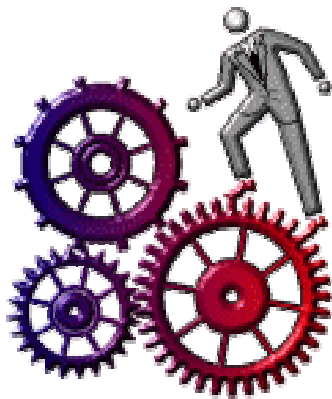


Discussions about investing more in public transit in Edmonton--including rapid transit expansion--are sometimes seen as a debate between “pro-roadway” business interests on one side and “pro-transit” environmental, seniors and community groups on the other. The reality, however, is that increased investment in public transit will benefit **everyone**--young or old; car driver, truck driver or transit user; student or businessperson. In fact, *business will gain with improved public transit!*



“We must do what we can to increase our investments in transit...Major metropolitan areas are the backbone [of national economies] and we firmly believe that their ability to expand is tied to our willingness to invest in... public transportation systems.”

—Gerald J. Roper, President of the National Business Coalition for Rapid Transit (US)⁴

Investments in *Better Transit* bring these gains for Business:

1. Better Employee Transportation



➤ Increasing traffic congestion means car commuters spend more time stuck in traffic jams. Investments in frequent service and high-quality/high-speed transit provide employees with a fast and reliable means to reach their workplaces.

➤ Transit gives businesses access to workers who do not own a motor vehicle or choose not to drive to work.

2. A Revitalized Downtown

➤ Public transportation is vital for Edmonton to continue to develop a prosperous, vibrant and attractive urban core.



➤ Quality public transit can reduce traffic and the need for expensive parking facilities, creating quieter and cleaner downtown neighborhoods.

➤ According to a study on the revitalization of city centres, upgrading public transit can contribute significantly to the revitalization of central commercial districts that have lost patronage to suburban shopping centres.¹

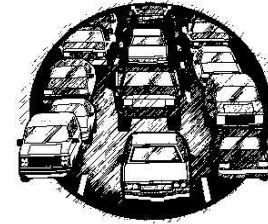
3. Lower Business Taxes



➤ According to a City of Edmonton report, automobile use in our area is subsidized by over \$700 million annually, an expense borne by businesses and taxpayers.²

➤ Expanded transit systems can transport people more efficiently and cost effectively than new roadway construction. Consider one rapid transit line can replace a six lane freeway. Saving money on roadway construction could open the door to lower business taxes.

4. Reduced Congestion for Commercial Trucking



➤ Many of today’s businesses rely on “just-in-time” supply and delivery of goods, particularly by commercial truck.

➤ With rapid suburban growth, congestion on

Edmonton’s roadways is expected to **triple** by 2020,³ meaning trucks will spend more time in standstill traffic. This will mean greater productivity losses and higher costs for businesses.

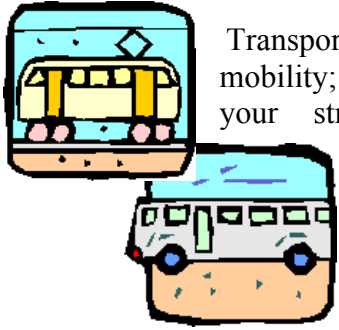
➤ The experiences in Portland, Toronto and Calgary have proven that investments in *high quality* public transit encourage commuters to choose transit over private vehicles. This frees up existing roadway space for the movement of commercial vehicles.

5. Lower Parking Costs

➤ According to published figures, the average cost to build a new employee or customer parking space in Edmonton is over \$5,300.^{2,5}



➤ High quality transit can lower development-parking requirements, allowing businesses to spend less on expensive parking facilities for both customers and employees.



Transportation is about your mobility; your community; your street; your family, friends, children and grand-children; your ability to do business; your quality of life. It's even about your health costs and the air you breathe.

Better public transit has the ability to improve many of these things. But to become a reality, it needs your voice. Let it be heard!

How can YOU help to ensure that 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 at 496-8200 or cacentre@edmonton.ca.
- Join an organization that advocates for improvements to public transit.
- Become involved with the *Citizens for Better Transit*.

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 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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Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of Environment Canada or Health Canada.

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Sources: ¹Newman and Kenworthy, *Winning Back the Cities*, 1992; ²City of Edmonton, *The True Costs of Transporting People*, 1996; ³City of Edmonton (Transportation and Streets), *Transportation Master Plan*, 1999; ⁴Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce Press Release, Apr. 17, 2002; ⁵Litman, *Transportation Cost Analysis: Techniques, Estimates and Implications*, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, 1995.

Business Gains With Better Transit



***Citizens for Better
Transit
Edmonton***