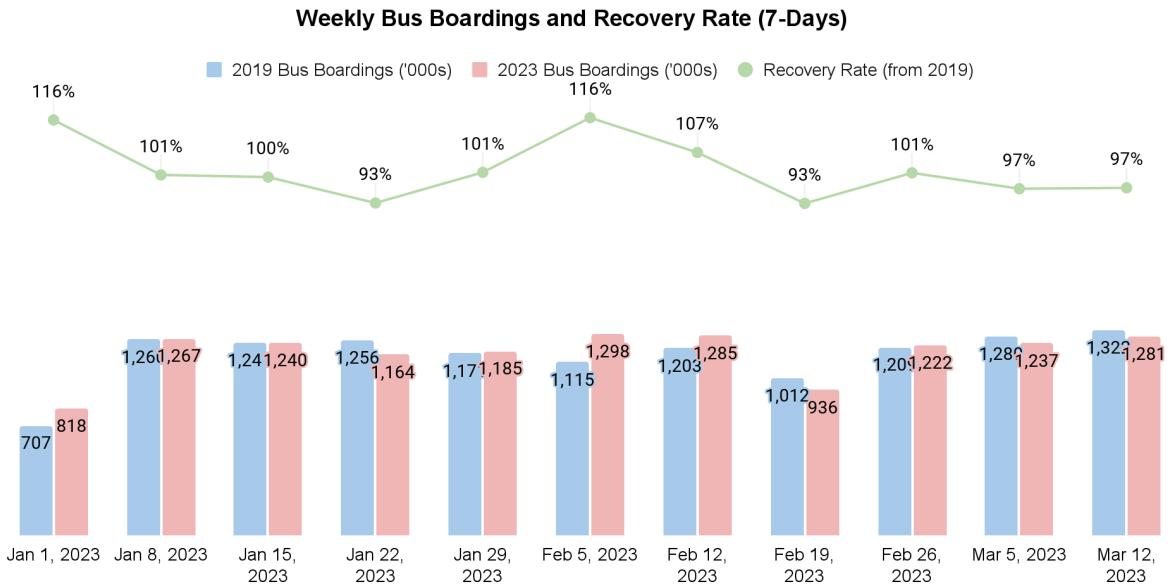


ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: March 27, 2023

1. RIDERSHIP



The week of March 12-18 saw a total of 1.28 million in bus boardings, representing 97% of bus boardings during the same week in 2019 and a 32% increase from 973,148 bus boardings for the same week in 2022. Bus boardings increased by 4% from the previous week (March 5-11), which had 1.24 million in bus boardings.

With an average of 1.2 million bus boardings per week since the beginning of 2023, ridership is on par with the weekly average bus boardings for the same period in 2019. Fluctuations in ridership recovery are expected over the next few months, however overall our ridership recovery has been significantly higher than the Canadian average for public transit agencies which was at 74% of 2019 levels as of January 2023.

2. ETS UPDATES

Community Outreach Transit Teams

The Community Outreach Transit Team (COTT) program first launched in July 2021 with funding for two teams. In February 2022, COTT received additional funds through the Transit Safety Plan which enabled the program to expand to a total of seven teams. The program currently has five operational teams and is working to scale up to seven teams. Bent Arrow and the City are currently determining timelines and details around the expansion of the outstanding two teams. COTT is a partnership between Transit Peace Officers and Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society Outreach Workers, and provides compassionate, trauma-informed support to individuals in transit spaces who are struggling with issues such as housing, mental health, and substance use support. Between September 2021 and September 2022, COTT had 2,700 general interactions with people in transit spaces where they shared information about the program and how they can help. Also during this time, there were 510 engagements where they referred individuals to other agencies and services to access further support and resources.

Ongoing operational funding for COTT was approved by Council during the 2023-2026 Council budget deliberations. On March 20, 2023, the Community and Public Services Committee approved an extension to the service agreement with Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society for an additional three years, to August 2026.

Ride Transit Program Update

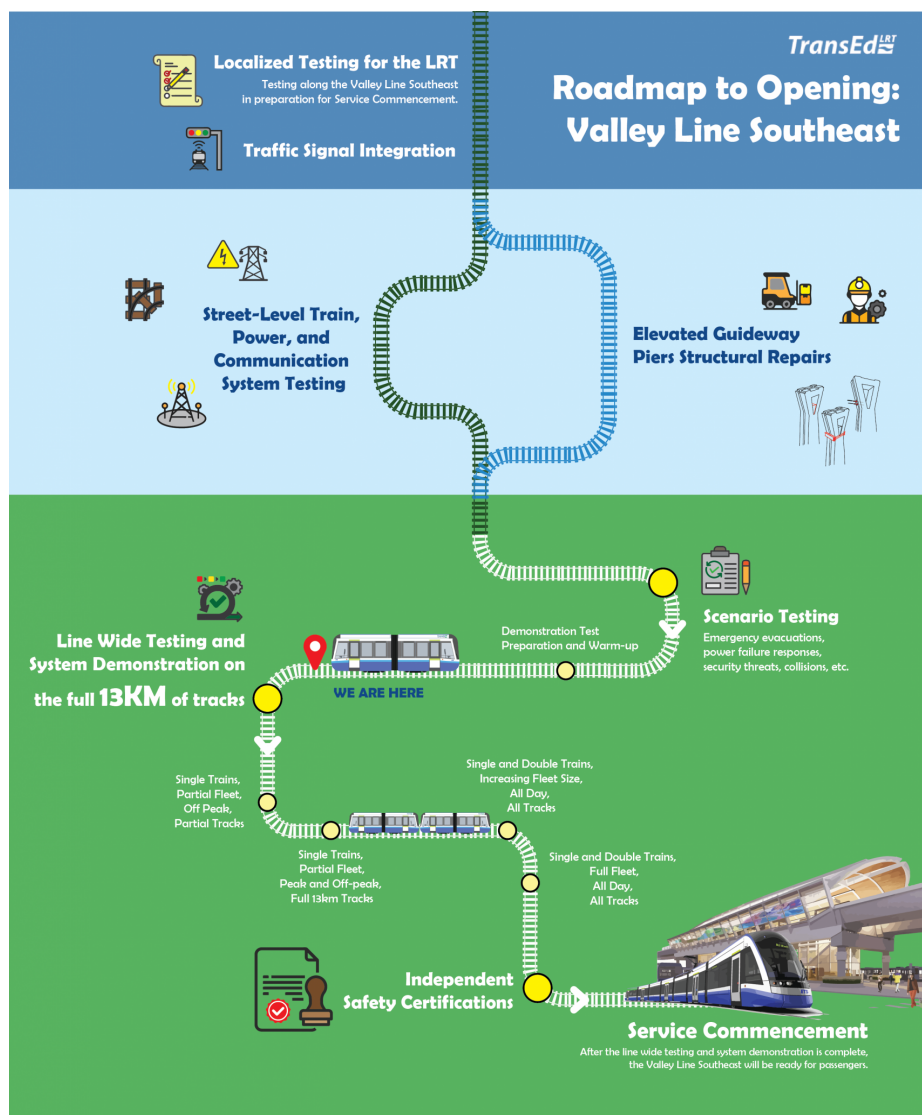
Since 2017, the Ride Transit program has played an important role in helping Edmontonians experiencing low income access affordable transit fare. Several changes to the program have been implemented over the last few years to reduce barriers to accessing the program and in 2022 an action plan was developed based on feedback from the 2021-2022 engagement on ETS' low income fare programs. The City of Edmonton is pleased to announce that two action items for the Ride Transit programs were implemented on March 1 to further improve access to the program:

1. Registered Social Worker Letter: The list of qualifying documents for proof of eligibility for the Ride Transit program expanded with the addition of the letter from a registered social worker (RSW). The goal is to support individuals and families who have experienced sudden changes in income, need affordable access to public transit and are unable to apply for the Ride Transit program through a Notice of Assessment or any of the other qualifying documents. Those applying through this method will only be eligible for the Ride Transit program and not the Leisure Access Program.
2. Conditional Program Eligibility: To support individuals and families who need immediate access to discounted transit passes, Ride Transit and Leisure Access Program applicants are now able to submit their completed application form and supporting documentation at the Edmonton Service Centre to be considered for conditional eligibility to the Ride

Transit program. With conditional eligibility, applicants are able to purchase a discounted Ride Transit pass on the spot. At this stage, applicants are not officially approved for the Leisure Access and Ride Transit programs and will be notified by the City of Edmonton once they are officially approved for the programs.

Valley Line Southeast

On March 10, TransEd provided an update on Valley Line Southeast with an infographic showing the roadmap to progress and to the opening of the Valley Line Southeast LRT. TransEd has reached its “warm-up” phase which will see more trains running along the tracks from Mill Woods to Downtown to help drivers and pedestrians become more accustomed to how the Valley Line trains operate. The second phase will be System Demonstration testing with end-to-end testing of the complete LRT system. Trains will mimic different frequencies with more trains running during peak travel times and fewer during off-peak hours. More information will be shared about the timing of when the line will be open to the public once TransEd has made further progress on line-wide testing.



3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

Arc Update

The launch of the Arc electronic fare payment system is well underway. More people are opting for Arc each day as they realize the benefits of using the new system. ETS has been rolling out Arc in phases and concession fares (Youth, Seniors, and Ride Transit) will be the next group to transition to Arc, followed by Paratransit. Lab testing has begun for these fare categories and pilots will begin in the summer and continue throughout the remainder of the year. Prior to launching Arc to the new fare categories, outreach will be conducted to ensure a smooth and seamless transition to Arc.

Key Facts and Figures

- The number of Arc cards activated reached 222,000, up by 350% from 49,092 on December 31, 2022.
- Over 1 million taps were registered in February, with standard adult fare riders contributing to 25% of monthly taps.
- The majority standard adult fare riders are loading their Arc purses through the myarc.ca website.

4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2023

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
Upcoming reports being led by ETS:			
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
Other upcoming reports of interest:			
FCS01700	Bylaw 20421 to authorize the City of Edmonton to undertake, construct and finance City Operations Project, LRV Replacements	April 4, 2023	CC
IIS01679	Capital Line South Extension Update	April 14, 2023	Exec
IIS01739	Valley Line Southeast Contract Amendment	April 14, 2023	Exec
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