

July 29, 2011

GreenTRIP expands public transit system in Fort McMurray

Edmonton... Public transit service in Fort McMurray will be expanded thanks to funding support from the Alberta government's Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP).

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo will use \$35.9 million to purchase a number of accessible low-floor transit buses for the city and build a new transit vehicle maintenance and storage garage, within the context of a larger transportation plan.

"As Alberta's towns and cities continue to grow, there will also be a rising demand for public transit," said Premier Ed Stelmach. "These projects play a vital role in promoting vibrant communities and enhancing quality of life, and GreenTRIP is key to helping municipalities meet the transit needs of Albertans now and into the future."

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.

"It is great to see communities all across the province looking at transit projects that respond to local needs and provides Albertans with more transportation choices," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation. "GreenTRIP is about getting more cars and trucks off our roads, improving traffic safety and reducing greenhouse gas emissions."

The Fort McMurray buses will be fully accessible and will incorporate fuel-efficient "clean-diesel" technologies. These buses will be used to replace aging vehicles and to provide expanded transit service within the city. The new transit maintenance and storage garage will provide an ideal facility for keeping transit vehicles up and running.

"We are very excited about this announcement," said Don Scott, Deputy Mayor of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. "This program complements our own municipal strategy to reduce our impact on the environment. Recently we announced plans to downsize our fleet of municipal vehicles, replacing older diesel engines with more fuel efficient ones and exploring alternative fuel options. These initiatives, combined with our expanded fleet of buses, will help us in our goal of becoming Canada's most sustainable municipality."

Over the duration of the GreenTRIP 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.

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: Fort McMurray public transit project and GreenTRIP program

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To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.



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Fort McMurray Public Transit Project

How much funding will GreenTRIP provide for Fort McMurray's public transit project?

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo will receive a GreenTRIP grant of two-thirds of the estimated eligible project costs, up to a maximum of \$35.9 million for the project. The regional municipality's final grant amount will be based on the actual eligible costs at the time of project completion.

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 municipality as the transit buses are purchased and progress is made on construction of the transit maintenance and storage garage.

Where can I get more information about the project?

For additional information about the project, contact Jawed Malik, manager, transit services, Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, 780-799-7475.

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 intercity 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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