



ECONOMIC AND FINANCE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title Funicular/River Valley Accessibility and CultureLink Final Report

Meeting Date November 15, 2023

Submitted By Galt Museum & Archives Board of Directors and CEO/Executive Director

Summary

- February 16, 2023 Cultural and Social SPC Resolution:
BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council requests the Board of Directors of the Galt Museum & Archives to bring forward options and costs associated with the development of a transportation system between the Galt Museum and Fort Whoop-Up to a Cultural and Social Standing Policy Committee meeting by end of Q4 – 2023.
- This report is the result of CIP Project D-49 (Attachment 1), River Valley Ridership Study (Attachment 2) and Analysis (Attachment 3). CIP D-49 was the continuation of a previous CIP project D-38 of 2018-2027.
- CIP-D49 is now complete, with the budget extinguished.

Recommendation(s)

That the Economic and Finance SPC recommends that Council direct Administration to implement the CultureLink seasonal and special event public transportation system (option 1a) connecting the downtown core with the river valley (Indian Battle Park), funded from Council Contingencies as follows:

2024 cost estimate	2025 cost estimate	2026 cost estimate	Total cost estimate
\$57,120	\$58,262	\$59,427	\$174,809

- Recommend options for the fiscal 2027-30 Operating Budget by Q3 2026.

Financial

- CIP Project D-49 budget of \$164,000 has been spent on the analysis and CultureLink Ridership study.
- If the CultureLink bus is to be implemented the costs would be as follows:

2024 cost estimate	2025 cost estimate	2026 cost estimate	Total cost estimate
\$57,120	\$58,262	\$59,427	\$174,809

Background and Prior Decisions

- January 23, 2019, the Galt Museum & Archives and City of Lethbridge received the River Valley Accessibility Study (Attachment 4) conducted by Outdoor Engineers, INC. The report focused on alternative ways to connect the plateau with the river valley with a particular focus on a Funicular System. Project was funded through CIP D-38.
- Continuation of previous CIP project D-38 of 2018-2027 was initiated in 2021. The project was included in the prior CIP as the River Valley Accessibility Study and since then the scope has been further refined. The River Valley Ridership Study was an opportunity to study the efficacy of further accessibility developments between the river basin and that of the plateau. The ridership data assisted in the development of a cost-benefit analysis for a purpose-built transportation system between the Galt Museum & Archives and Fort Whoop-Up.
- Out of the study, the idea and implementation of the CultureLink bus during the summer of 2022 was piloted with the ridership data considered for next steps of this project.
- The CultureLINK Ridership Study Report was shared with the Cultural and Social SPC on February 16, 2023 as part of deliverables in CIP D-49, which is now complete, and the \$164,000 extinguished.
- February 16, 2023 Cultural and Social SPC Resolution:
BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council requests the Board of Directors of the Galt Museum & Archives to bring forward options and costs associated with the development of a transportation system between the Galt Museum and Fort Whoop-Up to a Cultural and Social Standing Policy Committee meeting by end of Q4 – 2023.

Engagement

- The Galt Museum & Archives collaborated with Lethbridge Transit Services and Outdoor Engineers, INC. to determine costs of transportation options.
- The CultureLink bus was used to pilot and to create ridership data.

Recommendation and Option(s) Analysis

1. Preferred: Seasonal and Special Event CultureLink Transit Option

- Provides reliable service during select periods throughout year.
- Requires moderate annual operational investment by City of Lethbridge.
- Provides linkages to transit routes currently in place.
- Minimally increases City of Lethbridge carbon output.
- Minimal return on investment by transit subscribers due to nature of service.
- Initiative could be altered based on needs assessment.
- Bicycles are able to be transported.
- Offered at no cost to riders.
- Hours offered in 2022 would be revised if implemented for cost-benefit
- CultureLink was not offered in 2023 but was requested

NOTE: Nikka Yuko is not included due to an increase in costs but Committee may want to consider adding it if additional cost can be covered (see option 1b below).

		Public Transit (2023 cost estimate)	2024 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2025 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2026 cost estimate with 2% inflation	Total cost estimate
Capital Expenditure		Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Operating Expenses: Option 1a	Galt, Fort, Helen Schuler, SAAG/CASA, Transit Hub	\$56,000	\$57,120	\$58,262	\$59,427	\$174,809
Operating Expenses: Option 1b	Galt, Fort, Helen Schuler, SAAG/CASA, Nikka Yuko, Transit Hub	\$90,125	\$91,927	\$93,765	\$95,640	\$281,332

2. Regular Transit Option

- Provides regular, reliable service levels throughout the year.
- Requires significant annual operational investment by City of Lethbridge.
- Moderately increases City of Lethbridge carbon output.
- Moderate return on investment by transit subscribers.

		Public Transit (2023 cost estimate)	2024 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2025 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2026 cost estimate with 2% inflation	Total cost estimate
Capital Expenditure		Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Operating Expenses: Option 1	Galt, Fort, Helen Schuler, SAAG/CASA, Transit Hub	\$ 193,142	\$197,005	\$200,945	\$204,963	\$602,913
Operating Expenses: Option 2	Galt, Fort, Helen Schuler, SAAG/CASA, Nikka Yuko, Transit Hub	\$ 233,441	\$238,110	\$242,872	\$247,729	\$728,711

3. Funicular Options

- Requires substantial capital and operational support.
- Requires further geological study to access viability.
- Provides a new attraction for residents and visitors to City of Lethbridge.
- Environmentally sustainable.

	Funicular without operator (2019 cost estimate)	Funicular without operator (2023 cost estimate)	2024 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2025 cost estimate with 2% inflation	2026 cost estimate with 2% inflation	Total cost estimate
Capital Expenditure	\$7,750,000	\$8,938,371*	\$9,117,138	\$9,299,481	\$9,485,471	N/A
Operating Expenses (annual)	\$50,000	\$57,667*	\$58,820	\$59,996	\$61,195	\$180,012
*Bank of Canada inflation calculation						
	Funicular with operator (2019 cost estimate)	Funicular with operator (2023 cost estimate)				
Capital Expenditure	\$7,750,000	\$8,938,371*	\$9,117,138	\$9,299,481	\$9,485,471	N/A
Operating Expenses (annual)	\$500,000	\$576,669*	\$588,202	\$599,966	\$611,965	\$1,800,138
*Bank of Canada inflation calculation						

Attachment(s)

1. CIP Project D-49 – River Valley Ridership Study and Analysis
2. River Valley Accessibility Study 2019
3. Ridership Study
4. Lethbridge Transit Costing Analysis.

Link(s)

N/A

<p>Approvals Department Director: Carly Kleisinger City Manager: Lloyd Brierley</p>
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