

Creation of Bow Valley Regional Transit Services Commission

Following on work completed in 2007/2008 in regard to the feasibility of creating a regional organization for managing and improving transit services in the Bow Valley, AECOM Canada Ltd. was selected, in late May 2009, to work with local representatives to make the Bow Valley Regional Transit Services Commission (BVRTSC) a reality.

AECOM staff is working with a Steering Committee, composed of members from the following groups:

- the Mayor, councilors and staff from Canmore, Banff and Improvement District No. 9,
- representatives from the three ski areas – Lake Louise, Banff Sunshine and Mount Norquay
- representatives from the hotel and accommodation business sector in Bow Valley
- representatives from Parks Canada and Under the Sleeping Buffalo environmental group
- representatives from the transportation (primarily bus) sector
- representatives from the Alberta Ministry of Transportation and Alberta Ministry of Municipal Affairs

The objectives of the Steering Committee and AECOM are to prepare an application for the consideration of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for the creation of the Bow Valley Regional Transit Services by late October, 2009. This application will contain:

1. a regulation creating the BVRTSC;
2. a detailed bylaw outlining the purpose and structure of the Commission, who its initial directors are, and how the directors will be chosen in the future, the functions of the Commission and its funding; and,
3. a detailed 5 to 10 year plan and budget outlining plans for improving transit services in Bow Valley.

Following the successful approval of this application by the Ministry, by early 2010, the working details of the new BVRTSC will be developed so it could start functioning in the summer or fall of 2010.

The potential transit service improvements in the Banff / Canmore / Lake Louise area for the next one to five years might include:

- a transit service connecting Canmore and Banff;
- improved services to the three ski areas;
- extensions of the Canmore – Banff regional service by connecting it to Lake Louise;
- enhancements to the local transit service in Banff;
- introduction of local transit service in Canmore; and,
- transit service to some popular camping and hiking destinations in Bow Valley.



The vision for future transit services in Bow Valley is to build on the excellent transit service in Banff, and customize and enhance the existing and new transit services in terms of:

- their customer focus
- cost efficiency
- high cost recovery
- the educational experience for visitors to the Banff National Park

Funding for future transit service enhancements is expected to come from:

- immediately: fares, property taxes, private contributions (accommodation and ski business sectors); and
- potentially medium term: other private sector contributions, Parks Canada contributions, new funding sources as gas and parking taxes

The Towns of Banff and Canmore and ID#9 have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to create this Transit Commission. One of the principles embraced by the three municipalities is that to the greatest extent possible private contractors rather than the Commission would operate the buses serving the Valley (just as they do now).

For more information on this project, or to tell us where you think transit services should be added or improved in the Bow Valley or your thoughts on this initiative, please contact:

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