

*April 5, 2011*

## **Edmonton LRT NAIT line announced as first project approved under GreenTRIP**

*Edmonton...* The Alberta government will support the City of Edmonton's plan to extend its existing LRT system from the downtown Churchill Station to Grant MacEwan University and then on to the NAIT campus through \$497 million in capital funding.

The funding is part of the provincial Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP).

"GreenTRIP is about this government's commitment to supporting communities as they plan for the future, making transit more accessible and better connecting municipalities," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "I commend the municipalities of the Capital region for working together to plan for growth in the region and develop a shared vision for transit infrastructure."

The \$2-billion GreenTRIP program provides one-time capital funding that will support new and expanded public transit throughout Alberta. This will help provide Albertans with a wider range of sustainable and accessible public transit alternatives for local, regional and intermunicipal travel. The program will help reduce the number of vehicles on Alberta roads as well as greenhouse gas emissions.

With the approval of the City's submission for this LRT project, the province has provided \$70 million from budget 2010-11 to the City of Edmonton to cover project costs already incurred. The remaining payments will be allocated to the City as progress on construction is made.

"GreenTRIP is a huge investment in public transit and a key part of building a world-class transportation system for Alberta," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation. "GreenTRIP capital funding is a major source of funding that government makes available to municipalities for infrastructure, in addition to the funding the province already provides to municipalities for this use."

GreenTRIP is a multi-year program. The province's share of this project is two-thirds of the estimated eligible project cost of \$745 million. Applicants are required to contribute at least one-third of the capital cost of a project. GreenTRIP funding does not flow all at once; rather, funding is allocated on a "pay-on-progress" basis.

Over the duration of the program, \$800 million in funding is available for transit projects in the Capital region; \$800 million for the Calgary region; and \$400 million for other Alberta municipalities.

Mayor Stephen Mandel said the provincial funding makes an important contribution as Edmonton moves toward its vision of being an increasingly vibrant, innovative, inclusive and sustainable city.

"Transportation plays a vital role in enhancing the high quality of life in our community," said

Mandel. “This funding demonstrates our shared priorities with the province, a key partner in helping us shift to increasingly more environmentally-responsible modes of transportation. It truly is an investment in the economic, social and environmental future of our capital region.”

The Alberta government is working to build a better Alberta by fostering economic growth, strengthening our health and education systems, investing in infrastructure, supporting safe and strong communities and ensuring a clean and healthy environment.

-30-

**Backgrounder:** Edmonton LRT project and GreenTRIP program

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## Edmonton LRT project and GreenTRIP program

### Edmonton LRT project

#### **What does the Edmonton LRT- NAIT extension project involve?**

The project involves extending Edmonton's existing LRT line from the downtown Churchill Station to the NAIT Campus, including stations at Grant MacEwan University, Kingsway/Royal Alex and NAIT. The overall project includes:

- Purchase of right-of-way for LRT track and stations;
- Detailed design of LRT infrastructure from Churchill Station to the proposed NAIT Station;
- Construction of twin tunnels from Churchill Station to portal including Y-junction and track;
- Construction of surface LRT track from portal to NAIT Station;
- Construction of three LRT stations for pedestrian access (Grant MacEwan, Kingsway/Royal Alex and NAIT);
- Construction of power supply substations;
- Construction and activation of traction power system;
- Construction of related road realignments, drainage and landscaping;
- Construction of related utility adjustments;
- Implementation and integration of LRT signal and control system, including communications systems; and
- Purchase of 20 new LRT vehicles

For additional information about the Edmonton LRT-NAIT extension project, go to [www.edmonton.ca/transportation/ets/future-lrt-projects.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/transportation/ets/future-lrt-projects.aspx)

#### **Will the \$70 million in funding available for GreenTRIP through the province's 2010-11 budget all go toward the City of Edmonton project?**

Yes. The project has incurred eligible costs to the extent that all of the \$70 million available for GreenTRIP through the 2010-11 provincial budget has been provided to the City of Edmonton.

#### **How much funding will GreenTRIP provide for the Edmonton LRT-NAIT extension project?**

The City of Edmonton will receive a GreenTRIP grant of two-thirds of the estimated eligible project costs, or up to a maximum of \$497 million for the project. The City of Edmonton's final grant amount will be based on the actual eligible costs at the time of project completion.

#### **How will the balance of the funding be provided for the Edmonton LRT project?**

The remaining payments will be allocated to the City as progress on construction is made.

### GreenTRIP program

#### **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.)

### **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.

### **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.

### **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>.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **What is the status of the other applications the Alberta government received?**

Alberta Transportation is currently reviewing the applications. These can be very complex public transit projects, so the department will exercise due diligence in reviewing the applications, but will also do so in a timely manner. Projects will be announced when approved.

### **When will the second round of applications for GreenTRIP be called?**

The exact date is yet to be determined. Municipalities will receive full notice prior to the second round of applications and will have sufficient time to submit their projects.

### **How can I gain additional information about GreenTRIP?**

For additional information about GreenTRIP, go to [www.transportation.alberta.ca](http://www.transportation.alberta.ca).

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