LLOYDMINSTER

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MASTERPLAN PHASE II

INFORMATION REPORT

October 5, 2026

Public Transportation Working Group

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MASTERPLAN PHASE II

Phase I – Feasibility Study

Through Capital Budget Project No.: 2213628, the Public Transportation Master Plan Phase I project was completed. The Phase I project included two (2) rounds of survey stakeholder engagement sessions which garnished a total of 3,500 responses, targeted engagement sessions including Lunch-and-Learns, pop ups, and open houses, the development of preliminary service delivery models and accompanying cost estimates culminating in a desire to answer the question of: *Is public transportation in Lloydminster desired and is it supported?*

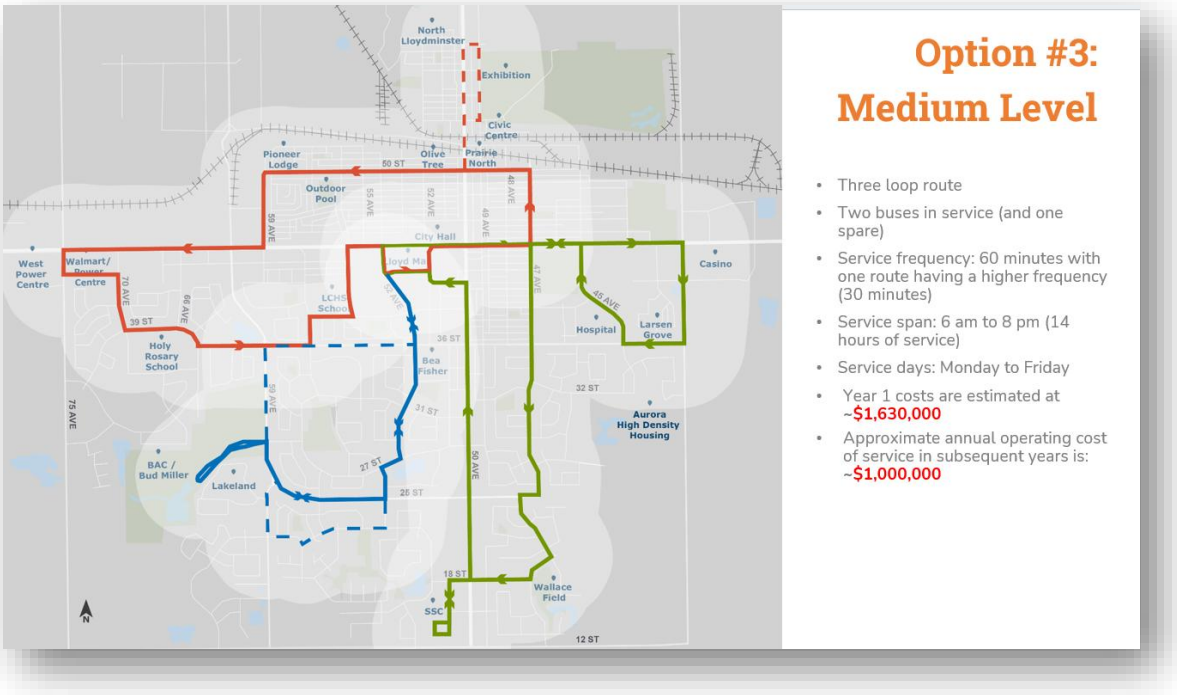
The engagement results, preliminary service delivery options, and the cost estimates were compiled to form the Public Transportation Master Plan (WATT, 2024), and is available on the City of Lloydminster's website.

At the completion of Phase I, the data suggested that **public transportation is a service that is generally desired by the residents of Lloydminster and is accepted as a potential service the City of Lloydminster should explore**. This was supported with the following being the key takeaways of the community in 2024:

- Respondents are mostly travelling to West Lloydminster, Central Business District, Southridge & West Commercial areas;
- High Level Service ranked the highest to meet travel needs;
- Majority of respondents feel that the options represent a good use of taxpayers' money;
- Medium Level Service ranked the highest as providing the most value for taxpayer money spent;
- $2.00 is the most preferred one-way fare option;
- Evening (6pm – 8pm) and peak afternoon (4pm – 6pm) are when respondents are likely to access the service.

Survey results show that respondents are very likely to support the implementation of a public transportation service.

The Medium Level Fixed Route service was ranked the highest when considering the most value for taxpayer money spent. As identified within the Public Transportation Master Plan (WATT, 2024) the Medium Level Fixed Route service consisted of the following:



The Public Transportation Master Plan (WATT, 2024) was accepted by Council at the May 13, 2024, Regular Council meeting.

The findings of Phase I were prepared to inform the Phase II project, (Capital Budget Project No.: 2532059).

Upon completion of the Phase I project in May 2024, the project was put on hold until the 2025 Capital Budget was approved. Throughout 2025, the Phase II project was paused while a corporate direction was determined and Council's level of interest in pursuing public transportation as a service in Lloydminster formalized. The Phase II project was reinstated as an active project in 2026.

2026 – Cost Estimate Updates:

As part of the Phase II project, Administration sought updated cost estimates to ensure the costs being presented were validated using the most relevant information, updated ridership estimates, and current industry trends with respect to costing. The updated cost estimates were completed for both the On-Demand and Medium Level Fixed Route Service options to ensure an appropriate cross section of costs were understood. The updated cost estimates were generated using updated ridership estimates, assumed a one-way cash fare of $2.00, and included items such as, but not limited to, operating costs, storage costs, maintenance costs, and technology costs.

The updated Cost Estimates, prepared by WATT Consulting Ltd. (WATT), in 2024 dollars, provided the following information:

Table 1.Updated Cost Estimate from WATT Consulting

Service Delivery Model	Year 1 Costs (2026 $) (+/- 25%)	Annual Operating Costs (2026 $) (+/- 25%)	Considerations
On-Demand (6am to 8pm, Mon to Sun)	$2,200,000*	$1,500,000*	5% tax increase in year 1 with a 3% tax increase in subsequent years.
Medium Level Fixed Route (6am to 8pm, Mon to Fri)	$2,500,000*	$1,200,000*	6% tax increase in year 1 with a 3% tax increase in subsequent years.

** These costs assumed that the City of Lloydminster would operate the system, however the ownership of the system would need to be determined as part of a future implementation plan if the introduction of a service was desired.*

Using $420,000 as a baseline representing a 1% tax increase, the On-Demand service would introduce an anticipated 5% tax increase in year 1 with a 3% tax increase in subsequent years. With respect to the Medium Level Fix Route service, there would be an anticipated 6% tax increase in year 1 with a 3% tax increase in subsequent years.

To support the updated Cost Estimates, the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) was used to determine key financial metrics of other operating authorities. It should be noted that only communities that are part of the CUTA are reported in their data. The 2024 CUTA data for comparable municipalities is as follows:

Table 2. 2024 CUTA Data for Comparable Municipalities

	Okotoks	Moose Jaw	Grand Prairie	Fort Saskatchewan	Leduc	Hinton	Airdrie
System Established	2019	1958	1981	2005	2010	2008	1980
Municipal Population	33,096	33,665	70,385	29,857	38,543	9,882	85,805
Annual Operating Cost	$1,353,249	$1,722,677	$5,273,011	$1,176,684	$2,890,000	$355,458	$4,837,974
Annual Capital Cost	$336,729	$1,254,244	$1,100,000	$662,000	$500,000	NA	$22,336
Annual Revenue	$193,479	$460,227	$1,019,245	$170,000	$441,849	$84,513	$ 1,795,544
Annual Boardings (Ridership - Linked Trips)	68,323	190,467	519,390	64,286	153,569	25,922	657,615
Adult Fare	$3.50	$3.25	$3.25	$3.00	$5.00	$3.00	$2.90

As identified within the table above, the annual revenue being generated compared to the annual operating and capital costs across all comparable municipalities who offer public transportation services is a fraction of that needed to ensure a self-sufficient service. The community of Cold Lake has not been included within the data above as they are not part of the CUTA.

The adult fare as identified above was as of 2024; however, through completing market research, the average adult fare in 2026 is $2.50 for a one-way trip: the highest fare for a one-way trip being $4.00 with the lowest being $2.00.

2026 – Ridership Potential

When reviewing the potential of implementing a public transportation service, one must determine how many residents will use the service; the potential for a resident to use the service is known as Transit Potential.

In Lloydminster, the 2024 population was postulated as 33,702, however assuming only 25% of the population would have a propensity to use public transportation this reduces the 33,702 total population to a portion of the population of 8,426. This transit potential number, which was generated by WATT, was used to determine updated ridership estimates through boardings per hour. For the On-Demand service, it was estimated that 4.86 boardings per hour could be assumed while 14.17 boardings per hour could be assumed for the Medium Level Fixed Route service. These boards per hour estimates were used to inform the updated Cost Estimates.

It should be noted that although the transit potential has been generated using industry best practice and compared against comparable municipalities operating a public transportation system, the final transit potential and boardings per hour cannot be calculated until a public transportation system is in place and transportation habits changed to align with the service.

2026 – Community Consultation

The City of Lloydminster contracted a local facilitator and consultant Wendy Plandowski to coordinate an engagement process between April and June 2026 to understand transportation needs, barriers, and opportunities. More than 70 participants from the social services, education, business, and resident sectors, along with a cross-sector Transportation Design Jam, contributed their perspectives. The purpose was to capture community input, not to recommend a specific transportation model.

Participants identified seniors, students, newcomers, persons with disabilities, lower-income residents, shift workers, and residents without reliable vehicles as the groups experiencing the greatest transportation challenges. Transportation barriers were associated with missed appointments, reduced employment and educational opportunities, social isolation, and decreased community participation.

There was broad agreement that Lloydminster should explore transportation solutions; however, support for a traditional fixed-route transit system was mixed. Concerns focused on costs, taxation, ridership, sustainability, and the city's geography. Instead, participants showed stronger support for

flexible and targeted approaches such as on-demand transportation, transportation hubs, voucher programs, employer and educational partnerships, and community connector services.

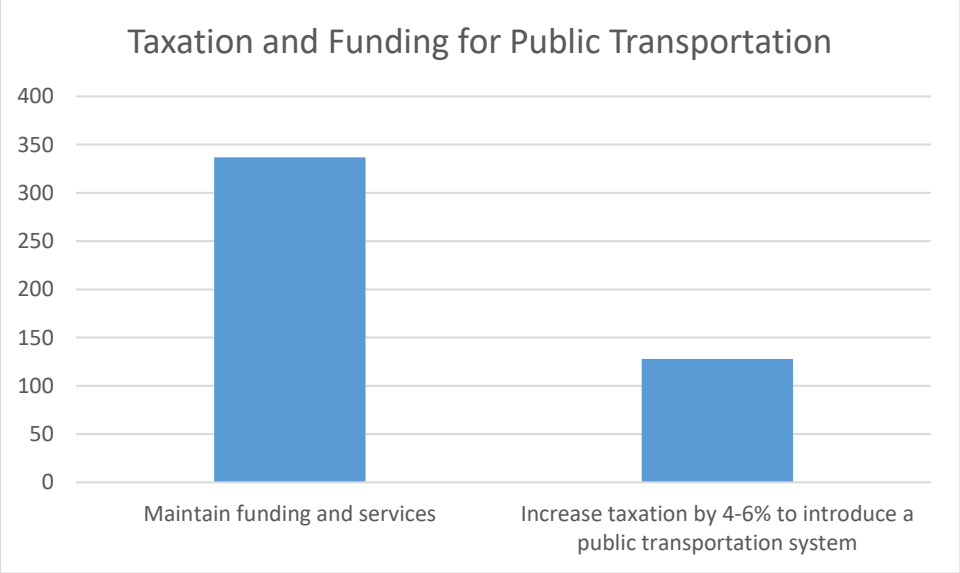
A major theme across all sessions was building on existing assets, including Border City Connects, the Senior Taxi Voucher Program, educational transportation supports, medical transportation services, employer ride-sharing initiatives, and community organization programs. Participants felt future efforts should strengthen and better coordinate these services before creating new systems. There was also strong consensus that any future solution should begin with pilot projects, collect local data, measure outcomes, and scale only when proven effective.

Financial responsibility was a critical consideration. While participants expressed compassion for residents facing transportation barriers, they emphasized that solutions must be affordable, evidence-based, right-sized, and sustainable for both users and taxpayers.

Key Finding: Transportation was consistently viewed as access to opportunity rather than simply moving people. Participants linked transportation to employment, education, healthcare, recreation, independence, and quality of life. These opportunities could be realized through a pilot project(s) that can measure impact, growth, and can be tailored to the community's unique needs.

2027 Municipal Budget Engagement Survey

The 2027 Municipal Budget Engagement Survey looked at residents' willingness to support public transportation through municipal taxes. 72% of respondents indicated support to maintain funding and services. 28% of respondents indicated support to increase taxation by 4-6% to introduce a public transportation system.



A total of 301 survey comments were submitted in respect to public transportation. The submitted comments followed themes of:

Funding - Comments largely discussed the concern for a tax increase to support a public transit service, some comments illustrated the desire seek grants, sponsorship, user fees etc. as funding opportunities.

Comments expressed the concern for the taxation effect on households and highlighted the potential usage of untaxed users. Frequent comments supported the desire to examine current funding and fund utilization prior to seeking taxation as a funding source. Additional comments supported aligning user fees with the Recreation Access Program and subsidies for seniors.

Route Solutions - Comments expressed the desire to introduce a system slowly and with smaller capacity vehicles, if routes were implemented there was a desire for the services to connect north, south, east, west and 59th Ave/25th St connections. Alternatively, if public transportation isn't feasible, ride solutions such as Lyft, Uber, e-mobility rentals, enhanced senior taxi voucher program and subsidized transportation options for youth etc. are desired.

Economic Opportunity - Comments illustrated the support for future potential opportunity. They identified the benefit for youth, seniors, disabled patrons, newcomers and students, while sharing the accessibility it would create for employment and commerce opportunities.

Safety and Usage - Concern for the general safety of those utilizing the services. Along with the access to neighbourhoods for criminal activity and unhoused patrons.

Infrastructure - Concern for the effect it would have on deterioration of roadways, sidewalks etc., along with the potential congestion.

Research - Desire to research similar public transportation models from communities such as Cold Lake, Camrose and Prince Albert.

Surveying - Concern for the format and perceived limitation of the question within the survey.

Summary

Based on the findings from Phase I and Phase II of the Public Transportation Master Plan, it is evident that transportation barriers impact access to employment, education, healthcare, recreation, and community participation for many Lloydminster residents, particularly seniors, students, newcomers, persons with disabilities, lower-income residents, and those without reliable transportation.

While public transit continues to be viewed as a desirable service and residents have identified potential economic and social benefits, updated cost estimates indicate that implementing either an on-demand or fixed-route transit system would require a significant municipal investment and ongoing taxpayer support. Community engagement findings and budget survey results demonstrate stronger support for exploring flexible, targeted, and scalable transportation solutions rather than immediately implementing a traditional transit system.

Given the financial implications, uncertain ridership potential, and evolving opportunity for rideshare and other transportation options, the recommended path forward is to investigate and pilot an alternate transportation support program that builds upon existing community services. This approach would address identified transportation gaps while generating local usage and performance data to help inform any future decision regarding investment in a permanent public transportation system.