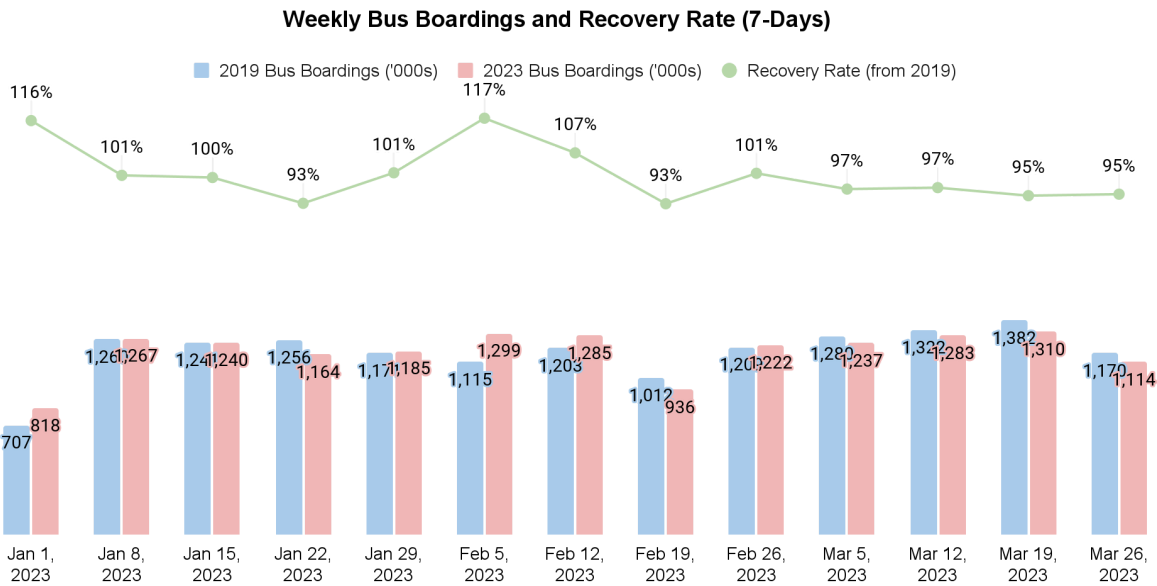


# ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: April 24, 2023

## 1. RIDERSHIP



The week of March 26 - April 1 saw a total of 1.14 million in bus boardings, representing 95% of bus boardings during the week of March 24-30 in 2019. Bus boardings during the week of March 26-April 1 decreased by 15% from the previous week (March 19-25), which had 1.31 million in bus boardings. The decrease in ridership during the week of March 26 is driven by a decline in student ridership due to Spring break.

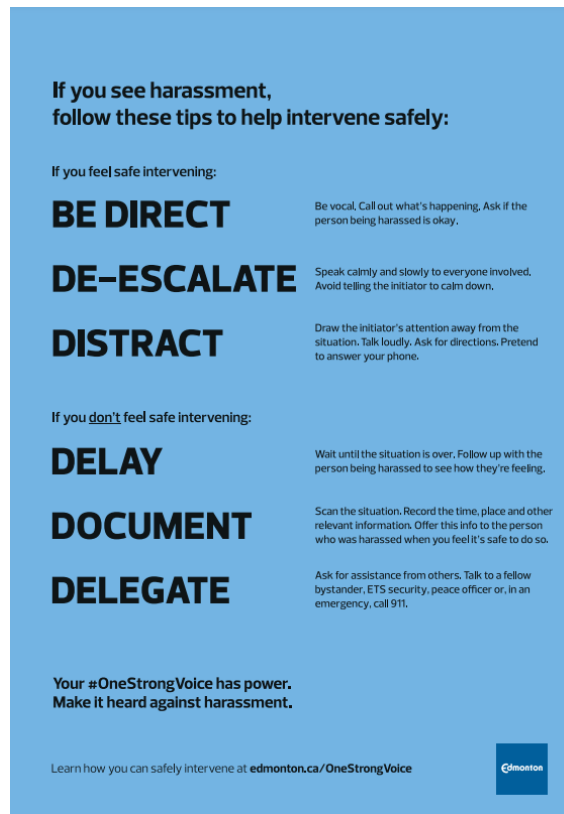
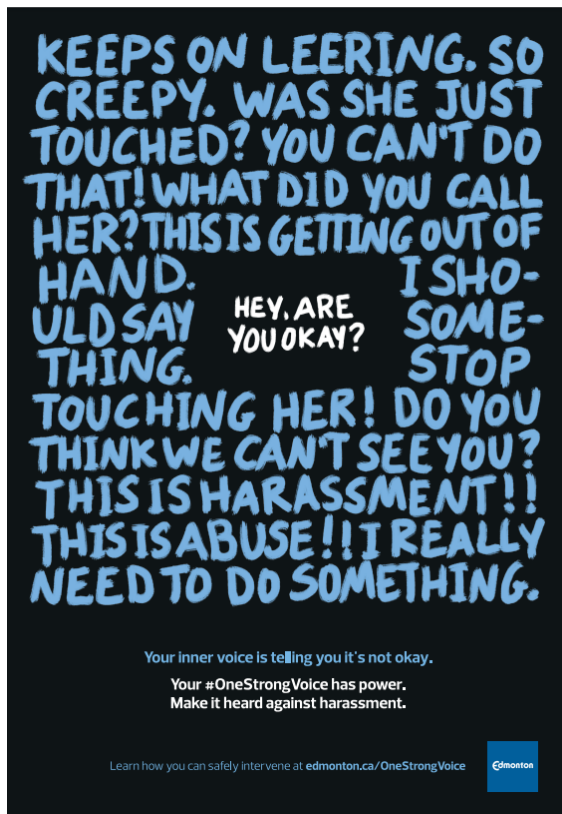
Total bus boardings for March 2023 was at 5.53 million, representing a 1% increase over March 2019 bus boardings which were at 5.48 million. Compared to March 2022, bus boardings increased by 33% in 2023. ETS remains one of the first large transit agencies to fully recover to pre-pandemic ridership levels. Over the past three years, internal and external factors that have impacted ridership during the COVID-19 pandemic have been assessed to guide actions to improve ridership. Continuous improvements in the transit network, service plan adjustments, safety and security initiatives, outreach and ridership campaigns and economic growth have driven an increase in transit usage among Edmontonians.

## 2. ETS UPDATES

### Bystander Awareness Campaign

On April 5, the City of Edmonton launched [One Strong Voice](#), a bystander awareness campaign aimed at reducing gender-based violence and harassment in transit spaces. The campaign - which is part of a broader, multi-layered effort to create safer transit spaces - aims to empower and educate bystanders about how to intervene in a way that is safe for them and for the individual being targeted. The campaign educates bystanders on six actions people can take based on their assessment of personal safety: *Direct, De-escalate, Distract, Delay, Document and Delegate*. ETS presented an update on this project to ETSAB at the November 28, 2022 meeting.

In addition to the posters below being displayed in transit centres, LRT stations, and inside buses and trains, the City released a short [video](#) to promote the campaign, along with digital and audio ads. Wallet cards with the six actions will be distributed at transit events and are also available online for anyone to download. On April 13, the City invited stakeholders who had been involved in the research phase of the campaign, to hear more about the research and community engagement that helped develop the campaign in a meaningful way. There was an overview provided of the website and the other transit safety and security activities that are underway. To evaluate the impact of the campaign on transit riders, the City will be conducting mid-campaign and post-campaign surveys to compare the results with the survey conducted prior to the launch of the campaign.



## **Advancing Edmonton's Safety and Security**

This report will be presented to City Council on May 1, 2023. The report discusses three topics related to safety and security: downtown vibrancy, Chinatown recovery and transit safety and security, with a focus on work completed in 2022 and an overview of upcoming initiatives in 2023.

## **Government of Alberta Transit Safety Actions**

On April 4, the Government of Alberta announced an additional 100 police officers dedicated to public transit security in Edmonton and Calgary will be hired over the next 18 months. As part of this plan, the province aims to increase the number of police and crisis teams (PACT) - a partnership which sees Edmonton Police Service (EPS) constables paired with mental health therapists from Alberta Health Services' Access 24/7, Addiction and Mental Health. The province will also be providing both Edmonton and Calgary with a one-time \$5 million grant to support further enhanced cleaning of transit stations and vehicles. These actions directly support the City's Enhanced Transit Safety Plan which sees the City actively working with partners to improve safety and security on transit, including the provincial government, EPS, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society and other community partners.

## **ETS Annual Service Plan Launch**

On April 11, the [ETS Annual Service Plan](#) launched to the public. The Annual Service Plan highlights ETS' achievements in 2022 as well as projects and service plans for 2023. Among other projects, during 2023 ETS will focus on making further improvements to transit service, promoting transit equity, improving safety and security, and conducting outreach and engagement for the phased implementation of Arc.

## **April Service Adjustments**

Five times a year, ETS implements service adjustments to make service more efficient and effective for riders. On April 30, ETS will implement regular spring service adjustments to various bus routes and On Demand Transit. A summary of some of the changes riders will experience is outlined below:

### Bus Service

- Route 940X will be cancelled due to not meeting ridership standards outlined in Transit Service Standards Procedures (Policy 539A). Riders will instead be able to use alternative routes 901 and 5.
- Route 622 to Concordia University of Edmonton will be suspended until the start of the Fall 2023 term due to the Winter 2023 term ending.
- Frequency will be reduced on the following routes to match seasonal travel patterns: 1A, 1B, 2, 118, 122, 130X, 140X, 150X, 700X, 702, 900X, 904, 97, 921.
- Some routes will be on detour at certain points due to construction projects, including routes 5, 2, 101, 998, 106, 150X, 613, 624, 625, and 684.

### On Demand Transit

- On Demand Transit riders in Glenridding Ravine will see six new stops being added to the neighbourhood due to the completion of new collector roads. These stops will be closer to residences and will help enhance pedestrian safety
- In response to the new Glenridding stops, four stops on Rabbit Hill Road will be removed.
- Four new stops are also being added in Edgemont to better accommodate On Demand Transit riders in the area.

### **Capital Line South Update**

Administration provided an update to City Council on the Capital Line South project on April 14. Phase one of the project extends Capital Line South by 4.5 kilometres from Century Park to Ellerslie Road. Early construction work is ongoing in 2023, with major construction work expected to start in spring 2024. Since the business case was first developed in September 2020, estimated project costs have increased due to economic challenges associated with COVID-19, including inflation, supply chain disruptions and labour availability. In order to keep the project within the approved funding amount, Administration recommended revisions to the project scope proponents, including but not limited to reducing the number of LRVs, storage garage capacity and deferral of the Heritage Valley Park & Ride expansion as well as other expansions to future projects. City Council is currently assessing the project scope revisions and will make a decision on the project.

### **Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) Replacements Procurement Update**

City Council approved a Bylaw 20421 which would allow the City to borrow the sum of \$240.5 million to purchase new replacement LRVs. The capital profile was approved by Council during the 2023-26 Capital Budget deliberations. Funding would allow the City to procure 37 new LRVs to replace the existing U2 LRV fleet which was first purchased in 1977. The LRV specification and long-term procurement contract is being updated this year and the target is to have the 37 replacement LRVs ordered in 2024. The first replacement LRV is expected to be put in service in 2027.

### 3. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2023

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
<b>Upcoming reports being led by ETS:</b>			
CO01562	Bus Service for Youth After School Hours - Approach and Work Plan	June 20, 2023	UPC
CO01337	Edmonton Transit Services in Newer Developing/Developed Communities	June 20, 2023	UPC
CO01551	Developer-funded Transit Service Options to Support Early Adoption of Transit in New Neighbourhoods	June 20, 2023	UPC
COXXXXX	Transit Safety Update (TBD)	June 2023	CPSC
CO01552	Commingle Paratransit and On Demand Services	November 28, 2023	UPC
CO01632	Direct Downtown to Airport Bus Route	December 6, 2023	CC
CO01580	Fare Policy Amendment - Children Under 12	TBD	CC
<b>Other upcoming reports of interest:</b>			
OCM01797	Advancing Edmonton's Safety and Security	May 1, 2023	CPSC
FCS01246	Revenue Source for Transit - Potential, Risk and Implementation and Intergovernmental Advocacy	TBD (Q3 2023)	Exec

\*Subject to change

CC = City Council

CPSC = Community and Public Services Committee

Exec = Executive Committee

UPC = Urban Planning Committee