

August 8, 2011

GreenTRIP enhances public transit service in Lethbridge

Edmonton... Public transit service in Lethbridge will get a significant boost thanks to funding support from the Alberta government's Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP).

The City of Lethbridge will receive \$6.1 million through GreenTRIP to purchase 10 hybrid low-floor transit buses and five hybrid para-transit buses (minibuses with wheelchair loading capacity), and install mobile data terminals with GPS on 43 regular transit buses and 20 para-transit buses.

"GreenTRIP is beginning to make a difference in municipalities of all sizes throughout the province," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "The Alberta government places equal importance on providing support for medium-sized cities like Lethbridge, and these upgrades to the city's transit system will enhance the quality of life of residents and contribute to the city's livability."

GreenTRIP is a \$2-billion program that provides one-time capital funding to support new and expanded public transit throughout Alberta. This helps make transit more accessible, and provides Albertans with a wider range of public transit options for local, regional and intermunicipal travel.

"GreenTRIP enables communities across the province to apply for funding that will help provide residents with more options for transportation," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation. "This program is also about getting more vehicles off Alberta's roads, which will improve traffic safety and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions."

"The purchase of these new buses along with upgrades to many public transit vehicles will benefit residents and visitors to Lethbridge," said Greg Weadick, MLA for Lethbridge-West. "This project is a good example of how the province is partnering with municipalities to develop effective infrastructure solutions for Albertans."

"Thanks to the generous support from the Government of Alberta, we have the opportunity to not only provide new buses to our residents, but to also reduce our impact on the environment," said Rajko Dodic, Mayor of Lethbridge.

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

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.

Backgrounder: Lethbridge transit projects and GreenTRIP program

Media inquiries may be directed to:

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Lethbridge transit projects and GreenTRIP program

Lethbridge transit projects

What is the total estimated cost of purchasing 10 hybrid low-floor transit buses and five hybrid para transit buses, and installing mobile data terminals with global positioning systems on 43 regular transit buses and 20 para-transit buses?

The City of Lethbridge has estimated the total cost to be about \$9.2 million. For additional information, contact John King, Senior Manager of Transit Projects and Studies, City of Lethbridge, 403-320-3156.

How much funding will GreenTRIP provide to the City of Lethbridge?

The City of Lethbridge will receive a GreenTRIP grant of up to \$6.1 million -- two-thirds of the estimated eligible cost of the 15 new transit buses and the mobile data terminals with GPS for 63 transit vehicles. The final grant amount the municipality will receive will be based on the actual eligible cost of these purchases.

How will the GreenTRIP funding be allocated for the project?

GreenTRIP funding is allocated on a "pay-on-progress" basis and the payments will be allocated to the city as progress on the purchases 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); 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.

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.

How can I gain additional information about GreenTRIP?

For additional information about GreenTRIP, go to www.transportation.alberta.ca.

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