



RETHINK
the **Green**
Line

We must rethink the Green Line

Calgary West Rotary Club

Delta Hotel, Calgary South, 135 Southland Dr SE

11:30 am, December 4th, 2023

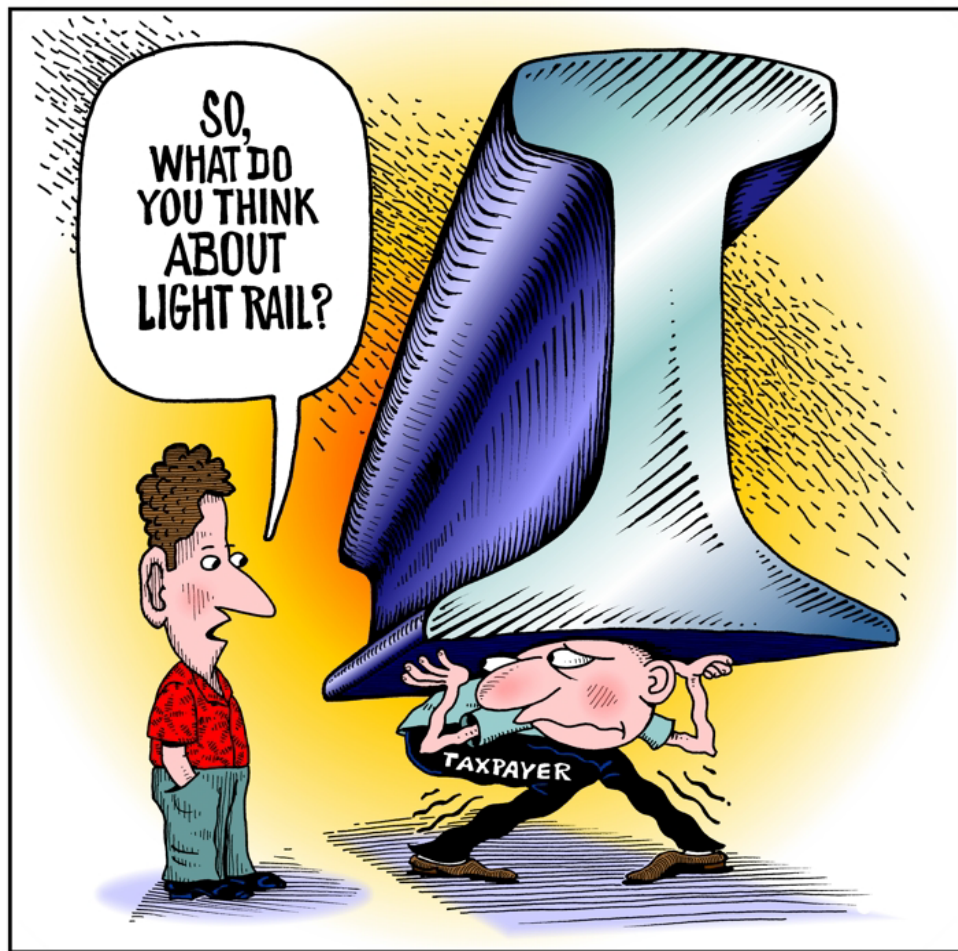
James K. Gray

It's never too late to do the right thing!





Calgary's largest-ever project

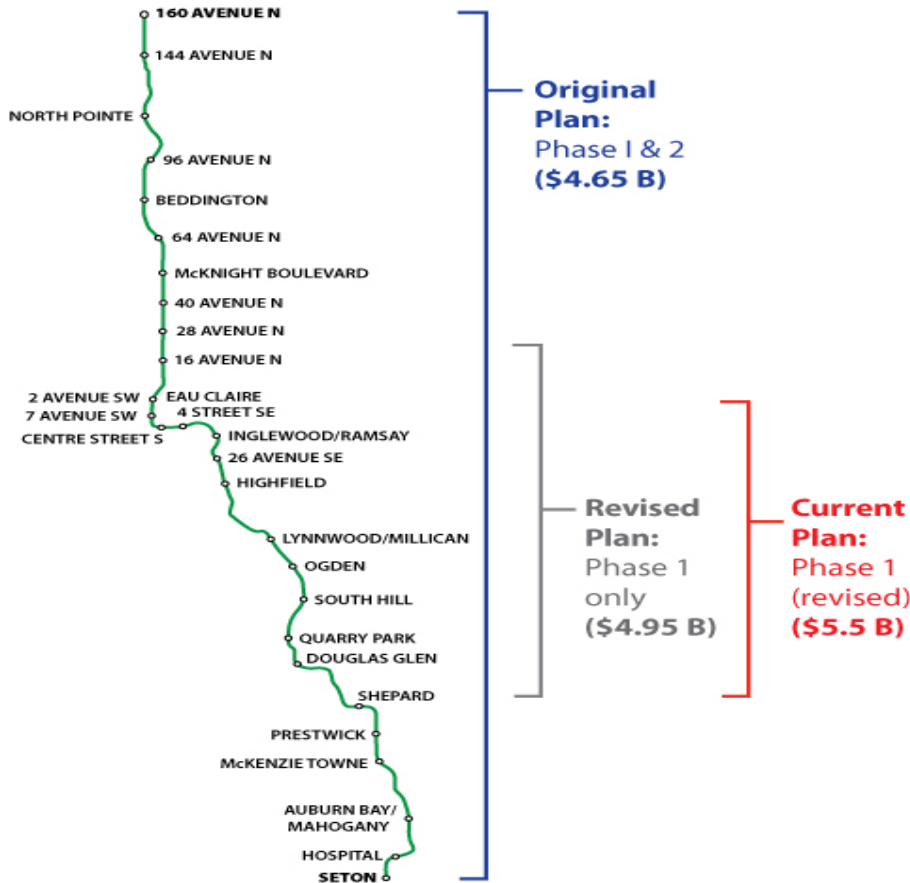


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- Green Line has gone off the rails
- Taxpayers on the hook for \$\$Billions
- \$1 Billion spent in 2023 (\$150,000/day) - not an inch of track laid!
- 1,100 employees
- Final budget for Phase 1 due June 2024; \$1.5 Billion will be spent by then
- There's still time to do the right thing!

Project shrinks, costs grow

Proposed Green Line



Original Plan (Phase 1 & 2): \$4.65 Billion (2017)

- Over \$6+ Billion in today's dollars (2023)
- 160 Ave North to Seton (46kms+28 stations)

Phase 1: \$5.5 Billion (2022)

- Eau Claire to Shepard (18kms+13 stations)
- Few new riders; ground-loading cars
- Operating costs: \$40 to \$ 50 M/year (80% taxpayers + 20% fare box)

Phase 2: On hold

- Tunnel or bridge across Bow River
- From 160 N to South Health Campus

The Armageddon case

Phase 1 built with \$3 B in cost overruns

- City estimate: \$5.5 Billion
- Probable costs: \$8 to \$10 Billion
- Taxpayer liability: \$3 to \$5 Billion
- **Result will be a 25% tax increase for 20 years!**

Phase 2 will never be built

- Probable costs: \$15+ Billion (triples your taxes)
- No bailout by Feds or Province (too many hands out)
- City's unallocated reserves depleted

A Green Line 'from nowhere to nowhere'

Weak post-Covid business case

Cost increases

- Construction inflation: steel, cement, people, equipment up 80%

Changing work habits

- Overall transit ridership has fallen 30%; not likely to rebound
 - Employers underestimate power of home and family
 - Telecommuters like work/life balance and personal savings (\$3,500/year)
 - Reduced emissions and pollution
- Office towers have a 25 - 30% vacancy rate; not likely to rebound
- Increased security and safety issues using public transit

Ridership too low to justify LRT costs

- Few new riders from Eau Claire to Shepard (Phase 1)
- No residences at Shepard (industrial, office, retail space)
- More new riders from South Health Campus, Seton
 - 74% of population live past Shepard
 - 84% feeder population around Seton

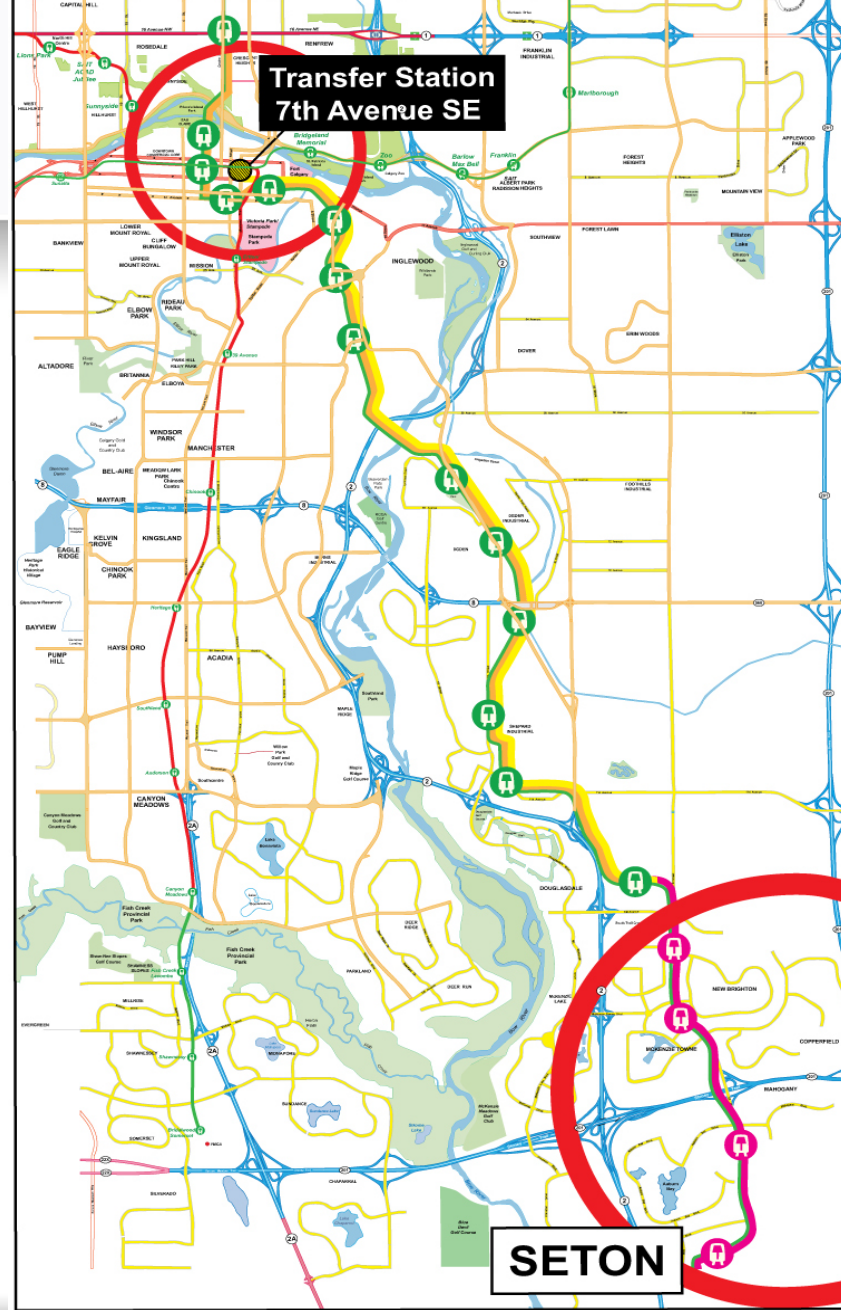




An Affordable Option

1. **Cancel** costly, unsafe **underground tunnels** in flood-prone downtown
2. **Extend** line from **7th Ave to the South Health Campus, Seton**
 - Start at 7th Ave, not Eau Claire!
 - Go past Shepard to populated southeast communities
3. **Hire local contractors** for surface, elevated construction
4. **Improve bus services** to the north
5. **Extend** existing line **to airport**

Inform taxpayers of real, ongoing costs!



Cancel high-risk, high-cost tunnels

Extend line to South Health Campus and Seton to capture more riders

Similar LRT projects in Canada

Edmonton

- City paused project due to ballooning costs, major delays with cracks in the line
- Partially opened Valley Line, the first of several phases, in November
- Cost estimate: \$1.8 billion for 13-km line from Mill Woods to downtown (3 years overdue)

Montreal

- Poor financial model, long delays, stations in disrepair, ballooning costs
- Cost increase from \$6.3 billion to \$8 billion, an 26% increase since 2018

Toronto

- 12-year Eglinton Crosstown project has no timeline for opening
- Public stonewalled on delays and bloated costs (from \$5 to \$13 Billion)

Ottawa

- Delays, shortages, tunnel construction, ballooning costs, secrecy
- Scathing judicial inquiry report results in resignations
- Multimillion-dollar budget deficit a result of low ridership

What our citizen's group is doing

- Established Ad Hoc Committee in 2016
- Presented the 'affordable option' to City in 2020
- Contacted Mayors, Councillors, Administrators, Auditors
- Reached out to GL Board; they won't meet with us
 - Board operates at arm's length from Council
- Contacted Premiers, Ministers, MLAs
- Relaunched web site (greenlineinfo.ca)
- Engaged 1500+ supporters (GL has 3,400)
- Submitted op-eds and set up interviews
- Launched social media campaign in September

We must engage more Calgarians!

How you can help!

1. **Complete the City's [online survey](#)**
2. **Register as a supporter**
 - 5,000 Calgarians = a sizeable constituency the City can't ignore
3. **Invite friends, family, other Calgarians to stand with us**
 - Sign up form on web site (greenlineinfo.ca)
4. **Connect on Social Media**
 - Follow daily posts and comments; join the conversation
5. **Volunteer and donate**
 - Help with social media campaign
 - Organize speaking opportunities
6. **Spread the word**
 - Talk about this issue at Christmas gatherings
 - Set up speaking opportunities for us

Key takeaways

1. The Green Line is off the rails

- \$1 Billion spent in 2023 with no track laid
- Final cost estimates mid 2024

2. Phase 1 is too high-risk, high-cost

- \$5.5 Billion will likely be \$10-15 Billion
- Taxpayers on the hook for overruns
- Less secrecy by the City; more honesty, accountability, transparency

3. Support the affordable option

- No underground tunnels
- Start at 7 Ave not Eau Claire
- Go to South Health Campus + Seton to reach more new riders
- Extend existing line to airport



“The right thing to do when facts change is the courage to change direction”

Britain’s PM Rishi Sunac cancels London - Manchester rail line
as costs spiral past £100 billion.

October 3, 2023



It's never too late to do the right thing!

