

# Valley Line LRT - Public Engagement Plan

**Recommendation:**

That LRT Governance Board recommend to City Council:

That the Valley Line LRT - Public Engagement Plan as outlined in the April 17, 2014, Transportation Services report CR\_1216, be received for information.

**Report Summary**

This information report and attachment summarize the Office of the Public Engagement and LRT Design & Construction's collaborative approach to Public Engagement and Communications for the Valley Line from the procurement stage to when the line is fully operational.

**Previous Council/Committee Action**

At the March 19, 2014, Transportation Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

3. a) develop a public engagement plan that describes how the public, including the LRT Citizen Working Group, will be involved in the procurement and construction phases of the Valley LRT Line;
- b) implement that public engagement plan;
- c) provide a report through the LRT Governance Board to City Council.

**Report****Background**

At the March 19, 2014, Transportation Committee meeting, a number of delegations made presentations to Committee regarding report CR\_650 - River Valley LRT Construction Impact Reduction. A number of the delegations spoke to the need for continued public engagement during the procurement and construction phases of the Valley Line LRT.

**Report**

The Valley Line project (Mill Woods – Downtown) is currently in its procurement stage, which involves a two staged process. The first stage is a Request for Qualifications which could be issued in the Spring of 2014. The Request for Qualifications asks for submissions from all interested teams which are evaluated on the teams experience, expertise, qualifications and financial capabilities. The City will choose the top three groups of companies forming consortia from this process, and those companies will be invited to participate in stage two of the process; a Request for Proposals which will be issued in the Fall 2014. The Request for Proposals process involves specifying design requirements (including commitments already made to the public) into a contract. These

top consortia will be announced to the public after the proponents are notified, and information relating to public engagement, will be available to the public.

The Request for Proposals process requires the consortia to make several design submissions with details on construction, operation, maintenance, and finance plans. The consortia will also make Sustainable Urban Integration submissions and provide feedback on the draft Project Agreement. The City will review the submissions from the consortia ensuring they meet and adhere to the specific design requirement laid out by the City, and that commitments already made to the public will be kept. Once all teams pass the compliance criteria, the winning team will be chosen solely on the basis of the lowest Net Present Value bid. The successful proponent is expected to be selected by the end of 2015.

Construction will begin in 2016 and will be complete by 2020. The line will be open for revenue service in 2020 - 2021, and the P3 consortium will be responsible for operating and maintaining the line for 30 years (until approximately 2050), at which time the asset will be handed back to the City.

While the City will retain overall accountability for the Communications and Public Engagement throughout the life of the project, specific responsibilities will shift to ProjectCo (the selected consortium) a short time after the successful consortium is chosen and announced. These requirements are outlined in the Request for Proposals's *Public Engagement & Communications* section.

Based on Committee's direction, Administration has developed the attached outline of an approach for Public Engagement. The following sections outline that approach.

### **Public Engagement and Communications Commitment**

The City has enshrined its commitment to Public Involvement in Policy C513. The Public Engagement Plan for the Valley Line will be developed in accordance with this Policy. Honouring this Policy includes adhering to the following commitments:

- Our Commitment to Citizen Engagement: The City of Edmonton believes that a key element of representative democracy is that people have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them.
- Our Commitment to Honouring People: The City of Edmonton Public Involvement process design will ensure people are treated with respect, honesty and integrity.
- Our Commitment to Accessible Involvement: The City of Edmonton will ensure public involvement processes are accessible to the public.

Additionally, the Valley Line Public Engagement Plan will endeavor to:

- Facilitate an open and transparent process that builds trust with stakeholders and the public.
- Provide a venue/means for two-way communication between stakeholders and the public and City of Edmonton/ProjectCo.
- Through these activities, the City will endeavour to build and maintain relationships between the People and City of Edmonton/ProjectCo.

### **Public Engagement Objectives**

The Plan will be designed to meet the following objectives:

- Ensure that commitments that were made during prior phases of the project (planning and preliminary engineering) are included in the technical Performance Requirements, Schedule 12, and the Request for Proposals document, where possible.
- Provide information about the Valley Line to stakeholders and citizens that is timely, accurate and transparent.
- Listen to all feedback received from citizens and stakeholders. The City has an obligation to capture this feedback, consider it, act where possible and appropriate, and communicate about how the feedback was considered and why it was used or not used.
- Determine what aspects of the project (during detailed design, construction, and operation) can be influenced by the public and actively seek input in these areas of interest.

### **Public Engagement Strategies**

The Plan will utilize the following strategies to ensure robust public engagement:

#### *Ongoing communication with stakeholders and the public*

- Maintain an open and transparent dialogue using a variety of media.
- Provide accurate, timely information as available and as requested

#### *Gatherings that are open to the public*

- Designed to inform citizens about current and planned activities, provide ongoing updates, describe challenges and solutions, and, in some cases, gather feedback on specific items.
- Meeting or event format and frequency will vary.

#### *Community Advisory Teams*

- Enable a small group of citizens to discuss in-depth issues of concern and to collaboratively build solutions together with the City.
- 8 - 12 community members from five geographic areas; Mill Woods, Argyll and surrounding areas, Strathearn and Bonnie Doon, Riverdale, Cloverdale, and the Quarters and surrounding downtown.
- Meets regularly until the construction is complete.

The Mill Woods and Argyll areas may be combined as the project progresses, based on historically low-interest from Area 2.

### *Issue Advisory Teams*

- Enable a small group of citizens concerned about a specific issue to discuss the issue together with the City and collaboratively build solutions (E.g.: River Valley wildlife).
- 8 - 12 community members from each of the five geographic areas, representing various interests and concerns; may also be open to citizens outside the five geographic areas.
- Teams will be created as issues arise and will only exist for the time required to address the issue.

### *Ongoing meetings with key stakeholders/groups*

- Enables key project members to address stakeholder-specific concerns and work together to share information and identify potential solutions (E.g.: Edmonton Ski Club).
- Discussions are often technical or legal in nature to address stakeholder's specific needs, so these meetings are not open to the public.

### **Policy**

- C513 Public Involvement
- Bylaw 15101 - Being a Bylaw to Establish the Transportation System for the City of Edmonton

### **Corporate Outcomes**

- Shift Edmonton's Transportation Modes.
- Edmonton has sustainable infrastructure that fosters and supports civic and community needs.
- The City has well-managed and sustainable assets and services.
- Increased Community engagement and responsibility.
- Ensure Edmonton's Financial Sustainability.
- Improve Edmonton's Livability.
- Transform Edmonton's Urban Form.

### **Public Consultation**

Administration intends to vet the Engagement and Communications Plans including topics and methods summarized here with stakeholders and the public, bearing in mind that decisions already made or approved by Council are not able to be reversed or influenced at this stage of the project.

### **Attachment**

1. Public Engagement Approach Summary

### **Others Reviewing this Report**

- T. Webb, Office of the City Manager