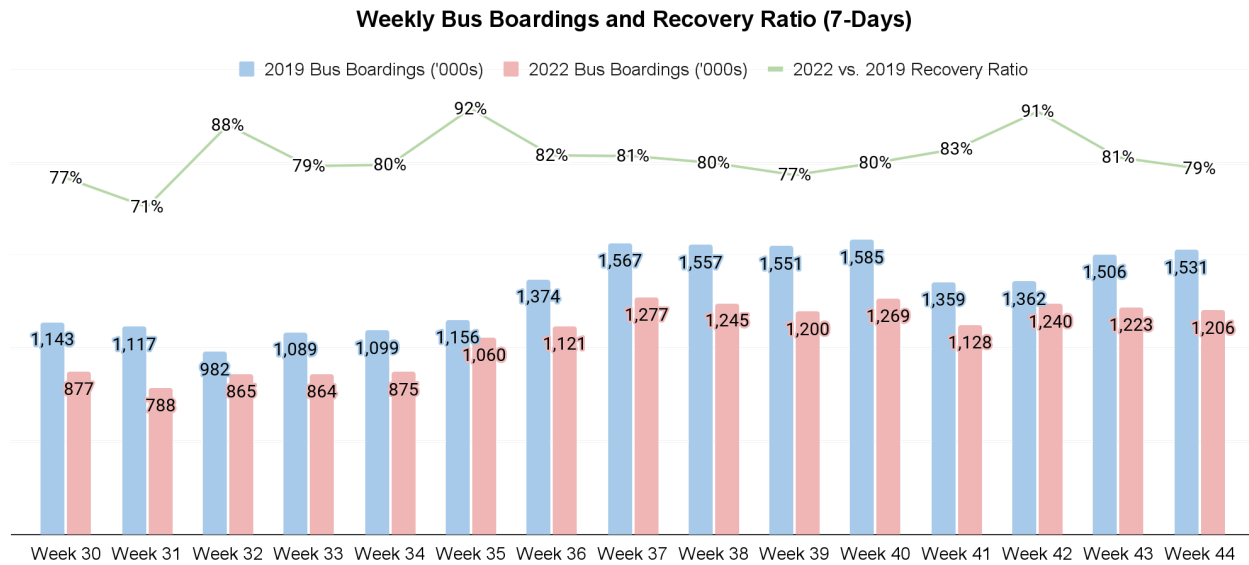


ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: November 28, 2022

1. RIDERSHIP



* Week 30: July 21, 2019 to July 27, 2019 / July 24, 2022 to July 30, 2022

* Week 44: October 27, 2019 to November 2, 2019 / October 30, 2022 to November 5, 2022

The week of October 30 to November 5 saw a total of 1,206,000 in bus boardings, representing 79% of pre-pandemic levels. Bus boardings decreased by 1.4% from the previous week, October 23-29, which had a total of 1,223,000 in bus boardings.

Ridership recovery has been strong, driven by the return of students to in-person classes during the fall period and an increase in office workers commuting to work via public transit. The increase in ridership over the last two months is also in part attributed to improvements with safety and security on transit. During the summer, the Rediscover ETS campaign also encouraged Edmontonians to ride transit to travel around the city.

2. ETS UPDATES

Arc Electronic Fare Payment System Launch

The Arc electronic fare payment system launched on November 21 for Standard Adult fare riders. Standard Adult fare riders are able to start using Arc cards or single-use Arc tickets when taking transit. This is in addition to U-Pass students and Arc pilot volunteers who have been using Arc since last year. Discounted fare paying groups and DATS riders will start using Arc in the next phase of implementation in 2023.

Arc provides a more modern, reliable and seamless way to travel around the greater Edmonton region. With Arc, riders can:

- conveniently tap on and off buses and LRT without needing to carry exact change or paper tickets and passes;
- sign up, check their balance and add money to their Arc accounts anytime, anywhere, including online, by phone or on site at transit centres;
- load as little as \$4 - or as much as they need - to their Arc accounts (single trip price using an Arc card - \$2.75; Arc ticket - \$3.50, cash fare - \$3.50)
- pay for transit fare product using credit and debit; and
- avoid paying upfront for a monthly pass, while also experiencing the best fare possible through regional price caps.

From November 21 to December 2, ETS staff will be conducting outreach activities at major transit spaces. ETS staff will be distributing free Arc cards to transit riders and educating riders to start using Arc to pay for transit.

Improving Access to ETS Low Income Fare Programs

ETS offers three low-income fare programs that help reduce financial barriers to accessing transportation and support mobility independence:

- The Ride Transit program provides a subsidized monthly transit pass to Edmontonians experiencing low income.
- The Donate-A-Ride program provides free transit tickets to non-profit organizations that support families and individuals experiencing low income.
- Providing Accessible Transit Here (PATH) distributes monthly passes to partner agencies that support Edmontonians experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

An anti-racism review was conducted in two phases of engagement in 2021 and 2022 to understand the barriers to accessing the programs and improve equitable access to the programs. Through the engagement, four areas of improvement were identified: the application process; eligibility; fare product distribution, and program awareness. As a result, an anti-racism action plan has been established to address barriers to accessing the programs. Action items will be implemented throughout 2023 and include supporting

translation of program materials, providing conditional eligibility to the Ride Transit program, offering different types of fare product options and increasing outreach activities to promote the programs.

In addition, Administration engaged with Enoch Cree Nation to explore opportunities to expand access to transit fare and recreation facilities to band members. A program is being developed in collaboration that would provide free transit tickets for Enoch Cree Nation to distribute to band members. For recreation access, the group Leisure Access Program was identified as a suitable option for their youth programs, allowing free access to recreation facilities up to 12 times a year.

Fare-Free Transit For Youth

On October 26, Council directed Administration to bring forward an amendment to Transit Fare Policy C451H to allow youth 12 and under ride free without a fare paying rider. Currently, youth 12 and under can only ride free when traveling with a fare paying rider. ETS is currently assessing the financial impact of this policy change, and that will be shared with Council in the follow up report in early 2023. To support increased youth ridership, ETS will also be increasing education and outreach programs to youth-serving agencies in the coming year.

Transit Equity Analysis

In 2022, ETS initiated a transit equity analysis to find ways to improve the transit network and better meet the needs of equity-seeking communities. Women, newcomers, essential workers and students tend to rely on transit to access employment, education, healthcare and connect with social supports. These groups also represent a higher proportion of ridership during off-peak periods.

Phase one of the equity analysis included identifying neighbourhoods with the highest prevalence of seniors, low-income populations and Indigenous populations. The initial assessment indicated these demographic groups, particularly those living downtown and inner-city areas, are relatively well-served with off-peak, high frequency transit. However, transit service in north central and northeast Edmonton can be improved with increased transit frequencies.

The equity analysis is an ongoing process and additional phases will include an evaluation of other equity-seeking communities, such as racialized Edmontonians; newcomers; LGBTQIA2S+ community; and other communities who may experience discrimination or additional barriers. Further community engagement and analysis will provide greater insight on additional improvements to the transit network.

3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

None.

4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2022-2023

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
Upcoming reports being led by ETS:			
CO01337	Edmonton Transit Services in Newer Developing/Developed Communities	Feb 8, 2023	UPC
CO01562	Bus Service for Youth After School Hours - Approach and Work Plan	Apr 14, 2023	Exec
CO01551	Developer-funded Transit Service Options to Support Early Adoption of Transit in New Neighborhoods	Jun 20, 2023	UPC
CO01552	Commingle Paratransit and On Demand Services	Nov 27, 2023	UPC
CO01580	Fare Policy Amendment - Children Under 12	TBD	CC
Other upcoming reports of interest:			
OCM01136	Amendments to Bylaw 8353 Conduct of Transit Passengers	TBD	CPSC
-	Edmonton Transit Service Annual Service Plan 2022-2023	Feb, 2023	-
FCS01246	Revenue Source for Transit - Potential, Risk and Implementation and Intergovernmental Advocacy	TBD	Exec

*Subject to change

AC = Audit Committee

CC = City Council

CPSC = Community and Public Services Committee

Exec = Executive Committee

IRCD = Inter-municipal and Regional Development Committee

UPC = Urban Planning Committee