transit projects would qualify for funding?**

Some examples of eligible capital projects include:

- construction of light rail transit (LRT) and inter-city commuter rail systems;
- planning for and acquisition of transit or commuter rail corridors;
- park and ride facilities (as a component of a larger transit project submission);
- construction of bus terminals;
- purchase of public transit vehicles (e.g., LRT vehicles, hybrid buses, accessible buses, etc.); and
- installation of transit intelligent transportation system components.

### **8. What are the funding guidelines for projects?**

Project submissions will be assessed on a competitive basis, in part to the extent they advance Alberta government priorities as well as local or regional transportation priorities. Each submission must include a solid business case that demonstrates appropriate cost-sharing and a clear commitment to sustain the operations of the project once it is in place. Applicants must contribute a minimum of one-third of the capital cost of their project.

### **9. Project submissions must demonstrate that a project can help advance government priorities. What are these priorities?**

The Alberta government's priorities include:

- implementing the 20-year Strategic Capital Plan;
- investing in priority projects that contribute to a safe and world-class transportation system that supports regional and provincial economic development and provides Alberta with some of the most advanced infrastructure in North America;
- supporting the province's return to prosperity and creating a strong foundation for continued economic strength;
- implementing the provincial Land-use Framework, which supports regional planning for key infrastructure, such as transit; and
- advancing the province's climate change strategy by getting cars off roads to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### **10. Are municipalities responsible for their own transit services?**

Yes. Transit is a municipal responsibility and that does not change. It is up to municipalities to identify their transportation priorities, develop transit policies and plans, and operate and maintain their own transit services.

### **11. Can municipalities use Alberta government grants or federal funds as the municipal share?**

Yes. Municipalities can use other provincial municipal capital grants or funding from other partners (e.g., federal government or private sector) as part of their cost share.

### **12. How does GreenTRIP fit with Alberta's climate change strategy?**

GreenTRIP is a good example of how the province is investing in green initiatives that will help contribute to Alberta's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The emphasis of GreenTRIP will be to support regional transportation initiatives that make public transit more accessible to Albertans, reduce the number of vehicles on Alberta's roads and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Alberta government will continue to take advantage of opportunities to foster

Alberta's growth in a responsible, environmentally-conscious way.

**13. What is the process involved to send in a submission for GreenTRIP?**

Applicants must complete a GreenTRIP submission form. This will include providing a comprehensive business case and detailed information about how the project will achieve GreenTRIP's goals. Applicants can send in submissions for projects immediately. The submission form and guidelines are posted on the Alberta Transportation website at <http://www.transportation.alberta.ca>.

**14. Which government department will be handling the funding for GreenTRIP?**

Alberta Transportation will be managing the program and providing the funding.

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