

Valley Line Stage 1 (Mill Woods to Downtown)

Procurement – Operation: 2014-2020

Public Engagement Approach Summary

A collaboration between LRT Design & Construction and
the Office of Public Engagement

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1. About this document

This is a summary document detailing Public Engagement methods and approaches, and will inform the final / formal Public Engagement Plan and Communications Plan.

2. About the Valley Line – project understanding

Valley Line LRT Stage 1 is a 13 km section of a low-floor urban-style Light Rail Transit (LRT) system that will connect Mill Woods to Downtown, linking to Edmonton's existing LRT system at Churchill Square.

City Council has approved the route, concept plan, and stop/station locations through a process of planning, design, and Public Engagement that began in 2009 and ended in December 2013.

The City of Edmonton, the Government of Alberta, and the Government of Canada have contributed funding for Construction, in an arrangement called a Public Private Partnership (P3). A P3 is a method of delivering public infrastructure and services through a long-term contractual arrangement between public and private entities.

Project Stages

2.1.1. Procurement - RFQ

Today, the project is in its Procurement stage, which involves a two stage process. The first stage is a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which could be issued in the Spring of 2014. The RFQ asks for submissions from all interested teams which are evaluated on the teams experience, expertise, qualifications and financial capabilities. specifying design requirements. 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 (RFP) which will be issued in the Fall 2014.

2.1.2 Procurement - RFP

This process requires the consortia to make several design submissions and detail their Construction, operation, maintenance, and finance plans. Consortia will also make Sustainable Urban Integration (SUI) submissions and provided feedback on the draft Project Agreement. The City will review the submissions from the consortia ensuring the submission meets the requirements set out in the specific design requirements, ensuring that they adhered to the design requirements as laid out by the City. This is one way the City can ensure that commitments already made to the public will be kept. Once all teams pass the minimum submission criteria, the winning team will be chosen solely on the basis of the lowest Net Present Value bid. The preferred proponent is expected to be selected by the end of the 2015.

2.1.3 Detailed Design & Construction

The final design will be completed by the winning consortium following the procurement process.

Construction will begin in 2016 and will be complete by 2020.

2.1.4 Operation & Maintenance

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.

3. Public Engagement Approach

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.

The Valley Line Public Engagement Plan is also committed to:

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

This Plan will outline the City's proposed Public Engagement approach and will be complemented by a Communications Plan. The City intends to vet the Engagement and Communications topics and methods 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.

3.1 Public Engagement Objectives

Following is a list of Public Engagement objectives that a Public Engagement Plan will be designed to achieve. They will remain valid throughout the life of the project.

- 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 RFP document, if possible.
- **Provide information** about the Valley Line to stakeholders and citizens proactively or in response to their questions. This will include increasing general understanding and awareness of project, including of this P3 process and Urban-Style Low-Floor LRT. This information should be accurate and timely, and will support an overall principle of transparency.
- **Listen** to all feedback received from citizens and stakeholders about the Valley Line, both unsolicited feedback and input solicited through engagement activities. 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** via purposefully designed engagement processes and activities.

3.2 Public Engagement Strategies

Following is a description of Public Engagement strategies that will be implemented to achieve the above-noted objectives.

- **Ongoing communication** for information-sharing and relationship management
- **Gatherings that are open to the public (format TBD)** – These events will be open to the public and will be 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. These should be held as-needed at various locations throughout the corridor.
- **Community Advisory Teams** – These Teams will be built around five areas: Mill Woods, Argyll and surrounding*, Strathearn and Bonnie Doon, Riverdale and Cloverdale, and the Quarters and surrounding downtown. Eight (8) to twelve (12) citizens representing each of these areas will be appointed to the Teams, based on their interest to participate and a public selection process. Consideration will be given to their stake in the area or overall project and their past involvement in order to achieve a breadth of perspectives.

Consideration will also be given to how to include community league, Business Revitalization Zones and Associations, and other community representation as part of these Teams.

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

These Teams will allow a small group of citizens to interact with the City to discuss in-depth issues of concern and to collaboratively build solutions. Team members will not be asked to represent their communities and act as conduits for information sharing, although they can take on these roles if they feel they are possible and appropriate. Rather, they will be asked to come to the table as thoughtful citizens with local knowledge and experience. These meetings will not be public, in order to allow for in-depth discussions and also to provide a safe environment for Team members to participate. A summary of what is discussed at these sessions and subsequent actions to address them will be presented at the public meetings and workshops. These Team meetings will be led / facilitated by an expert third-party facilitator, selected and managed by the OPE.

- **Issue Advisory Teams** – These Teams will be purpose-built to address specific issues. Eight (8) to twelve (12) citizens who have expressed concerns about a particular issue will be asked to join the Team to explore the issue in more depth, generate common understanding, and find solutions. Therefore, these Teams will be created as issues arise and will only exist for the time required to address the issue. They will meet as frequently as the Team determines is needed to effectively address the issue. Members will be drawn from the geographic areas adjacent to or near the issue, may include members that are also members of the Community Advisory Teams, and may also include members drawn from outside the five geographic areas identified above, if appropriate.

Similar to the Community Advisory Teams, this approach will allow a small group of citizens concerned about a specific issue to interact with the City to discuss the issue and collaboratively build solutions. A summary of what is discussed at these sessions and subsequent actions to address them will be presented at the public meetings and workshops. These Team meetings will be led / facilitated by an expert third-party facilitator, selected and managed by the OPE.

- **Ongoing meetings with key stakeholders / groups** – Engagement and Communication with key stakeholders such as the Edmonton Ski Club, Downtown Business Association, etc. will be ongoing throughout the project. This will allow key project members to address these specific concerns and work with the stakeholder group to provide information and identify potential solutions. There may be cases where the interests of stakeholder groups align directly with Community Advisory Teams or Issues Advisory Teams. In these cases, discussions will be held with the stakeholder group to determine the best forum for listening to their concerns, providing information, and building solutions. The decided-upon approach will be communicated to the relevant Community Advisory Teams and/or Issue Advisory Teams so that expectations are clear and duplication of efforts does not occur. These

interactions will be co-led / facilitated by an expert third-party facilitator and leadership or a subject-matter expert from LRT D&C.

Referencing the aforementioned Project Stages, Public Engagement and Communications will continue throughout the project's life. 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 a short time after the successful consortium is chosen and announced. Per these timelines, until the successful consortium is in place, the City will continue with its Communications and Public Engagement planning and activities, to provide a solid foundation for the continuation of these activities in partnership with the consortium. Public Engagement planning and implementation for the Valley Line will be led by a Public Engagement Advisor from the City's Office of Public Engagement. The Communications planning and implementation for the Valley Line will be led by a Communications Officer from the City's Corporate Communications group, who will work closely with the Public Engagement Advisor.