

# BRIEFING

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Item # 7.2.1.

Transportation Briefing to  
Combined Meeting of Council  
2020 June 15

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## Regional Transit Update

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### PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an update on the Bow Valley Passenger Rail project.

On 09 June 2020, the Alberta government, through Alberta Transportation (AT), announced it has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) to assess the feasibility of a new passenger rail service between Calgary and Banff.

This work is not a commitment to invest in the project. A business case will be created by a consulting team selected by CIB and AT for review for investment. Administration will continue to provide input to help guide project outcomes.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### Background

On 2019 February 27, the Town of Banff released the Calgary-Bow Valley Mass Transit Feasibility Study which reviewed the possibility of introducing a mass transit service between the Calgary area and the Bow Valley. The study reviewed:

- Bus and rail options;
- High-level infrastructure and fleet requirements;
- An operations plan; and
- A regulatory framework for the introduction of mass transit.

The study confirmed that mass transit (bus and rail) is feasible; however, capital and operating costs are significant. A copy of the full report can be found at <https://banff.ca/1029/Mass-Transit-Feasibility-Study>

#### Principles

While The City of Calgary supports mobility choices to the Bow Valley, competing priorities within Calgary do not currently make it feasible to provide capital and operating support to the bus and rail options outlined in the report.

In 2019, IGA2019-0669—Bow Valley Mass Transit Feasibility-Next Steps, presented two-principles to guide Administration's participation:

#### Advocacy Principles:

1. Mass transit between Calgary and the Bow Valley should not compete with existing and future infrastructure projects and funding in Calgary; and
2. The project should benefit Calgarians from a triple-bottom-line (social, environmental, economic) perspective.

In addition, the passenger rail should not negatively impact Calgary's current and future transit service offerings.

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## Next Steps

CIB and AT have engaged a consulting team to assess the technical and commercial feasibility of passenger rail service between Calgary International Airport and Banff via downtown Calgary. The outcome of this work will be to develop a business case that will help inform and determine CIB and AT investment in this project.

Work will include:

- Refinement of the existing feasibility study refinement of the existing feasibility study between downtown Calgary and Banff; and
- Development and refinement of the alignment and it's feasibility between Calgary International Airport and downtown Calgary via the Nose Creek right of way.

Administration will continue to monitor route development and assess the impacts of transit ridership and connections to the airport.

This work is outside the scope of the Calgary Metropolitan Region Board (CMRB). Members may be engaged specific to their interface along the corridor.

Calgary Transit will continue to provide input and participate in the ongoing discussions to shape and provide input on mobility options between Calgary and the Bow Valley. There is still no commitment from The City of Calgary, just information sharing for this study.

Once the business case has been developed and shared with Administration, Administration will provide an update to Council which is estimated for the end of Q3 2020.