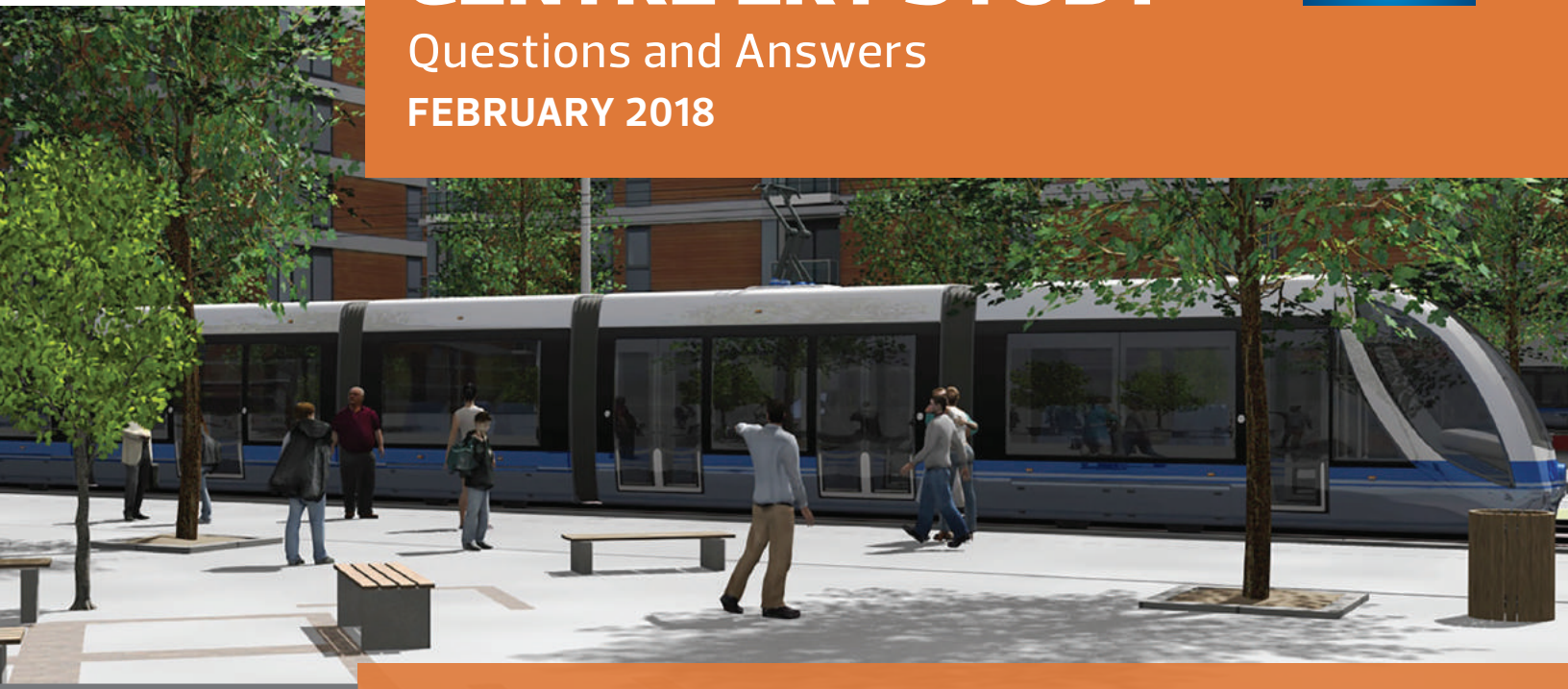


CENTRE LRT STUDY

Questions and Answers

FEBRUARY 2018



Why LRT?

LRT is about more than a transportation choice, it transforms cities. LRT helped transform Edmonton from a small to large city, and will help us as we continue to grow. LRT is an investment in our future: the development of a modern, globally competitive city with a transportation system that meets the needs of a diverse, dynamic and growing population.

As Edmonton grows, so does its transportation needs. The population continues to increase but there are space limitations that restrict most roadways from getting wider. We need alternative, more efficient ways of moving through the city. LRT is part of the solution by providing another transportation choice. An LRT line can carry the equivalent of eight lanes of traffic, per direction, which is like removing up to 5,000 cars off the road network in a single peak hour.

How will LRT fit within the limited right-of-way along Whyte Avenue?

While Whyte Avenue was the preferred route from both a technical and public perspective, there will be trade-offs to be considered to operate LRT along this corridor, including for example, parking lanes, travel lane widths, and the centre treed median.

A focus of the LRT study is to maximize the people carrying capacity of the route. LRT will aid in removing cars from the roadway as people make other transportation choices. Further traffic studies will be conducted to determine how Whyte Avenue and other roadways will be impacted by LRT to determine how other roadway and signal improvements can aid traffic flow this highly congested area.

Why is this proposed LRT route necessary?

The route will provide the east-west connection that completes the core of the LRT Network Plan, approved by City Council in 2009. With connections to the Valley Line both Downtown and in Bonnie Doon, it will create opportunities for seamless or one transfer connections to all quadrants of the city.

Is an LRT necessary? Can't buses meet the need?

The LRT line is projected to have ridership levels that are well beyond the capacity of a bus rapid transit (BRT) system. A BRT could use a similar amount of space, but it would provide a lower passenger capacity. As well, as ridership grows it would need to be replaced by LRT, which would be more difficult, have higher costs and significantly impact the transit riders using the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.

During peak hours on this route, the LRT could transport approximately 7,000 people per hour; a BRT system would transport approximately 1,000 people during the same period.

Why is the High Level Bridge not being considered as the river crossing for this LRT route?

While the High Level Bridge was the preferred river crossing, a 2017 feasibility study determined with or without extensive upgrades, there would be significant risk related to the additional load of LRT trains. A full replacement for the bridge would be required to accommodate all potential uses. Replacing the High Level Bridge in its current configuration would come with significant construction impacts, including but not limited to road closures on both sides of the river. It is not being recommended. As well, due to the bridge's historical designation (Municipal Historic Resource 1995), the required modifications would not be permitted.

Why is the new bridge location between the High Level Bridge and the Dudley B. Menzies bridge?

The bridge is proposed to be located between the High Level Bridge and the Dudley B. Menzies bridge as the location will help minimize the new bridge's impact on the sightlines of the High Level Bridge. This location also provides more opportunities to create the connections on both the north and south of the river without having any major traffic or land impacts.

Why doesn't the route end at the Health Sciences station (114 Street) and eliminate the need for a new bridge?

Terminating the route on the south side of the river wouldn't provide the opportunity to connect riders to the wider LRT network, which would reduce the opportunity for journeys without transfers, which would reduce ridership and therefore the effectiveness of the LRT route overall.

In addition, an interchange at University Station would increase passenger demand on the existing LRT into the downtown, the part of the system that is already highly used.

Will the new LRT route be located at street level or above or below ground?

Urban-style LRT operates at street level to be easily accessible for riders. The route will function as a street level service; however, some segments may require a grade separation above or below ground for efficient operation and to minimize traffic impacts. This will be determined during the next phase of the study.

When will the new route be constructed and operated?

This route is in its early stages of planning and many years of study and engineering are necessary before construction can begin. Construction timing will be determined by City Council priority and available funding, and operation would be a minimum of 10 years away.

Once the concept plan is completed (end 2018), the information will be available to assist City Council to determine what LRT will be constructed next. The Valley Line Southeast is currently under construction and the Valley Line West extension to Lewis Farms and the extension of the Metro Line from NAIT to Blatchford, have already been identified as the next priorities.

Why does the preferred route not extend east past Bonnie Doon?

The study identified the need to conduct additional work to better understand neighbourhoods and land use development in east Edmonton to determine the potential for LRT, therefore a preferred route will not be identified east of Bonnie Doon within the current study.

What measures will be in place to ensure pedestrian safety without gates and barriers, in all areas of the city, but especially on campus?

The LRT will operate at a slow speed in high pedestrian areas, such as the University of Alberta North Campus. Highly trained drivers are also able to stop the trains quickly in an emergency situation.

Safety is of the highest priority, the design of stops will be open, with clearly marked pedestrian/ passenger area and access routes. They will be well-lit and include security cameras and an emergency phone to provide a safe environment for passengers.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic interactions will be designed to minimize conflict and clearly define how and when each cross to ensure the safety of all.

Will this LRT route include bells, crossing arms and other barriers?

This route's low-floor, urban-style system operates within posted road speeds and with traffic signals, and therefore is not anticipated to require bells, crossing arms, barriers or other significant infrastructure.

How many people can each LRT vehicle hold?

Although the specific LRT vehicle won't be selected until later phases of the route development, it is anticipated that each LRT vehicle would carry a total of up to 300 people. Two cars could be coupled to increase capacity.

Why does this route need to cross into the downtown?

The current high-floor LRT lines, Capital and Metro, provide direct access to downtown, the University of Alberta and surrounding area. The new LRT route when complete, including a new crossing of the river would also provide this connectivity for the low-floor network. Creating the opportunity to provide transit to passengers on either the high or low-floor system, with direct access to downtown, the University of Alberta and surrounding area, removes the need to transfer between LRT lines. It will also provide additional passenger capacity across the river between these locations, which will be needed in the future to meet passenger demand.

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