

## GREEN LINE PROGRAM WORK PLAN

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the work plan for the Green Line fund. The Green Line fund is a 10-year, \$52 million per year funding stream that Administration will use along with provincial and federal transit funding programs currently being pursued. The funds will be used to establish the initial segment of what will become a dedicated transitway between North Pointe (Country Hills Boulevard/Centre Street) and Seton/South Health Campus. The transitway will significantly improve capacity, reliability and travel time for transit customers along the corridor.

### ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION

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

### RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT, DATED 2014 SEPTEMBER 19:

That the Administration Recommendation contained in Report TT2014-0676 be approved.

### PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

At the Special Meeting of Council on 2013 November 25, the following motion was approved:  
"That Council:

2. Approve the recommendations from the Interim and Permanent Financing and Funding Strategy (Attachment 1, pages 97 – 102), as follows:
  - d. (ii) The \$52 million in tax room for 2015 to 2024 be used to create a dedicated transit fund (the "Green Line Fund") to build the Green Line Transitway in both North Central and Southeast Calgary as described in Calgary Transit's *RouteAhead* plan, so that other sources of funding can be used for other *RouteAhead* priorities.
  - (iii) The Administration be authorized to use the Green Line Fund as matching funds for future provincial and/or federal transit funding that is specifically dedicated to the Green Line;
  - (iv) The Administration use existing sources of working capital as a source of bridge financing for the Green Line Fund, should cash flows to the fund not match expenditures for the construction of the Green Line; and
  - (v) The Administration return to Council through the SPC on Transportation and Transit with a detailed work plan for this new transit fund no later than Q3 2014."

At the 2014 March 31 Regular Meeting, NM2014-14 (Councillors Carra and Keating) was approved as follows:

"NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council direct Administration to hire a consultant to work collaboratively with Administration on SETway vision and objectives, TOD scoping and planning in conjunction with the Pre-Design and other applicable processes and also undertake community-based visioning with the impacted neighbourhoods and stakeholders.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation and Transit no later than October 2015 with the associated

## **GREEN LINE PROGRAM WORK PLAN**

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functional plan amendments regarding any potential alignment and station location modifications including additions and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Planning and Urban Development with TOD area plans and the associated policy amendments and/or replacements.”

Also, on 2014 July 21 at its Combined Meeting, Council directed Administration to make an application to the Building Canada Fund for the following additional options for funding should the Province decide to make a matching contribution towards the Green Line Transitway:

- 1) Extend the Green Line Transitway from Douglas Glen to Mckenzie Towne,
- 2) Extend the Green Line Transitway from 78th Ave N to North Pointe,
- 3) Extend the Green Line Transitway from Mckenzie Towne to the South Seton Hospital,
- 4) Construction of the Green Line Transitway Bus Maintenance Facility.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Green Line is identified in RouteAhead, a 30-year strategic plan for transit in Calgary, as a transitway between North Pointe in north central Calgary to Seton in the southeast, with future extensions to the north possible in the longer term. The Green Line will ultimately become an LRT line, complementing the existing Red Line and Blue Line. Implementation of bus-based transitway infrastructure on the Green Line will occur within the next 10 years based on Council's approval of funding as outlined in Investing In Mobility.

Council approved \$10 million for a preliminary design and \$2 million for TOD planning for the Southeast Transitway portion of the Green Line. As a result, Administration is advancing through the preliminary design stage on the infrastructure between downtown and Seton (the Southeast Transitway).

Administration is also completing the North Central LRT study, which includes the route from Beddington Trail south through the downtown to connect to the Southeast LRT. Upon receiving approval from Council on a recommended alignment for the North Central LRT, anticipated in 2015 January, Administration will begin a functional planning study for the bus-based transitway between downtown and North Pointe (the Centre Street Transitway). This functional planning study will include a review of the short-term connection in the downtown between the southeast and north central services. Subject to Provincial review and approval, funding for this functional planning study will come from Provincial grants used for transportation planning studies.

A related report specifically addressing transit oriented development (TOD) planning for the Green Line was presented to the SPC on Planning and Urban Development (PUD2014-0675).

A related report addressing the cost-benefit analysis of the Green Line Transitway extensions is being presented to the SPC on Transportation and Transit (TT2014-0690) on the same day as this report.

A related report addressing implementation of transit priority infrastructure in the Centre City (TT2014-0134) was approved by Council at the 2014 March 10 Combined Meeting of Council. Council approved Administration's request to study transit priority infrastructure, including transit-only lanes that would benefit transit customers travelling in and through the Centre City.

## **GREEN LINE PROGRAM WORK PLAN**

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These improvements would also benefit the Green Line Transitway by providing transit vehicles with priority along the most congested part of the route.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

The work plan schedule for the Green Line is identified in Attachment 1. Details regarding the Southeast Transitway preliminary design and next steps are included in Attachment 3. Details regarding the North Central LRT Route Planning Study and next steps in the Centre Street corridor are outlined in Attachment 4.

In response to concerns expressed by Council regarding the timeline for delivery of infrastructure, Administration has identified a package of projects identified in Attachment 2 as “Quick Wins”. These projects do not require land acquisition and are located in areas along the current BRT 302 route, where travel time delays are occurring. In some cases, financial contributions have been made to the projects by developers in the area. The projects will result in significant improvements to reliability and travel time in Southeast Calgary and can be delivered quickly. Administration is requesting Council approval of capital and operating budget for these improvements at the mid-year budget adjustments at Priorities and Finance Committee (PFC) in 2014 September.

With regards to the full Green Line Transitway, Administration has accounted for the risk that no additional funding is available from Provincial and Federal sources. Segments on the entire line will be reviewed in detail from a cost-benefit perspective in the event that insufficient funding is received, and phasing of improvements can be introduced. Bus-based transitway infrastructure offers flexibility in this regard that light rail transit does not; buses can move from segments of transitway to in-street operation where required.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Public engagement has been conducted along the Green Line as part of recent planning projects (North Central LRT Route Study and Southeast Transitway Scoping Study). Engagement will continue as outlined in detail in Attachments 2 and 3 in coordination with related programs (e.g. Corridors Program).

### **Strategic Alignment**

The Green Line is identified as part of the RouteAhead 30-year Strategic Plan for Transit in Calgary. The RouteAhead plan is aligned with the policy direction and strategic goals of the Municipal Development Plan and Calgary Transportation Plan, the 2020 Sustainability Direction and Council’s Action Plan priorities. RouteAhead was developed in coordination with Investing in Mobility to ensure strategic alignment within the Transportation Department capital plans. The identification of priorities in this report is consistent with the Growth Management Framework and the balance of growth between established communities and new green field communities.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

The Green Line will contribute directly to The City’s social, environmental and economic goals. Infrastructure investments that facilitate the more compact development patterns contained in the Municipal Development Plan will mitigate risks to The City and taxpayers by minimizing increases in capital and operating costs, while still accommodating population and employment

## **GREEN LINE PROGRAM WORK PLAN**

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growth. Extending the Green Line infrastructure will improve social outcomes through health benefits from reduced emissions and physical activity such as walking and cycling. There will be increased safety in some areas by facilitating more 'eyes on the street'. Investing in transitways also supports Calgarians who rely on public transit as their primary mode of transportation.

Improving travel options in established communities makes them more attractive to live in and provides development opportunities in the city. This in turn can slow the rate of urban expansion, which then reduces the associated loss of natural habitat and agricultural land. The longer extents of transit infrastructure help create complete communities in suburban areas. Build-out of the Green Line as a rapid transit corridor tied to the Centre City will also help to attract and retain international investment and in-migration in a competitive world market.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### **Current and Future Operating Budget:**

This report has no immediate operating budget implications.

#### **Current and Future Capital Budget:**

Future capital budget requests will be identified once a response is received regarding the Building Canada Fund application.

A high-level cost estimate has been identified in Investing In Mobility for the Centre Street Transitway (\$120 million). This estimate will be refined in 2015 through the functional planning process assuming the North Central LRT alignment is approved.

A Class 4 estimate of \$505 million has been developed for the Southeast Transitway. The available funds for the Green Line Program are \$520 million, resulting in a \$105 million shortfall. Administration's first funding priority is to secure BCF funds to eliminate the project shortfall. Opportunities to reduce the project scope to match the available budget will be investigated as part of the preliminary design process.

### **Risk Assessment**

There are several risks that could generate the need for alternatives to the work plan as currently envisioned. These include:

- Federal Government funding may impact the procurement options analysis
- Identification of unforeseen environmental or geotechnical obstacles
- Barriers to land acquisition (cost, time)
- Community impacts of alternative alignments
- Protracted community visioning process

These have been included in the project charter and mitigating strategies have been identified; however, all could have an impact on the schedule, cost and/or quality of infrastructure on the Green Line.

## **GREEN LINE PROGRAM WORK PLAN**

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### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The completion of a full transitway on the Green Line will take upwards of seven years due to timelines associated with alignment reviews, engineering/design, land acquisition, seasonal construction, and other factors. Implementation of “Quick Win” projects will result in short-term reliability and travel time improvements on the Green Line.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Green Line Program Schedule
2. Green Line Program Budget Allocation
3. Green Line - Southeast Work Plan
4. Green Line - North Central Work Plan
5. Green Line Transitway Funding