

ROUTEAHEAD UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the status of strategic, operational and innovation areas with respect to RouteAhead, the 30-year Plan for Transit in Calgary. Key elements of this update include information on the progress of infrastructure development, operational updates, and a scan of the changing landscape for public transit.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Transportation and Transit recommend that Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2016 MARCH 16:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report TT2016-0193 be approved.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the 2013 January 14 Combined Meeting of Council, report TT2012-0833, *RouteAhead: A Strategic Plan for Transit in Calgary*, was approved with the recommendation that Council direct Administration to prepare an annual status report on implementation of RouteAhead.

At the 2014 January 13 Combined Meeting of Council, report TT2013-0799, *RouteAhead Update*, was approved with the recommendation that "Council direct Administration to provide another RouteAhead update in 2014 December."

At the 2014 December 17 Combined Meeting of Council, report TT2014-0917, *RouteAhead Update*, was approved.

There is no Council direction to report back annually on RouteAhead progress.

BACKGROUND

In 2011, City Council directed that a new long-term plan for Calgary Transit be created in accordance with the Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP). The RouteAhead strategic plan was developed to guide both operations and investment in transit over the next 30 years. The plan was approved by Council on 2013 March 04. RouteAhead establishes a clear vision for transit in Calgary and will be used by City Council and Calgary Transit to make informed decisions regarding customer-centric improvements, investments in capital and operating budgets, impacts of fare adjustments, service changes and other major business decisions.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

This report provides an update on progress under the following categories: *strategic development*, *operations update*, and *looking forward*.

Strategic Development

Significant progress has been made in bringing rapid transit projects closer to reality.

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A funding, delivery and staging strategy is being implemented to address demand on the Green Line corridor. A quarterly update report on the Green Line is included in this SPC on Transportation and Transit agenda (TT2016-0220). In addition, in 2014 Council approved Provincial Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) funding to be used as matching funds for a Provincial Green Transit Incentives Program (GreenTRIP) funding proposal that includes the following projects:

- Light Rail Transit (LRT) Traction Power: Four-car Train Upgrades
- North Crosstown BRT
- South Crosstown BRT
- Southwest Transitway
- 17 Avenue Southeast Transitway

The Province of Alberta announced the award of funding for these projects in 2015 September. Attachment 1 provides a progress update on the status of these projects and other future rapid transit projects that are identified as 10-year projects in the RouteAhead plan.

Our Customer Commitment was released in 2015 September. Information is presented on the Calgary Transit website at <http://www.calgarytransit.com/customer-commitment>.

To be transparent and accountable to our customers, we are measuring and publicly reporting on our performance in these six qualities of service:

- Safe - we'll plan, design and operate a safe transit system;
- Reliable - we'll provide a dependable transit service by minimizing delays and being on time;
- Helpful - we'll provide a service that is friendly and helpful;
- Informative - we'll provide customers with accurate, consistent and timely information;
- Easy to Use - we'll make it easy to get around Calgary; and
- Clean - we'll keep our vehicles, stops and stations clean.

Operations Update

Updates are highlighted below under the appropriate Customer Commitment headings.

Safe: 2015 saw milestones reached in fare compliance (98.3% of CTrain passengers with proof of payment, the highest since the CTrain was opened in 1981) and person crimes per million riders (1.64, the lowest since data has been collected starting in 2003). These are a result of investments made as part of Action Plan, such as the hiring of 19 Peace Officers in 2014.

Reliable: Significant investments in CTrain reliability are being made as part of a broad strategy to improve reliability. These include the following:

Infrastructure	Light Rail Vehicles
Traction power upgrades	Wheelchair access ramp improvement
Signal system upgrades	Brake upgrades
Track switch investments	Motor upgrades
Track switch monitoring pilot	U2 (older CTrains) life extension and SD-160 mid-life rebuilds

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Automated inspection	Door adjustments to reduce faults
Elevator/escalator preventative maintenance	Video monitoring of pantographs

Helpful: City administration initiated a single-entry process for subsidy programs in 2015 under the Fair Entry Program (fairentry@calgary.ca), simplifying the process required to apply for low-income transit fares and other City subsidy programs.

Informative: Administration will be promoting awareness of the Customer Commitment indicators using available advertising space in the Spring of 2016.

Easy to Use: The first of 63 new CTrain vehicles arrived in Q1 2016. Aside from improving the overall reliability of the fleet, the addition of these new light rail vehicles will improve accessibility and comfort, particularly during peak periods and special events. Calgary Transit continues to roll out more consistent wayfinding for the Red Line (South-Northwest) and Blue Line (Northeast-West) CTrain services. Calgary Transit Access vehicles are the first of Calgary Transit's services to include the new City of Calgary corporate brand, making it more clear that Calgary Transit Access is public transit service and part of The City of Calgary. In addition, per Council direction in 2015 December, 2016 transit fares remain at 2015 rates to respond to the current economic climate in Calgary.

Clean: The completion of the Spring Gardens transit maintenance facility expansion in 2015 enabled the improved efficiency of cleaning, storage and maintenance of additional buses at the Spring Gardens facility. A shelter vandalism awareness campaign was initiated in 2015 to address inconvenience and disruption from broken/damaged shelters.

Looking Forward

The decline in the price of oil and its cascading impact on economic activity in Calgary is reflected in transit ridership and revenue trends. Attachment 2 includes data and exhibits that identify the magnitude of the impact.

During economic downturns investments in capital infrastructure typically increase to dampen job losses and take advantage of construction pricing. However, accelerating capital project delivery also means accelerating the timing of the need to operate and maintain the infrastructure. As outlined in Attachment 1, there are impacts to future operating budgets associated with the accelerated delivery of rapid transit projects. If new service is not accompanied by additional funding, these operating cost impacts will result in impacts to other Calgary Transit services.

This situation is not unlike the service implementation challenges in the past few years resulting from new communities coming online in Calgary with insufficient funds for operating transit service in the new communities. Rapid growth in population, combined with additional fare discounts that were not anticipated in the development of Action Plan 2015-2018, has resulted in insufficient funding for transit service in new communities. Attachment 2 provides more detail on these service challenges.

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Calgary Transit has reviewed alternatives to using service hours per capita as the means of determining the quantity of service related to MDP and CTP goals. Measuring the achievement of Base and Primary Transit Network (PTN) levels of service (a vehicle every 10 minutes, 15 hours a day, 7 days a week) will better determine how well Calgarians are being served Calgary Transit. Calgary Transit can use these and other service design standards as the rationale for service investments. In 2016, Calgary Transit will review service design standards as part of a 10-year service plan tied to long term goals, projected growth and capital projects.

Transit project delivery has evolved in recent years to include important elements of city-building where appropriate, such as integrated land use planning through design charrettes, public art, exploration of innovative funding/financing tools (e.g. sponsorship, digital advertising), protection of existing affordable housing and identification of new opportunities, and investment in site remediation to enable transit oriented development in preferred locations.

Attachment 3 identifies other emerging trends that have an impact on public transit service delivery. Administration continues to monitor these trends and responds with both strategic and operational initiatives were appropriate.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

A letter from the Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group is included in Attachment 4. In 2015 February, the two-year term of 11 members of the group expired and 11 new members have joined the group, therefore the letter does not necessarily reflect the consensus of the new membership.

Strategic Alignment

Investments are aligned with Action Plan 2015-2018, RouteAhead, the Calgary Regional Transit Plan, and the Municipal Development Plan/Calgary Transportation Plan.

Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

Public transit options allow citizens to take part in a variety of economic and social activities. Consideration for multi-generational communities and the places where residents can transition through all stages of life ensure a long term, sustainable city fabric. The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) has outlined the public health benefits of public transit to include improved urban air quality and increased physical activity, which can lower the risk for many diseases.

The appropriate quantity and quality of transit service and complete communities attract higher levels of ridership, decreasing the economic and environmental impacts associated with urban travel. The Green Line will lead to a significant reduction in green house gases. The City of Calgary uses a wind power contract for the LRT network, enabling zero-emissions door-to-door travel in Calgary for CTrain customers.

Improving travel options in established communities makes them more attractive to residents and developers. It provides the opportunity to attract global corporations in innovative industries to promote a diversified economy in Calgary. Improving public transit in established

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communities slows the rate of urban expansion, which reduces the fiscal impact of growth and promotes integrated and sustainable development.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

2017-2018 operating budget will include additional operating funding requirements for capital projects.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

There are no capital budget implications associated with this report.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated with this report.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Provide an update on progress related to RouteAhead, a 30-year Strategic Plan for Transit in Calgary. Council provided verbal feedback during past RouteAhead updates that they would prefer measures other than service hours per capita to gauge progress.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. RouteAhead Update: Status of Capital Projects
2. RouteAhead Update: Calgary Transit Service Delivery Goals, Trends and Challenges
3. RouteAhead Update: The Changing Landscape for Transit
4. Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group Report on Activities (2015)