

Moving Forward: Transit Future Bright in the Edmonton and Calgary Regions

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By Ruby Gill, Communications & Marketing Advisor

Collaboration key to Alberta transit and mobility

Two meetings between the [Calgary Regional Partnership \(CRP\)](#) and the [Capital Region Board \(CRB\)](#) are setting the groundwork for the future of transit in Alberta.

Through future regional and provincial meetings, many collaborative opportunities await.

Intermunicipal transit plays a significant role in the next fifty years of mobility within and between our communities.

Through ongoing Joint Policy Workshops, CRP and CRB are leading the way in evolving transit policy for the next several years.

At the December 4th workshop in Red Deer, the discussions centred on establishing province-wide transit guidelines and sharing previously learned lessons.

Watch attendees talk about workshop highlights:

Dorian Wandzura, GM at Edmonton Transportation Services was impressed “how closely the alignment was between the provincial agendas around accessibility, health, social policies and how those aligned with public transit policies.”

How public transit can be an avenue and vehicle to help the province deliver on their agenda items.

“The highlights that I took away was the understanding how the On-It partnership works with the Calgary region area and seeing how the municipalities collaborate together through the leadership of the CRP to put a pilot project together was quite interesting,” said Wandzura.

Why is this initiative important?

[Colleen Shepherd, CRP's Executive Director](#), states these workshops, while touching on a variety of topics, mainly focuses on transportation.

“Sustainable funding and land use planning is where the provincial and federal governments come in—these issues are just a few of the crucial topics we looked at on our March 2nd and December 4th meetings, and what we're really talking about is mobility,” said Shepherd.

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She also mentioned how “transit needs to develop as rapidly and efficiently as technology does—the CRP and CRB are looking to do that the smart way, with an intermunicipal approach where we're working with each other, pooling our resources and planning together.”

Alberta Transportation's presence was also a valued part of the workshops.

“What we have learned at the Capital Region Board,” adds [CRB Chair, Mayor Nolan Crouse](#), “Is that in order to get the most out of provincial and federal funding, with the private and public sectors aligned for an economical forward-looking system of transit, collaboration amongst our members and stakeholders is key.

So having the CRB and CRP discuss and shape policy together? It makes perfect sense, and these workshops are proving that.”

Funding for transportation

A major focus was on the future of funding: “Collectively advocating to Provincial and Federal Governments for transit funding and support is crucial to this process,” said Colleen Shepherd.

“We’ve established that the economic impact of improved transit is hugely beneficial. Planning and funding go hand-in-hand as we plan the transportation future of our regions.”

Message from the Province

Shaun Hammond, Assistant Deputy Minister at Alberta Transportation adds, “from my perspective, and the minister echoed this, I was really happy to see the level of what we call the four c’s: cooperation, collaboration, coordination and communications. Those four c’s are important to us because it sends a message that the transit constituency out there are in line and seeking the same broad outcomes respectively with transit.”

Honourable Brian Mason, Infrastructure and Transportation Minister as well as Alberta Transportation Deputy Minister Greg Bass was in attendance. Workshop attendees had the opportunity to ask questions about transit services and transportation infrastructure in the province.

“I was delighted to take part in the Regional Transit Policy Workshop with the Capital Region Board and the Calgary Regional Partnership. It gave me a chance to share our government’s vision for transit in our province, and outline the spending priorities that relate to transit in our first budget,” said Minister Mason.

He added: “The workshop also allowed me to receive feedback on the best ways to consult on this important issue, so we can develop criteria for transit funding in cooperation and collaboration with municipalities, and help support regional initiatives. I look forward to working with communities to support a modern, safe, efficient public transit network in the years to come.”