

Long-term LRT Expansion Fact Sheet

www.edmonton.ca/LRTprojects

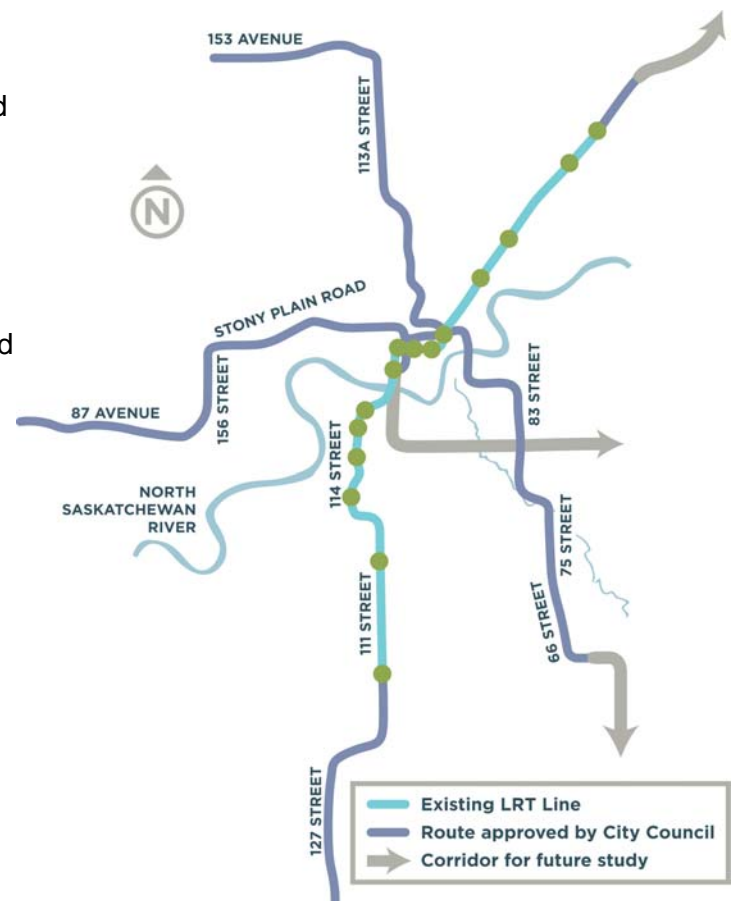
March 2011

LRT Network Plan

In June 2009, City Council adopted a long-term LRT Network Plan that defines the ultimate long-term future size, scale, and operation of Edmonton's LRT system.

The LRT Network Plan balances our long-term transportation needs with a commitment to grow green and create a compact, more integrated urban environment where roads move goods and transit moves people. Key directions within the plan include:

- Growth in outlying communities is unlikely to be sufficient to support LRT. Transit service to regional areas, where demand warrants, would be best provided in a different form such as bus rapid transit.
- LRT lines not tying into the existing LRT system will feature surface (street-level) operation and will provide convenient connections to the existing LRT system in multiple locations.
- An urban-system design should be pursued for the existing system and any new LRT lines.
- Low-floor LRT technology should be adopted for any new LRT line that does not physically tie into the existing LRT system.
- Some sectors such as the West will require premium bus service to supplement the LRT service.



Urban LRT

While the current LRT system can best be described as a 'suburban' system, the LRT Network Plan calls for a change to adopt an urban style. LRT will continue to operate on dedicated right-of-way, it will not mix with traffic, and LRT will have priority at intersections. However, the urban approach brings other changes that improve connections between the LRT and city life.

An Urban LRT system means:

- Building smaller scale stations that are spaced closer together than you see on the existing LRT system.
- Integrating LRT with the surrounding area by providing better links to a greater number of destinations, and providing more direct transit, pedestrian and cyclist connections.
- Integrating visual elements that minimise intrusion and maximise openness of space to create a safe environment.
- Respecting communities. The LRT would operate with reduced speeds in congested areas, allowing LRT to fit and operate safely in pedestrian-oriented communities with reduced right-of-way and fewer barriers.
- Investing in aesthetics to fit within an urban environment. This includes features such as landscaping, streetscaping, and architectural features like street furniture. Opportunities to use embedded track instead of traditional rock ballast and railway ties will be explored to improve visual appeal.



Introducing Low-floor LRT

As the West, Southeast and East LRT lines develop, new low-floor LRT technology will be used. Passengers will be able to connect to the high-floor LRT system. This will preserve the City's ability to increase frequency of service on the existing system.

Urban Low-Floor LRT in North America



Minneapolis



Portland



Phoenix

Bringing Urban LRT to Edmonton's High-Floor System

Edmonton's current LRT vehicles use a high-floor technology, which was state-of-the-art when LRT was first introduced. This technology will continue to be used on the Northeast, South and future Northwest LRT lines. However, changes can be expected over time on the existing LRT system to incorporate urban LRT characteristics, including adding stations as redevelopment and ridership potential increase. The North LRT to NAIT extension will incorporate some features of urban LRT by putting a greater emphasis on architectural features and urban design.

North LRT to NAIT



LRT on 105 Street between 107 Avenue and 108 Avenue. A canopy is planned to preserve the large Elm trees on this street, to help maintain the character of the existing residential community.



Plans for the MacEwan LRT Station integrate pedestrian, cyclist and walk-up connections to planned high-density development. The public plaza areas surrounding the station will add new amenity space to the community.

Urban High-Floor LRT in North America



San Diego



Denver



Calgary

Regional Connections

LRT is a vital part of an overarching Regional Transit Plan. Logical end points for the LRT network may evolve over time; however, analysis considering long-term regional population and employment growth provides a good indication of the extent of each segment and logical destinations. A full build-out scenario of LRT to the entire region was reviewed, but found a region-wide LRT network is not practical because there are limits to the length of the LRT routes when considering vehicle speed, distance and infrastructure costs. Urban centres within the region that are a significant distance from Edmonton would be better served by other transit solutions such as bus rapid transit and inter-municipal transit with interchange/transfer points to the LRT system.

Central Area Circulation

The LRT Network Plan also calls for the development of a Central Area LRT Circulator that will connect the downtown core to high activity areas near the University and Old Strathcona areas. Future study will be required to define how this would cross the North Saskatchewan River and connect through Old Strathcona to the future Southeast LRT line.

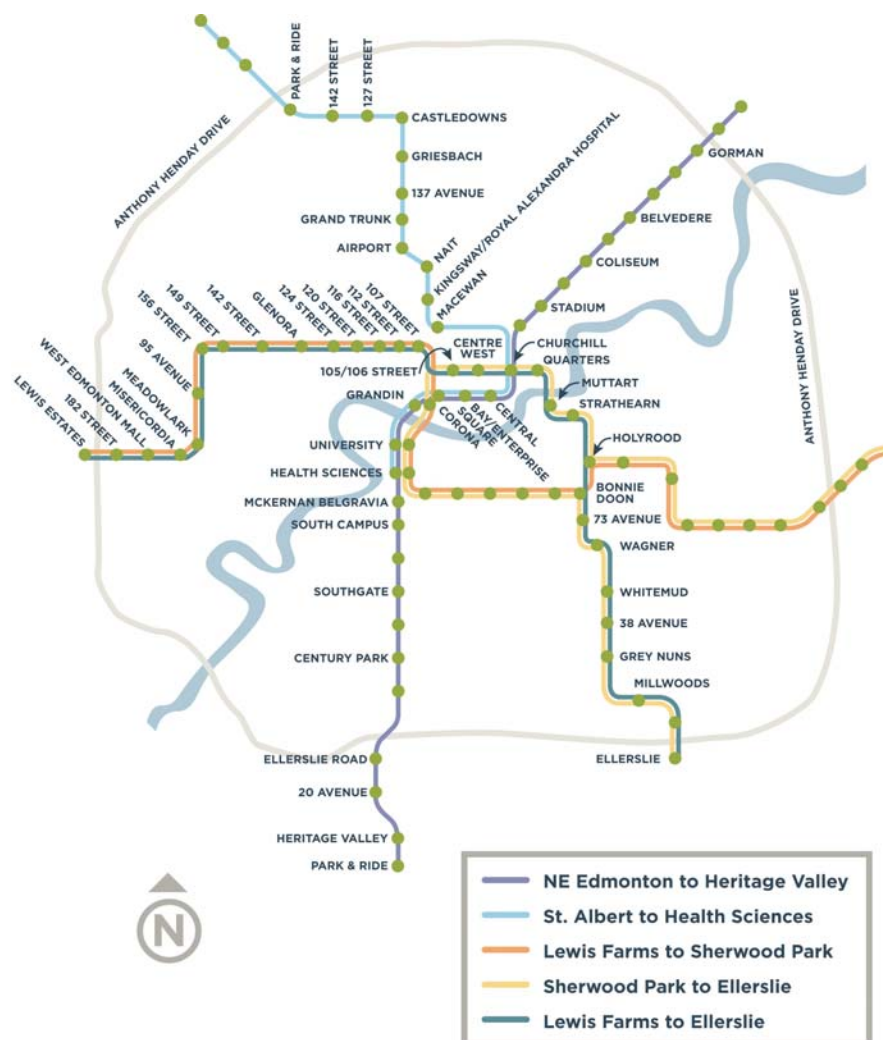


Figure illustrates the potential build out of Edmonton's ultimate LRT network.

Priorities

Expanding the LRT system is a key priority for the City of Edmonton. The North LRT to NAIT is the next priority for LRT expansion. Anticipated to be completed by 2014, the 3.3 km line will connect the Churchill Station in downtown Edmonton to new LRT stations at Grant MacEwan University, the Royal Alexandra Hospital and Kingsway Mall, and NAIT. On February 3, 2010, City Council passed a motion to make the combined West and Southeast LRT lines the next priority after, or concurrent with, the North LRT to NAIT.

For more information: www.edmonton.ca/LRTprojects, 780-496-4874, LRTprojects@edmonton.ca.