

MEDIA BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Calgary Airport–Banff Passenger Rail (CABR) Labour, Economic & Delivery Context for Media

Route Map



Overview

Passenger rail in Alberta's Bow Valley Corridor has progressed from concept to the design phase over the past ten years. CABR connects Calgary International Airport through downtown via shared access on the Calgary Airport – Downtown Express (CADE) rail line and will construct a dedicated passenger rail line(s) in the CPKC Rail corridor from Downtown Calgary to Banff and is supported by MOUs with CPKC and the Canada Infrastructure Bank for public-private partnership (P3) delivery.

CABR was submitted in December 2025 to the federal Major Projects Office as a Project of National Interest.

Why Now

This project will provide stability to the Alberta Construction Sector and stabilize resource revenue. CABR provides a counter-cyclical infrastructure opportunity with a fully trained workforce available and able to build today.

Strategic Impacts

Economic Diversification: strengthens Calgary's role as a continental gateway city and expands long-term tourism and labour mobility.

Workforce Stability: supports apprentices, Indigenous workers, and equity-seeking groups via multi-year construction.

Fiscal Efficiency: uses existing corridor; accelerated delivery vs. greenfield.

Visitor Economy: improves access to Banff National Park under regulated conditions.

Provincial Alignment: bridges Calgary's Green Line to future passenger rail under Alberta's Passenger Rail Master Plan.

Delivery & Governance

Corridor Advantage: Existing CPKC rail corridor reduces environmental, engineering, and permitting timelines.

Institutional Alignment: Supported by MOUs with CPKC and Canada Infrastructure Bank.

P3 Delivery Model: Enables risk-sharing with private & institutional capital with reduced risk to the taxpayer.

Intergovernmental Requirement: Municipal + Provincial + Federal coordination required for execution.

Labour & Training Context

Canada's Building Trades Unions (CBTU) and Building Trades of Alberta (BTA) train thousands of apprentices annually, providing a skilled workforce ready to deliver major infrastructure. Advancing CABR sustains workforce and institutional capacity and avoids boom-bust talent loss.

Infrastructure Continuum

CABR forms part of Alberta's emerging passenger rail continuum:

- **Green Line LRT (Under Construction):** anchors Calgary's urban spine and workforce mobility.
- **CADE/CABR (Design Phase and near Construction-Ready):** extends airport-downtown mobility west to Banff.

- **Future Provincial Projects (Identified in Alberta Passenger Rail Master Plan):** phases linking Calgary–Edmonton and broader intercity corridors.

This sequencing preserves project delivery capacity, retains skilled trades, and reduces boom–bust inefficiencies.

Project Readiness & Design Phasing:

- **CABR (Downtown–Banff):** Design-phase ready and can be completed within ~18 months before commencement of construction.
- **CADE (YYC–Downtown):** Significant design work already completed through the Calgary Airport Rail Connection Study (last updated January 2025), positioning CADE to advance on an accelerated delivery timeline in parallel with CABR.