

Metro Line to open September 6

New LRT extension brings changes to transit service and traffic patterns

The Metro Line LRT extension will open to public service on Sunday, September 6, 2015.

The Metro Line is the first spur line from Edmonton's existing LRT. It provides a new LRT connection between Churchill Station downtown and many neighbourhoods, educational institutions, commercial centres and health care facilities including NAIT, MacEwan University, Kingsway Mall and the Royal Alexandra Hospital. The Metro Line is expected to bring more than 13,000 new passengers to Edmonton's LRT network every weekday.

"On behalf of the City, I'd like to thank the people of Edmonton for their patience, and welcome everyone aboard the Metro Line," said Transportation Services General Manager Dorian Wandzura. "While this project has faced many challenges we are opening Edmonton's new LRT extension to public service in time for the start of the 2015-2016 school year."

The \$755 million Metro Line came in approximately \$90 million under budget, for a total project cost of \$665 million.

For the first time in the Edmonton's history two separate LRT lines are sharing the same set of tracks. Due to ongoing challenges related to integrating an advanced communication-based train control signalling system with the pre-existing LRT signalling system, the City is taking a staged approach to opening the Metro Line to public service. At first, Metro Line trains will offer LRT service every 15 minutes between Churchill Station and NAIT Station using a 25 km/h speed restriction. Once the speed restriction is lifted and the signalling system is fully operational, Metro Line trains will offer 10 minute service between Churchill and NAIT.

Metro Line operations bring changes to transit service in Edmonton. LRT passengers heading north towards Churchill Station can change between the Capital Line and the Metro Line anywhere between Churchill and Century Park. With every third northbound train turning northwest to NAIT passengers need to make sure they are on the correct train for their destination. LRT passengers should also give themselves more travel time to make connections between buses and LRT.

The staged implementation requires a reduction in LRT service frequency between Churchill and Clareview Station. During peak periods this section of the Capital Line will have LRT service every five or ten minutes. The City is offsetting this reduction in frequency with the increased capacity of five-car trains.

Metro Line operations also bring changes to local traffic patterns. The Metro Line intersects with several roadways between MacEwan Station and NAIT Station, and as Metro Line trains take priority when they travel through intersections some traffic delays are inevitable. Based on previous experience with the Capital Line, the City expects traffic wait times to decrease as motorists grow accustomed to Metro Line operations, allow more time for travel and find alternate routes.

"The Metro Line brings a significant change to Edmonton's urban landscape as well as its transportation, and it will take some time for everyone to adjust to the new LRT operations," said Wandzura. "Over time, and with patience from everyone, people will adapt to the change as Metro Line service improves."

Throughout design, construction and into operation of the Metro Line, safety has always been the City's top priority. Motorists and pedestrians are reminded to never stop on LRT tracks and to obey all signs and signals along the Metro Line right-of-way. The City's TraxSafe program is in place to raise public awareness about how to stay safe around LRT.

For more information:

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