

OLRT Update

On July 14th, Ottawa City Council voted unanimously to advance the Ottawa Light Rail Transit project, as announced by Mayor Jim Watson on July 7th. The approved report contains an updated cost estimate – within the budget of \$2.1 billion – a new design plan and a clear and affordable path for OLRT implementation.

The revised Queen Street alignment outlined in the report improves ridership experience, brings the tunnel closer to the surface, reduces risk and improves cost certainty for construction. The change allows the tunnel to be constructed at a depth of 15 to 16 metres instead of 39 to 40 metres. The revisions mean it should take LRT passengers roughly one minute to descend to the stations instead of two minutes.

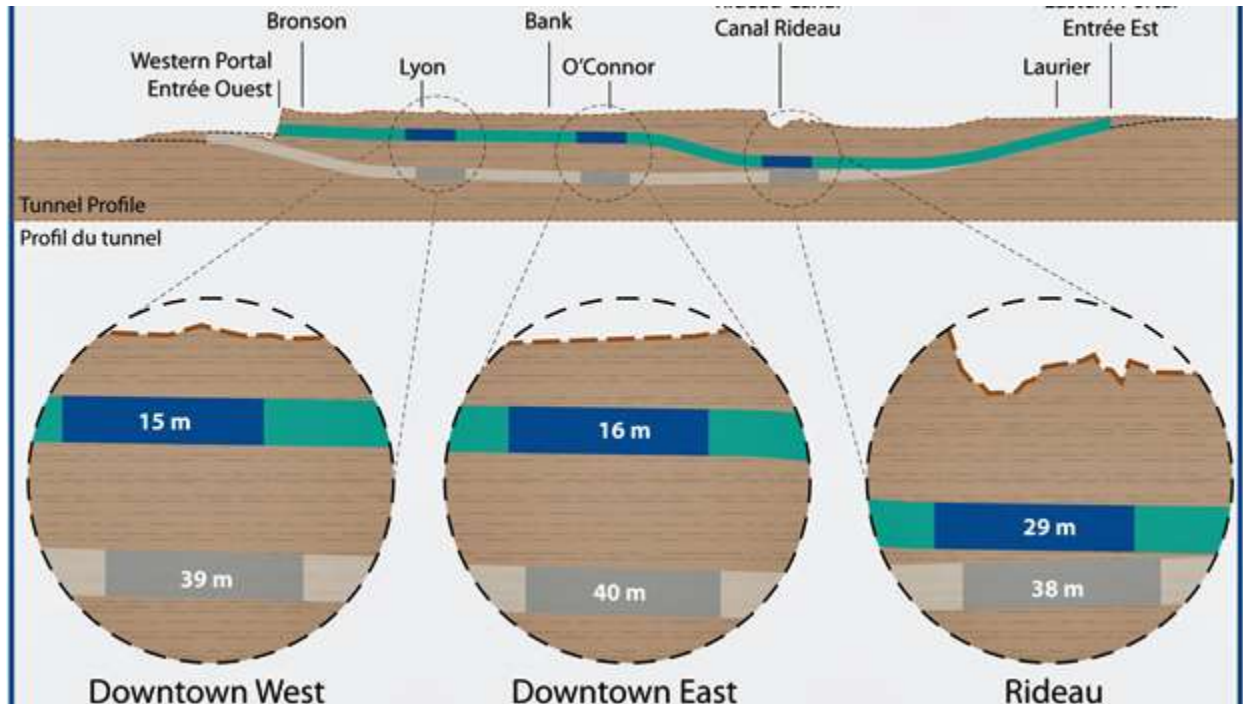


Figure 1. From CBC.ca

The report also recommends a Design-Build-Finance-Maintain (DBFM) procurement approach that will secure a fixed price contract to construct and maintain the LRT system from Tunney's Pasture in the west to Blair Road in the east. This 12.5km, 13 station LRT system includes a tunnel through the downtown core to address the transit bottleneck that slows service and challenges the reliability of the system today. This procurement approach will ensure this project is on time and on budget while taking advantage of the ingenuity and innovative ideas of private sector partners.

The plan is affordable because transit-related taxes and fares will increase at the rate of inflation, which is set at 2.5% in the long-term financial plan. The federal and provincial governments must also continue giving Ottawa a slice of the gas tax which is the plan moving forward.

The City of Ottawa commenced its request for qualifications process to identify firms with a proven track record in delivering successful LRT solutions to cities around the globe.

For more information: www.ottawalightrail.ca

