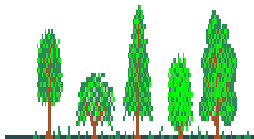


Facing the Challenges of Growth while maintaining Quality of Life

In Edmonton we can be proud of an excellent quality of life and plentiful opportunities for work and leisure. We have, for instance, the longest contiguous park system in North America. Edmonton won the “Communities in Bloom” competition in 2000. The Conference Board of Canada reports that Edmonton has the fastest growing economy in Canada. Thousands of Canadians and their families choose Edmonton to enjoy the prosperity and beauty of the region. As the city’s population increases, however, so do the challenges associated with growth. Roadway congestion, air pollution and urban sprawl threaten to erode our quality of life if we fail to advance quality transportation schemes that include effective alternatives to the private vehicle. **Public transit offers mobility solutions that can help maintain a high quality of life. It needs to be made an investment priority for Edmontonians today!**



More Cost Effective Transportation

- According to the Canadian Automobile Association, the direct costs of operating even an inexpensive new car average over \$8,000 per year in Canada.¹
- Transit systems in most Canadian cities provide an adult with year-round service for only \$500 to \$1,000 (the cost of 12 adult monthly passes)—a fraction of this cost.



Prosperous Cities

- Since the 1950’s, North American cities have sprawled steadily outward, creating ever more suburbs and increasing the infrastructure burden on taxpayers. Auto dependence, which goes hand in hand with such development, has led to greater subsidization of roadways and decreased investment in public transit.² The result is transit that is unable to perform as an effective alternative to the private vehicle.
- “Transit-friendly” policies in cities like Portland and Vancouver encourage compact and prosperous development that makes better use of existing infrastructure and protective services.²
- According to the National Transportation Research Board, compact and well-planned transit-friendly growth costs an average of 25% less for roads, 20% less for utilities, 5% less for schools, and consumes 45% less land, than sprawling growth.³



Better Health



- It is well established that pollution from vehicle exhaust aggravates asthma, reduces lung function, and increases the risk of cancer and birth defects.^{4,5}
- Investments in quality public transit can reduce the number of vehicles on city streets and lower the levels of specific air contaminants.⁶

Better for Business



- Public transit helps businesses prosper: High quality transit systems contribute to vibrant business districts, free up roadways for more efficient movement of goods and commercial traffic, and reduce the need to provide large and costly parking facilities.²
- The importance of mobility means that land in proximity to major transit lines can offer profitable opportunities for developers because it is “location efficient”.

A Cleaner Environment



- “Greenhouse gases” are contributing to a rise in global temperatures, resulting in drought, crop failures and huge economic losses. This phenomenon results largely from human activities. Motor vehicle transportation plays a significant role.
- According to the Canadian Urban Transit Association, each passenger-kilometre traveled by public transit produces about 65% fewer greenhouse gas emissions than private automobile travel. Increased investment in public transit can positively impact global warming.⁶
- Quality public transit can be electrically powered, reducing the levels of toxic exhaust emissions in our streets. Calgary’s C-Train is powered entirely by wind-generated electricity and contributes **no** additional greenhouse gases or toxic emissions to the atmosphere.⁷

But...

- **Total funding for public transit in Canada has declined almost 20% in the past five years.**⁶
- **Current levels of funding are insufficient to meet current, let alone future requirements.**⁶

Better Transit is the Answer!

Better Transit has the potential to:

- * improve our health
- * transport citizens in a more cost-effective manner
- * benefit businesses and the economy
- * lessen our impact on the natural environment
- * maintain our quality of life

To achieve this potential, transit must receive the investment funding it deserves.

To become a reality, *Better Transit* needs your voice.

Let it be heard!

How can YOU help to ensure better transit becomes a reality in Edmonton?

- Inform yourself about key issues and the benefits of improved public transit.
- Speak up – talk to friends, neighbors, colleagues.
- Write a letter to the editor.
- Call a local radio talk show.
- Contact the Citizens' Action Centre 496-8200 or cacentre@edmonton.ca.
- Join an organization that advocates for improvements to public transit.
- Become involved with the *Citizens for Better Transit*.

To find out more, visit our Web site at www.bettertransit.ab.ca.

To ensure a bright future for Edmonton, we need to commit ourselves to better transportation alternatives today!



The Society of *Citizens for Better Transit* is dedicated to promoting improved public transit as an effective transportation alternative for Edmontonians. The Society seeks to inform both the public and elected officials about the social, environmental and economic benefits of investing in quality public transportation. The Society calls on everyone to make public transit an investment priority.

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Contact Us:

Citizens for Better Transit
P.O. Box 47163
62 Edmonton Centre RPO
Edmonton, AB. T5J 4N1

E-mail: info@bettertransit.ab.ca

www.bettertransit.ab.ca

Sources: ¹Canadian Automobile Association, *Driving Costs*, 2001; Burchell, Robert W. et al., ²*Cost of Sprawl Revisited: The Evidence of Sprawl's Negative and Positive Impacts*, ³National Transportation Research Board and National Research Council, Washington, DC, 1998; ⁴Canadian Lung Association; ⁵California Air Resources Board; ⁶CUTA, *Promoting Better Health Through Public Transit Use*, 2002; ⁷Calgary Transit.

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A Wise Investment for Transportation



Citizens for Better Transit
Edmonton