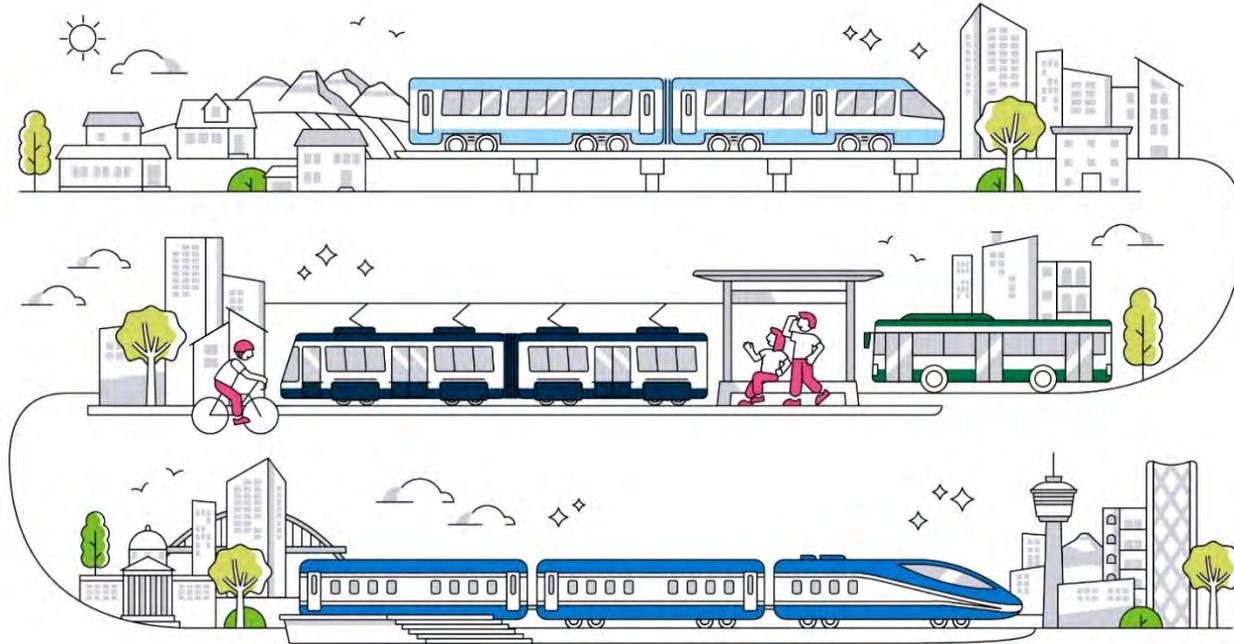


Virtual Session

June 2025

Alberta's Passenger Rail Master Plan

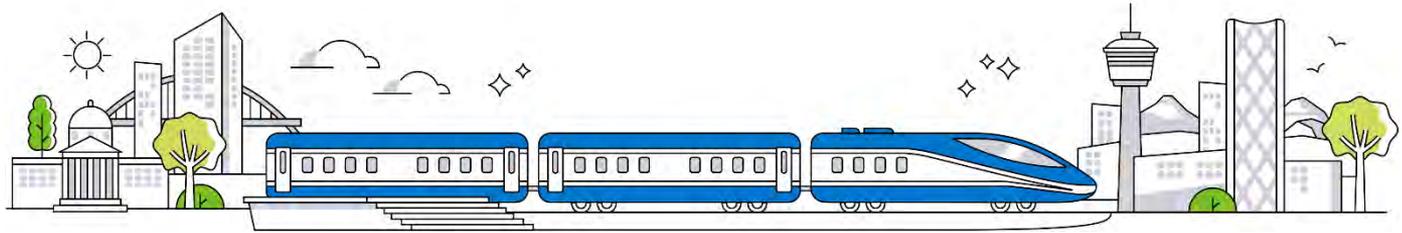




Land Acknowledgment

In the spirit of reconciliation, we respectfully acknowledge that we are on the traditional gathering place of the peoples of Treaties 6, 7, and 8. These lands have been, and continue to be, travelling routes and meeting grounds for Indigenous Peoples since time immemorial. We recognize the deep history and connection of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples with these lands, and we commit to partnership, collaboration, and friendship as we envision a shared future together.

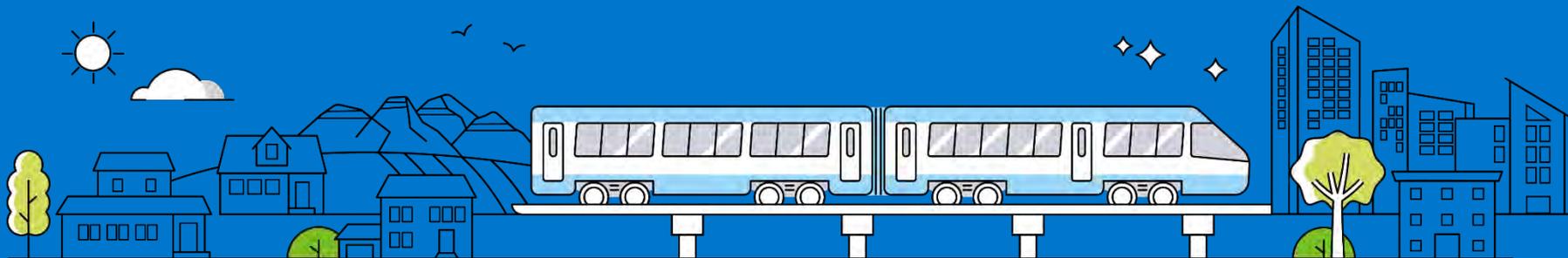
Agenda



Meeting purpose: to share information and updates on the Passenger Rail Master Plan study, and to receive feedback from community members.

- Project Team Introductions
- Background and Overview
- Engaging with Albertans
- A Future that Runs on Rails
- Next Steps
- Q & A

Project Team Introductions



Transportation and Economic Corridors

Passenger Rail Team



Rob Lonson
Acting Assistant
Deputy Minister



Chris Gentile
Acting Executive
Director,
Passenger Rail



Joshua Mackintosh
Director, Stakeholder
Engagement



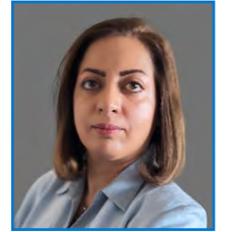
Darcy Kolodnicki
Director, Strategy



Justin Halbersma
Director, Financial

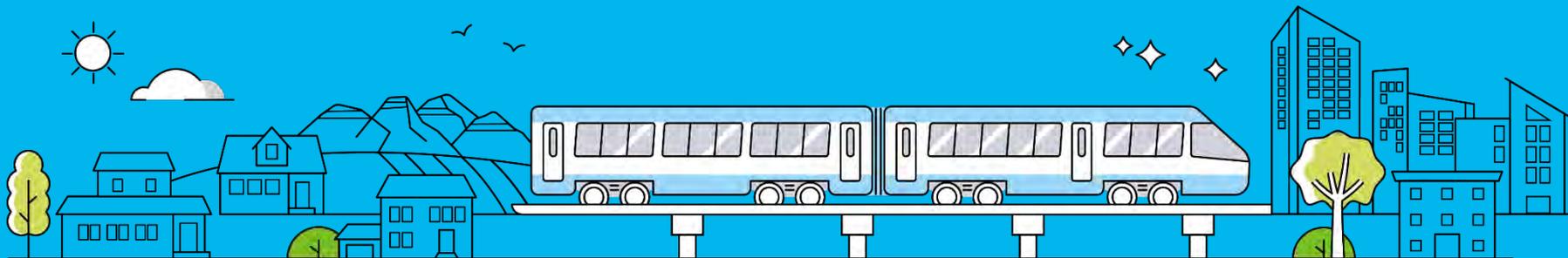


Sarah McDougall
Railway Program
Coordinator



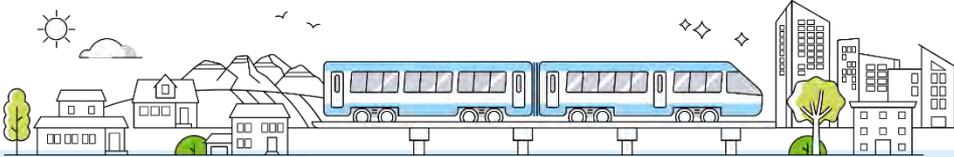
Asieh Soltani
Railway Engineering
Specialist

Background and Overview



Why We Are Here

- To share back what we have heard from engaging with Albertans.
- To confirm that what we have heard is still accurate.
- To share how we went from 60-Year Rail Possibilities to a 30-Year Network.



To learn more and
share your thoughts
after today:



Visit www.alberta.ca/passenger-rail-engagement



Email PassengerRail@gov.ab.ca

A Vision for Passenger Rail

On April 29, 2024, Premier Danielle Smith and Minister Devin Dreeshen announced an ambitious vision for advancing passenger rail for the province.

This announcement prompted the development of a **Passenger Rail Master Plan** that will look forward decades to **identify concrete actions** that can be taken now, and future actions to build the optimal passenger rail system for the province.

This work will ensure government has the required information to make decisions on the next steps to advance.



Commuter rail

A commuter rail system for the Calgary area that connects surrounding communities and the Calgary International Airport to downtown.

A commuter rail system for the Edmonton area that connects surrounding communities and the Edmonton International Airport to downtown.



Regional rail lines

A regional rail line between Calgary and Edmonton, with a local transit hub in Red Deer.

Regional rail lines between our major cities, Calgary and Edmonton, and the Rocky Mountain parks.



Crown corporation

Coordinated governance to develop the infrastructure, oversee daily operations, develop a fare collection/booking system, keep up with system maintenance, and plan for future system expansion.



Municipal-led LRT systems

Light rail transit systems in Calgary and Edmonton that connect with the provincial passenger rail system.



Multi-modal hubs

Provide links in major cities between commuter rail systems, regional rail routes, and municipal-led mass transit systems.

The Time is Right for Passenger Rail

4.8 million
people call Alberta home.

The population of Alberta could more than double in **60 years.**

As of October 2024, Alberta added close to

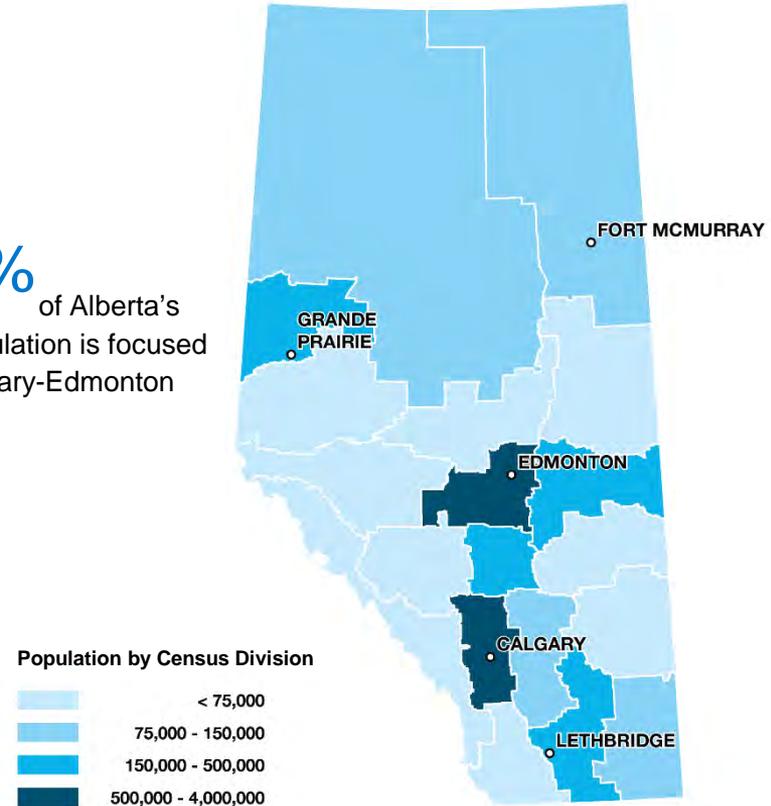
190,000
people year-over-year, equivalent to nearly double the current population of Red Deer.

Without more transportation options:

- The livability and economic development of Alberta will be constrained.
- Traffic congestion will increase with negative environmental consequences.
- Access to jobs and recreation will become more challenging.

Projected Population in 60 years

86% of Alberta's future population is focused in the Calgary-Edmonton corridor.

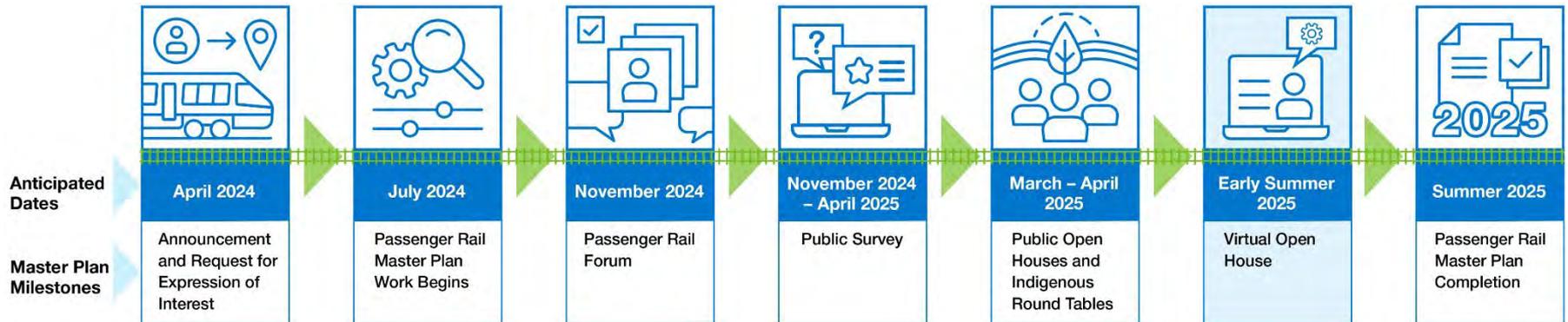


Alberta

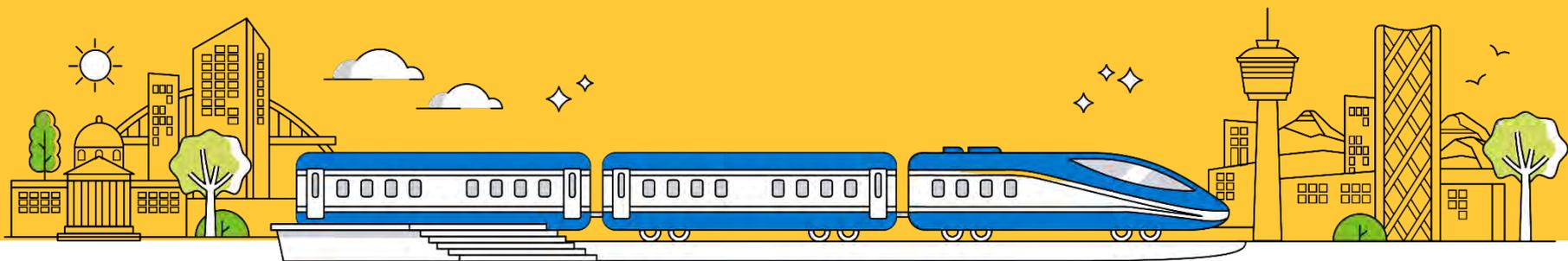
Passenger Rail Master Plan Timeline

The Passenger Rail Master Plan will look forward decades to identify concrete actions that can be taken now, and future actions to build the optimal passenger rail system for the province. This work will ensure government has the required information to make decisions on the next steps to advance passenger rail in the province, building on the strong public mass transit systems in Calgary and Edmonton.

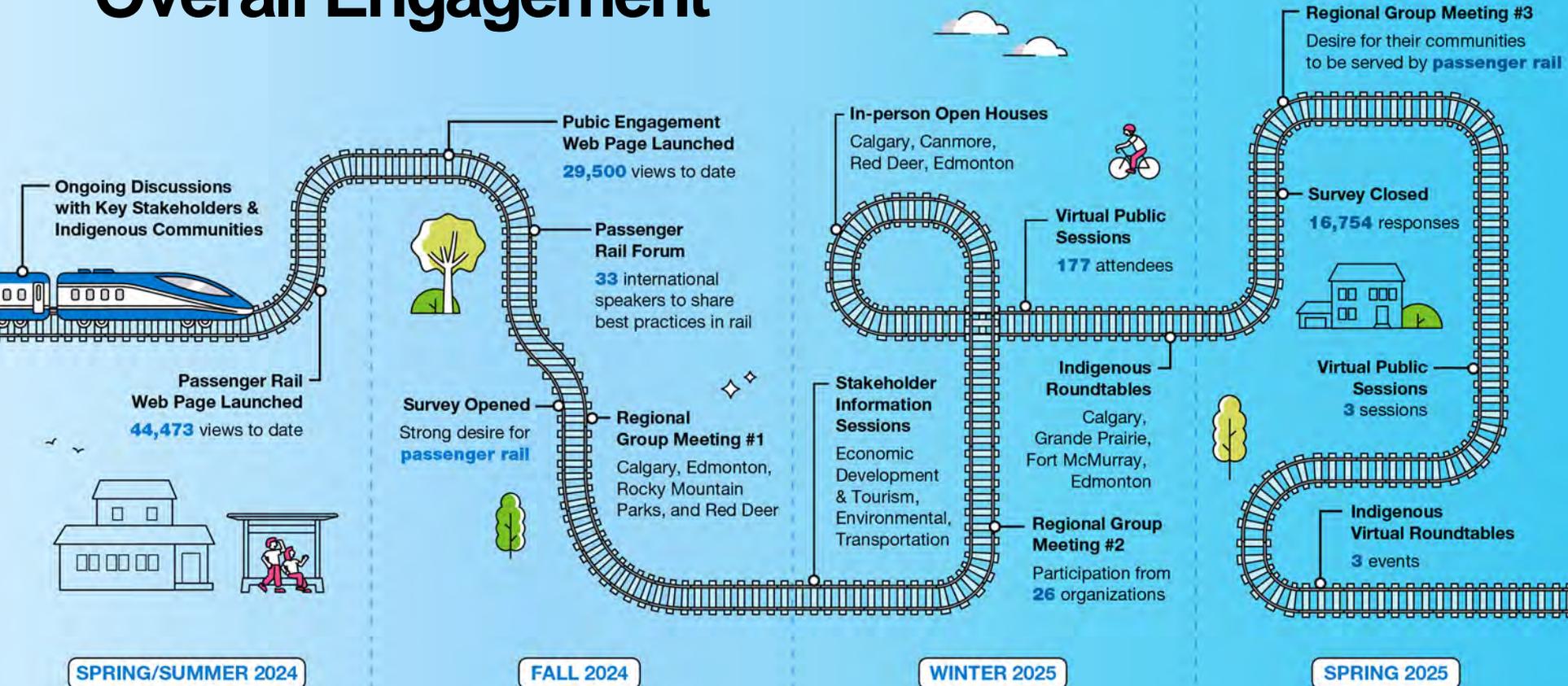
In April 2024, a procurement process was initiated for the development of a comprehensive Passenger Rail Master Plan, generating significant interest from industry and Albertans.

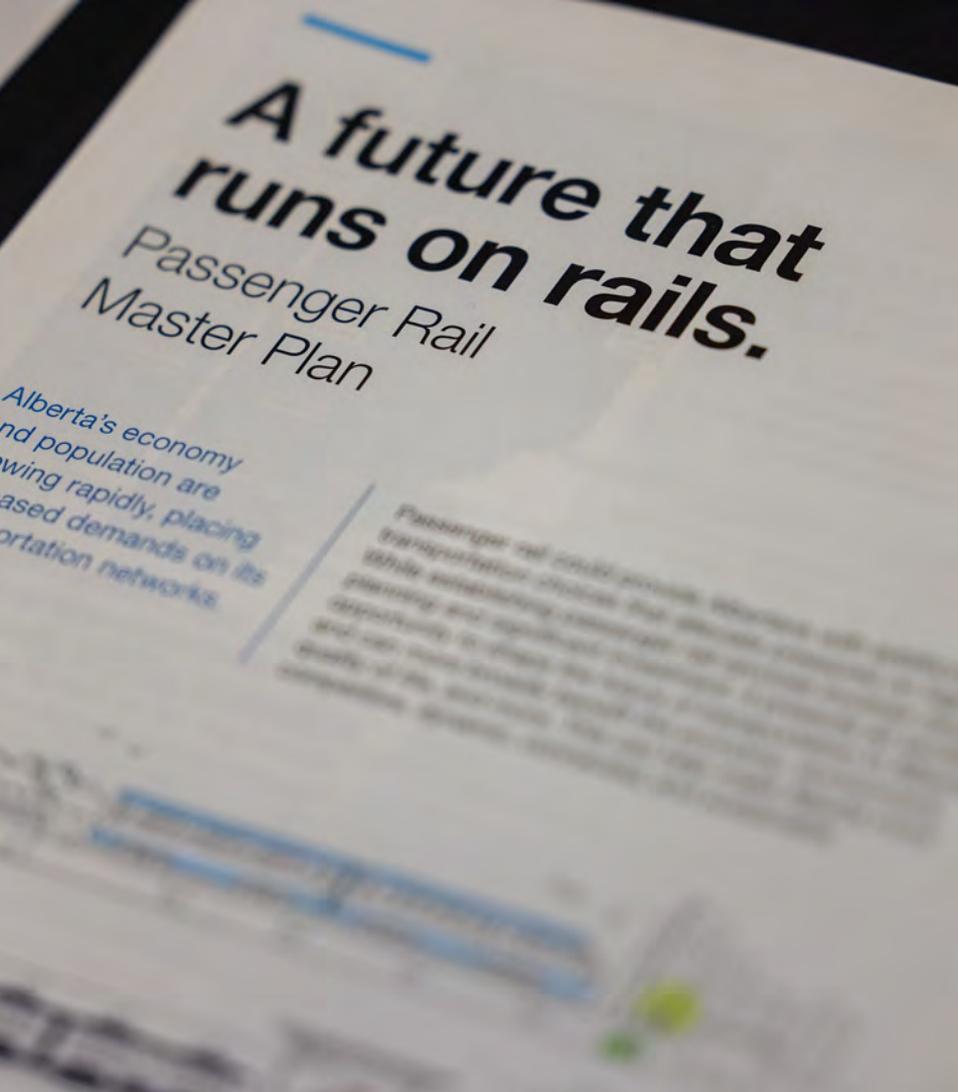


Engaging with Albertans



What We Have Done: Overall Engagement





Stakeholder Engagement

Since September 2024, the Government of Alberta has been **engaging with key stakeholders** to **gain their perspectives** on passenger rail. Group sessions and 1:1 conversations have taken place with government, associations, businesses, industry, transportation providers, landowners, and other parties with an **interest in the study**.



3 Stakeholder Information Sessions

Industry

- Economic Development & Tourism
- Environmental
- Transportation

4 Regional Groups

Regions

- Calgary
- Edmonton
- Red Deer
- Rocky Mountain Parks

What We've Learned: Public Survey

A public survey was released on

November 22, 2024

to gather thoughts and opinions of Albertans on the Passenger Rail Master Plan.



Promoted
online



and in 17
Albertan
newspapers

16,754 responses

by April 15, 2025, with a good geographic and age distribution of respondents.



91%

of Albertans who took the survey want to see passenger rail **by 2030**, including the **regional rail priorities** and **commuter rail** in and around Calgary and Edmonton.

Their top priorities are:



Rail from downtown Calgary/Edmonton to the **international airports**.



Regional rail along the **Calgary-Edmonton** corridor with a local transit hub in **Red Deer**.



The **#1** benefit respondents hope passenger rail will bring Albertans is **less traffic congestion**.

65%

want passenger rail to **support job creation and increase economic opportunities** for Albertans.

75%

think that passenger rail will **boost the tourism industry** and make Alberta a **more attractive place** for investments, businesses, and new residents.

60%

of respondents expressed hope for regional rail to **make travel more affordable**.

63%

of respondents want commuter rail to give them **access to sporting events**.



The Province is considering several delivery, ownership, and operations models for implementation of the Passenger Rail Master Plan, including partnerships with private companies.

80%

of respondents want government to be involved in the ownership and operations of passenger rail.

Alberta



Open Houses

In March and April 2025, the Government of Alberta invited Albertans to attend in-person **open houses** and a **virtual session** to learn more about the Master Plan and share their thoughts on the **60-Year Possibilities**.



4 In-person sessions

Locations

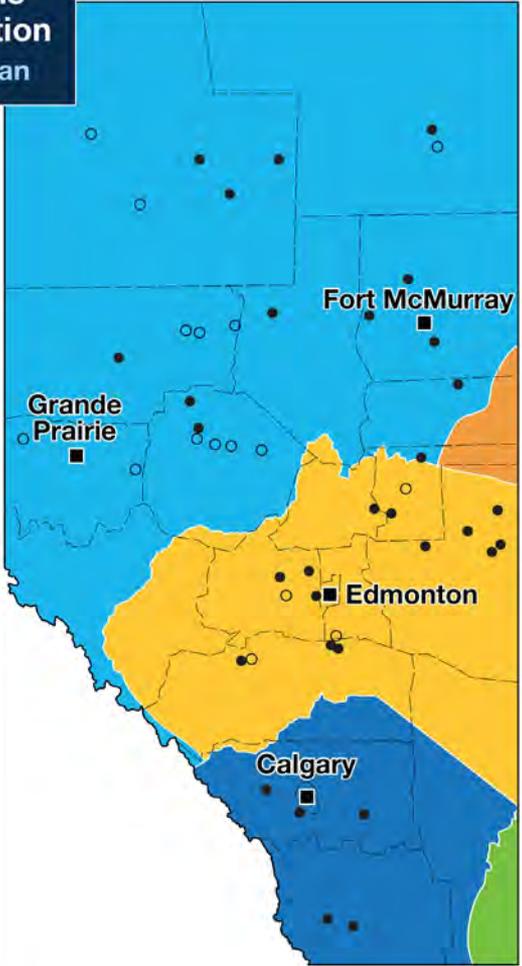
- Calgary
- Canmore
- Edmonton
- Red Deer

1 Virtual session

Online for all Albertans

**First Nations and Métis
Roundtable Participation
Passenger Rail Master Plan**

- In-Person Roundtable Locations
- Indigenous Communities (In Attendance)
- Indigenous Communities (Not In Attendance)
- Treaty 4
- Treaty 6
- Treaty 7
- Treaty 8
- Treaty 10
- Métis Nation of Alberta Districts



Indigenous Engagement

We are committed to **early engagement**, **open communication**, and **relationship building** with Indigenous communities and organizations.

In March 2025, the Government of Alberta invited Indigenous communities and organizations to attend in-person **roundtable** sessions **to learn** more about the Master Plan **and share** their thoughts on the 60-Year Possibilities.



4 In-person sessions

Locations

- Calgary
- Edmonton
- Grande Prairie
- Fort McMurray



Indigenous Roundtables

Indigenous communities and organizations want:

- Safety and environmental protection
- Economic equity
- Meaningful partnership and respect for Indigenous rights
- Tourism opportunities
- Further Indigenous engagement

How We Are Engaging: What We Have Learned

There is broad **support** for passenger rail from across Alberta.

Albertans want passenger rail **as soon as possible**.

Albertans prioritize the following two possible rail connections:

1. **Calgary and Edmonton Airports to their respective downtowns**; and
2. **Calgary to Edmonton via Red Deer**.

Albertans indicate a preference for **higher-speed rail connections** (shorter travel time); and **higher investments in rail by government** (faster development; more services).

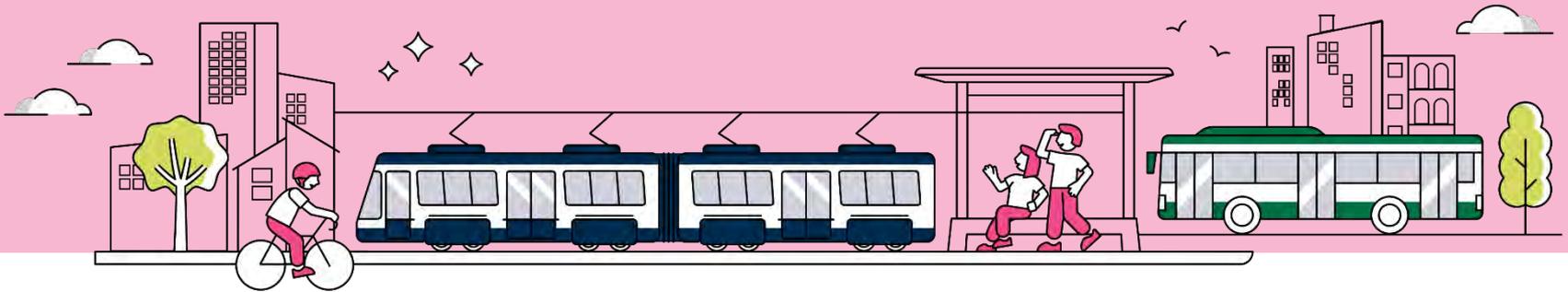
Albertans support **provincial government ownership** of infrastructure and vehicles (trains), and **involvement** in the operations of passenger rail (e.g., safety, scheduling, and fares).

Albertans expect further assessment related to environmental and community impacts and want to be engaged throughout.

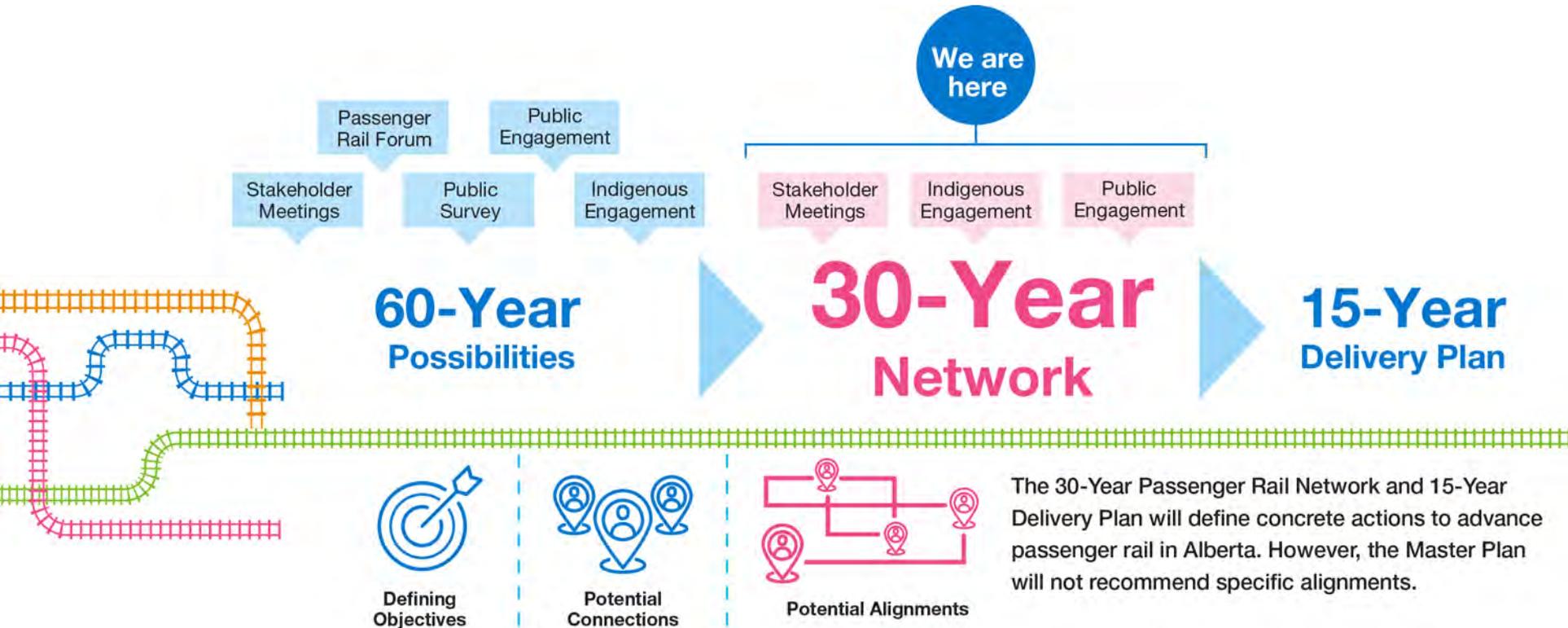


Since fall 2024, we have engaged with over **20,000 Albertans** and have communicated with many more.

A Future that Runs on Rails



The Master Plan Process

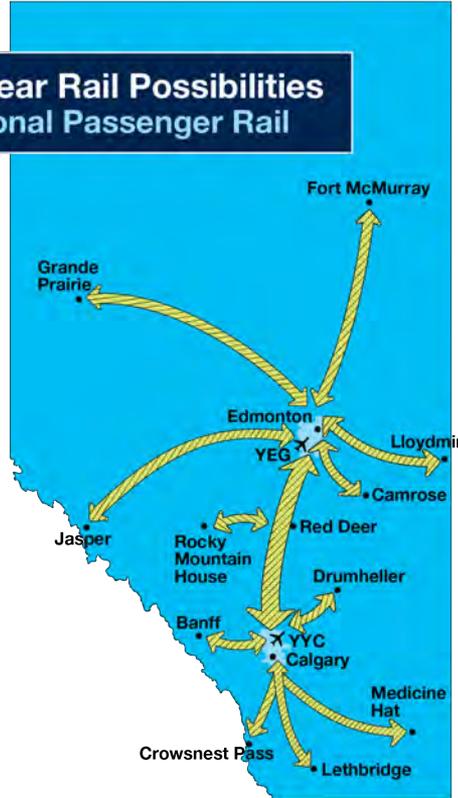


From 60-Year Possibilities to a 30-Year Network

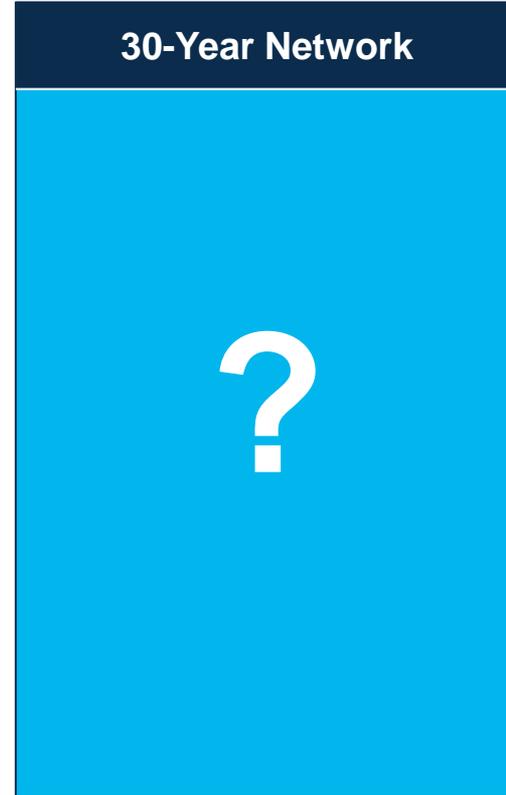
Commuter Rail



60-Year Rail Possibilities Regional Passenger Rail



Note: Map is conceptual and does not show exact routing.



Recap: A Holistic Evaluation Framework

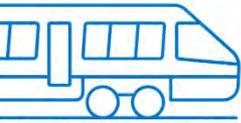
An evaluation framework aligned with global best practices and **tailored to Alberta's goals** was created to guide development of the Passenger Rail Master Plan and to evaluate connections.

It provides a **consistent, transparent, and holistic** approach to support decision-making, with criteria that can evolve based on the options being considered and information for analysis.

The evaluation framework uses four categories to assess options:



From 60-Year Possibilities to a 30-Year Network



1 60-Year Possibilities

The passenger rail connections that could be delivered over the next 60 years to support Alberta and Albertans.

2 Evaluating the connections individually

Evaluation of the 60-Year Rail Possibilities to identify the emerging 30-Year connections.



Weighting of all evaluation categories, including through population forecasts, ridership modelling, and high-level costing.

3 Evaluating the connections as a network

- Confirming the extent of the network
- Evaluating conventional vs high-speed rail

Evaluation of the costs and benefits of conventional rail and high-speed rail for the 30-Year Network.



Greater emphasis on deliverability, financial, and economic evaluation categories, including through cost-benefit analysis.

4 30-Year Network

The passenger rail network (connections and rail type) that could be delivered over the next 30 years.

Beyond Connections: Why the Network Matters for Albertans



A network of commuter and regional rail services, connected with LRT, transit, and airports, helps make it easier for Albertans to get to where they want to go.

- Albertans can transfer between different services and modes to go further, more conveniently.



Networks help make passenger rail operate more efficiently.

- Multiple services can share the same infrastructure.



Starting with the end in mind can help ensure the benefits of passenger rail grow over decades.

- With regular maintenance, tracks and corridors can last 50 to 100+ years. Once built, the infrastructure is hard to change.
- Over time, station locations and services can influence where people choose to live and work.

As part of the 30-Year Network evaluation, we considered how connections could be linked together for evaluation.

Getting the Network Backbone Right

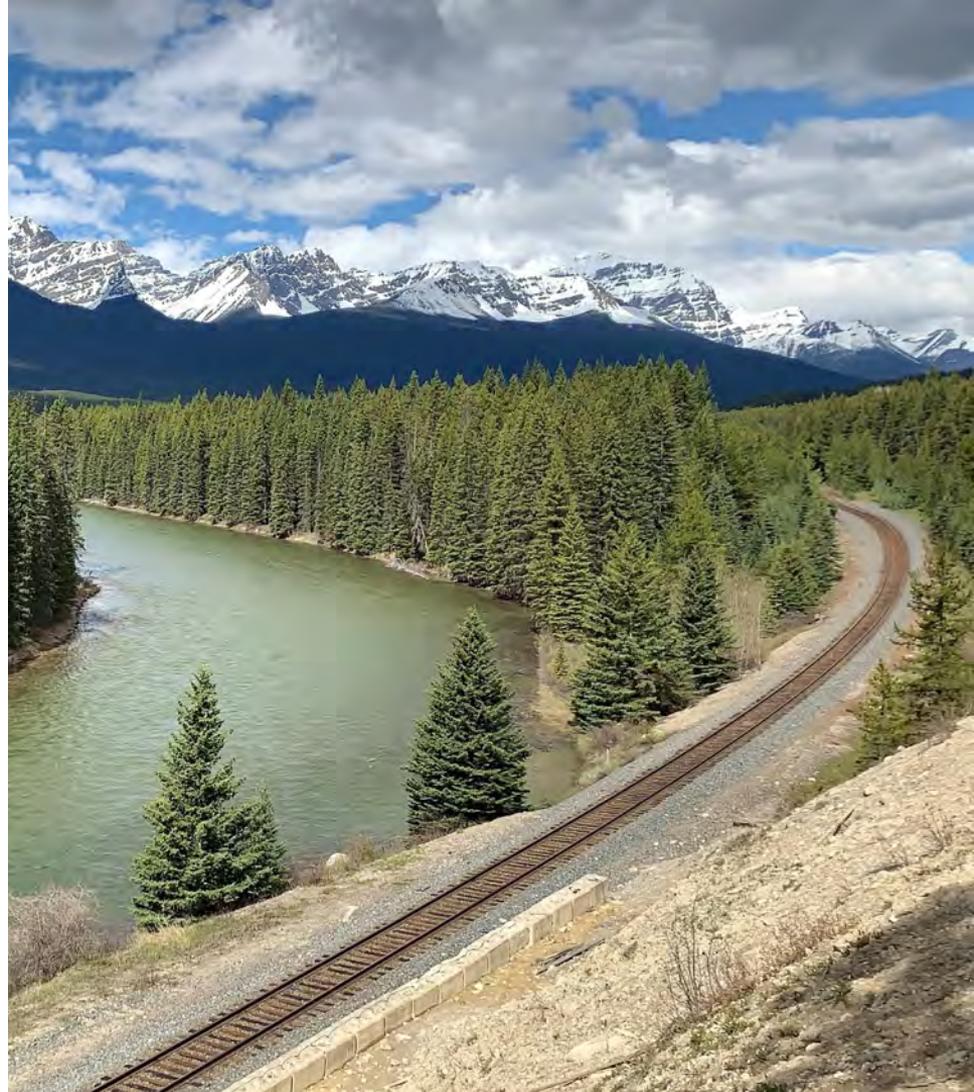
- Greenfield, or new rail corridors, have been evaluated that could provide either **conventional rail service** or **high-speed rail service** between Calgary-Edmonton, and Calgary-Banff.
 - All other connections were evaluated as **conventional rail** in the existing rail corridors.
- The highest forecasted ridership in the 60-Year Possibilities was for **Edmonton-Red Deer-Calgary** and **Calgary-Banff** services.
- High-speed rail can help make the service more attractive and attract more ridership, in turn:
 - Managing congestion on highways and roads for individuals who need to drive.
 - Improving the financial viability of passenger rail service.
 - Strengthening the economic competitiveness of Alberta.



Challenges of Using Existing Rail Corridors

There are challenges and complexities for implementing passenger rail in existing freight rail corridors.

- Existing corridors often follow the terrain (steeper grades and tighter curves), making them challenging (if not impossible) to later retrofit for high-speed services, which require very straight corridors.
- Existing corridors sometimes go through communities; adding trains and tracks impacts these communities.
- Sharing existing corridors can limit service reliability and frequency of passenger rail as well as growth capacity of freight.



Regional Rail Evaluation



Route	Strategic									Summary
	Population Served (2085 forecasts)	Employment Served (2085 forecasts)	Connecting People to Major Job Centres	Airport Connectivity	Connecting to Tourism Destinations	Transit Oriented Development Potential	Transit Network Connectivity	Indigenous Communities Connectivity	Reduced Agricultural / Sensitive Land Impacts	
Calgary - Edmonton (High-Speed Rail)	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary - Edmonton (Conventional Rail)	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary/YYC - Banff (High-Speed Rail)	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary - Banff (Conventional Rail)	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary - Medicine Hat	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary - Lethbridge	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Edmonton - Jasper	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Calgary - Drumheller	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Red Deer - Rocky Mountain House	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Edmonton - Fort McMurray	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Edmonton - Lloydminster	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Lethbridge - Blairmore	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink
Edmonton - Grande Prairie	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink	Dark Pink

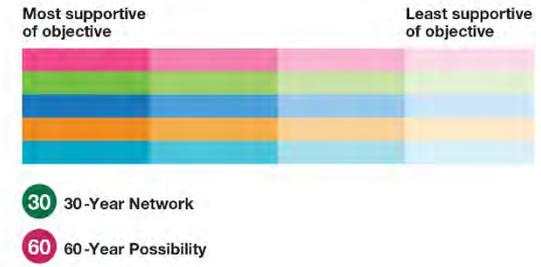
Regional Rail Evaluation



Route	Economic			Financial			Deliverability & Operations
	Forecasted 2085 Ridership	Rail-to-Auto Travel Time Ratio	Summary	Estimated Capital Costs Per Passenger	Estimated Operations and Maintenance Costs Per Passenger	Summary	Rail Corridor Operations and Service Delivery – Assessed based on the Track Corridor Type (Greenfield, Dedicated, Branchline/Spur, Secondary, Mainline)
Calgary – Edmonton (High-Speed Rail)							
Calgary – Edmonton (Conventional Rail)							
Calgary/YYC – Banff (High-Speed Rail)							
Calgary – Banff (Conventional Rail)							
Calgary – Medicine Hat							
Calgary – Lethbridge							
Edmonton – Jasper							
Calgary – Drumheller							
Lethbridge – Medicine Hat							
Red Deer – Rocky Mountain House							
Edmonton – Fort McMurray							
Edmonton – Lloydminster							
Lethbridge – Blairmore							
Edmonton – Grande Prairie							

Regional Rail Evaluation Summary

Regional Rail Evaluation	Route	Strategic	Economic	Financial	Deliverability	Total	30-Year or 60-Year
	Calgary – Edmonton (High-Speed Rail)	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	30
	Calgary – Edmonton (Conventional Rail)	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	30
	Calgary/YYC – Banff (High-Speed Rail)	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	30
	Calgary – Banff (Conventional Rail)	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	30
	Calgary – Medicine Hat	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Calgary – Lethbridge	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Edmonton – Jasper	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Calgary – Drumheller	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Lethbridge – Medicine Hat	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Red Deer – Rocky Mountain House	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Edmonton – Fort McMurray	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Edmonton – Lloydminster	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Lethbridge – Blairmore	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60
	Edmonton – Grande Prairie	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	High Support	60



Commuter Rail Evaluation



Route	Strategic									Summary
	Population Served (2085 forecasts)	Employment Served (2085 forecasts)	Connecting People to Major Job Centres	Airport Connectivity	Connecting to Tourism Destinations	Transit Oriented Development Potential	Transit Network Connectivity	Indigenous Communities Connectivity	Reduced Agricultural / Sensitive Land Impacts	
Calgary – Airdrie										
Calgary – Okotoks / High River										
Calgary – Cochrane										
Calgary – Calgary Airport										
Edmonton – Edmonton Airport										
Edmonton – Beaumont / Leduc / Nisku										
Calgary – Chestermere / Strathmore										
Edmonton – Spruce Grove / Stony Plain										
Edmonton – Camrose / Wetaskiwin / Leduc / Nisku										
Edmonton – Sherwood Park										
Edmonton – St. Albert / Morinville										
Edmonton – Fort Saskatchewan										
Red Deer – Blackfalds / Lacombe										
Red Deer – Sylvan Lake										

Commuter Rail Evaluation

Commuter Rail Evaluation

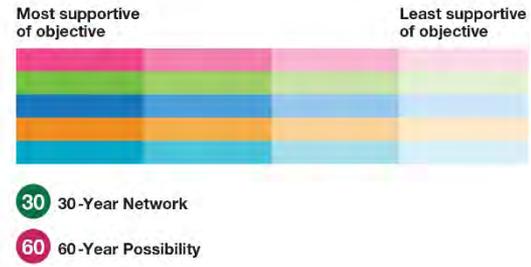


Route	Economic			Financial			Deliverability & Operations
	Forecasted 2085 Ridership	Rail-to-Auto Travel Time Ratio	Summary	Estimated Capital Costs Per Passenger	Estimated Operations and Maintenance Costs Per Passenger	Summary	Rail Corridor Operations and Service Delivery
Calgary – Airdrie							
Calgary – Okotoks / High River							
Calgary – Cochrane							
Calgary – Calgary Airport							
Edmonton – Edmonton Airport							
Edmonton – Beaumont / Leduc / Nisku							
Calgary – Chestermere / Strathmore							
Edmonton – Spruce Grove / Stony Plain							
Edmonton – Camrose / Wetaskiwin / Leduc / Nisku							
Edmonton – Sherwood Park							
Edmonton – St. Albert / Morinville							
Edmonton – Fort Saskatchewan							
Red Deer – Blackfalds / Lacombe							
Red Deer – Sylvan Lake							

Commuter Rail Evaluation Summary

Route	Strategic	Economic	Financial	Deliverability	Total	30-Year or 60-Year
Calgary – Airdrie	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Calgary – Okotoks / High River	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Calgary – Cochrane	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Calgary – Calgary Airport	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Edmonton – Edmonton Airport	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Edmonton – Beaumont / Leduc / Nisku	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60
Calgary – Chestermere / Strathmore	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Edmonton – Spruce Grove / Stony Plain	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Edmonton – Camrose / Wetaskiwin / Leduc / Nisku	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60
Edmonton – Sherwood Park	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60
Edmonton – St. Albert / Morinville	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	30
Edmonton – Fort Saskatchewan	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60
Red Deer – Blackfalds / Lacombe	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60
Red Deer – Sylvan Lake	Highly Supportive	Supportive	Neutral	Challenged	Highly Supportive	60

Commuter Rail Evaluation



Network Evaluation

- Within the evaluation framework, the **cost-benefit analysis (CBA)** weighs societal benefits against its costs. Results are typically reported as a **benefit-cost ratio (BCR)**.

A cost-benefit analysis was undertaken to compare the performance of conventional rail against high-speed rail for the combined Edmonton-Red Deer-Calgary and Calgary-Banff services at the 30-Year horizon.

- It estimates the benefits generated by the networks:



Social: safety improvements, congestion reduction, and infrastructure expansion deferral (roads and highways).



Economic: capturing how passenger rail connects people and places to generate economic activity.



Environmental: reductions in emissions.



Traveller: travel time and cost savings for passenger rail users.

Conventional Rail



- ✓ May be able to use existing corridors
 - ✓ Opportunities for stations in more communities
 - ✓ Smaller upfront investment
-
- ✗ Total societal benefits not expected to exceed costs (BCR <1)
 - ✗ Generates community impact and safety issues at road-rail crossings
 - ✗ No flexibility to later expand to high-speed

vs

High-Speed Rail



- ✓ Total societal benefits are expected to exceed costs (BCR > 1)
 - ✓ Faster services expected to attract more riders
 - ✓ Corridor would be fully protected and constructed to modern standards
-
- ✗ Fewer communities would have direct rail access
 - ✗ Requires acquisition of new corridors between communities
 - ✗ Larger upfront investment



Network Comparison Results

- High-speed rail is the **leading** option for regional rail services between Calgary and Edmonton.
- High-speed rail is the **emerging preferred** option for regional rail services between Calgary and Banff.
- High-speed rail would operate at conventional speeds in Calgary and Edmonton where tracks are shared with commuter services.
- Further planning would be needed to select a preferred alignment.
 - Existing corridors would continue to be explored for access to central business districts.

The Emerging 30-Year Network



Note: Maps are conceptual and do not show exact routing or station locations.

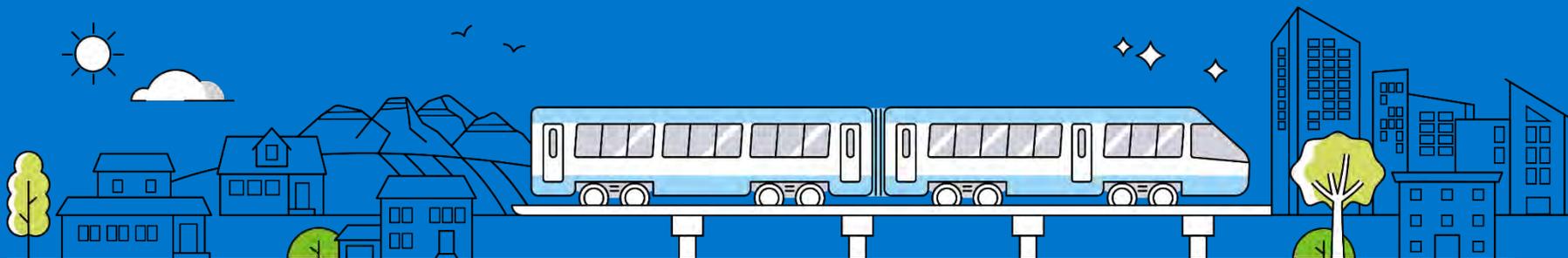
Transportation master plans like the Master Plan are refined and updated regularly.

Many connections remain under consideration as part of the 60-Year Possibilities and could be identified as higher priorities in the future.

For 60-Year Possibilities to become part of the emerging 30-Year Network, some or all of the following would need to be achieved:

- Higher population and/or employment growth and densities.
- Significant cost reductions or significant funding increase.
- Major infrastructure upgrades.

Next Steps

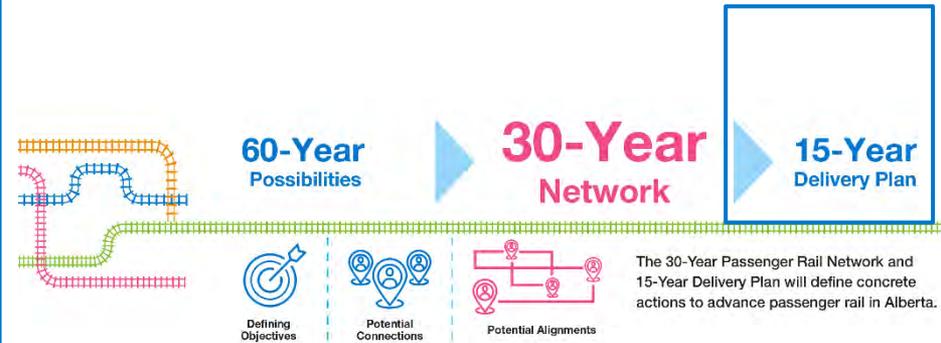


The 15-Year Delivery Plan

To support government decision-making, the **15-Year Delivery Plan** will describe the actions the Province could take over the next 15 years to begin implementing passenger rail services in the **30-Year Network**, including:

- The prioritization, staging, and sequencing of passenger rail investments.
- Considerations for effective governance of a passenger rail system, including options for a specialized provincial agency and its functions, powers, and accountabilities.
- Other actions required to advance the development of passenger rail.

The staging and sequencing approach uses a holistic multi-criteria framework with a focus on delivering positive impacts to Albertans early to build momentum.



Government Decision-Making

- The Master Plan will provide government with information to make decisions based on where passenger rail delivers the best return on investment and adds the most value for Albertans.
- Government will be considering the findings from the Master Plan in fall 2025. If they decide to proceed with projects, further work will be needed, including:



Conducting corridor-focused planning and engineering to determine specific routes and station locations.



Initiating environmental and other impact reviews.

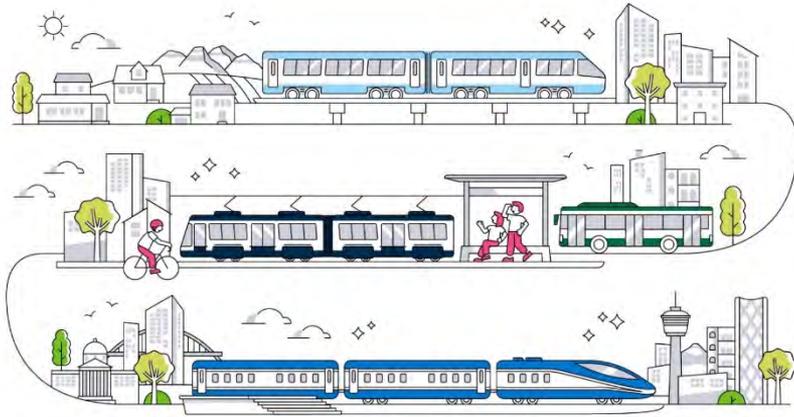


Continuing engagement with the public, Indigenous organizations and communities, and stakeholders.



Drafting legislation to create an agency to implement passenger rail.

Thank you for taking the time to join us!



The Passenger Rail Master Plan will help to inform government on the next steps to realize Alberta's vision for a future that runs on rails.

Stay in Touch!



Visit
www.alberta.ca/passenger-rail-engagement



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