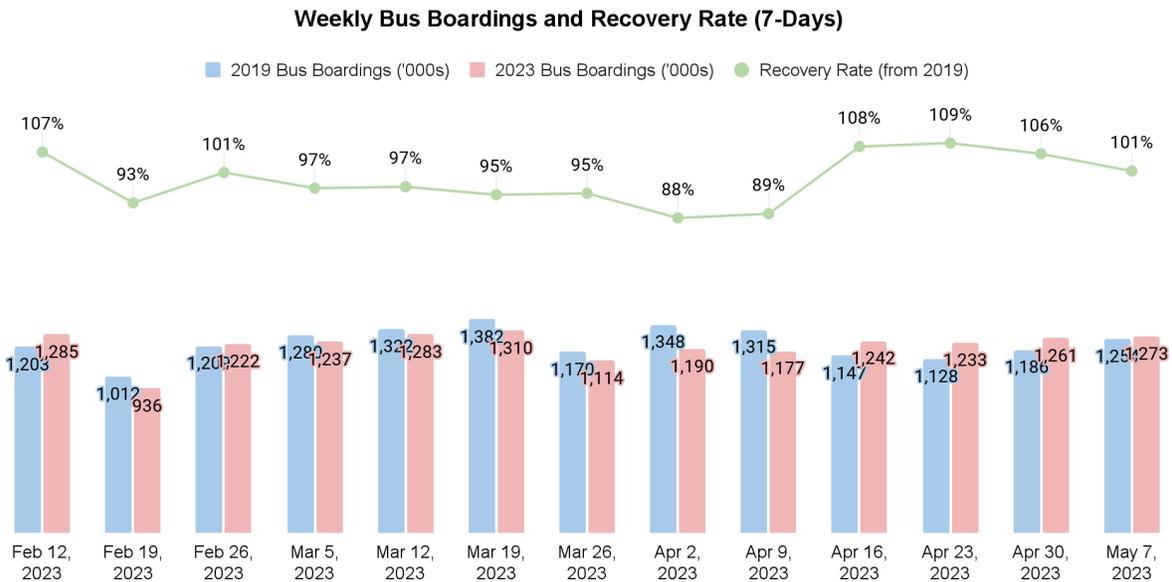


# ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: June 5, 2023

## 1. RIDERSHIP



After a slight dip in March and early April, ridership rebounded with over 1.2 million bus boardings per week during the past four weeks. The week of May 7-13 saw a total of 1.27 million bus boardings, representing a 1% increase from 1.25 million bus boardings during the same week in 2019. The number of bus boardings in the week of May 7-13 increased by 1% from 1.26 million in the previous week (April 30 - May 6).

Total bus boardings were at 5.04 million in April 2023, compared to 3.95 million in April 2022. This represents a significant year-over-year growth of 29%. Moving into the summer months, ETS will continue to monitor how civic events and planned ETS engagement activities will impact transit ridership.

## 2. ETS UPDATES

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

On May 1, Administration provided a verbal update to City Council on Advancing Edmonton's Safety and Security which outlined the City's progress and upcoming actions to improve safety and security on transit, as well as in the downtown and Chinatown areas. The City's integrated approach considers a wide range of perspectives and dimensions in the actions developed to make Edmonton safer. This work includes partnering with Edmonton Police Service (EPS), Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, and other community agencies and orders of government to reduce crime, increase community vibrancy and support greater access to resources for marginalized people. The safety and security presentation featured three key focus areas: the Enhanced Transit Safety Plan, Chinatown Recovery and Downtown Vibrancy.

Under the Enhanced Transit Safety Plan, the action items focus on integration, safety, perception of safety and well-being. These items build and expand upon the initial set of action items identified when the plan was originally approved. Examples of action items are outlined below:

- Implementing Transit Community Action Teams (TCAT)
- Creating organizational capacity through the Transit Safety Working Group and Downtown Pedway Working Group
- CPTED audits of LRT stations and transit centres through a community lens
- Increasing Community Outreach Transit Teams (COTT)
- Launching the Bystander Awareness campaign
- Joint deployment of teams with EPS officers, Transit Peace Officers (TPOs) and community outreach workers
- Additional cleaning budget from the province to enhance cleaning and reduce vandalism
- Additional proactive interventions when there is a crime hotspot
- Working on a shared communications plan with the tripartite members
- Applying the Enhanced Transit Safety Plan to Valley Line to predict and address potential challenges at LRT stops and stations
- Increasing access to the Transit Watch program by improving cellular coverage in transit spaces
- Exploring how to link safety actions to pedways and spaces directly connected to transit
- Using artificial intelligence to assist staff monitoring surveillance cameras
- Continuing the washroom attendant program

EPS also shared a list of actions to help reduce crime in transit spaces, including:

- Continued implementation of the 10-squad model to increase frontline patrol
- Providing support to Health Streets Operations Centre (HSOC) teams at transit locations
- Implementing a Guns and Gangs strategy which aims to suppress gang activity; police officer recruitment and training

- Enhancing transparency and accountability by increasing body-worn cameras on transit police officers

Updates on Chinatown Recovery and Downtown Vibrancy focused on increasing security and cleaning, collaborating with businesses and economic investments that will contribute to the growth of downtown Edmonton.

In the coming months, Administration will continue providing updates to Council on the progress of safety and security initiatives under the Enhanced Transit Safety Plan, Chinatown Recovery and Downtown Vibrancy. A standalone Enhanced Transit Safety Plan implementation update report will be presented on June 19 in addition to monthly verbal updates, currently scheduled for June 13, July 4, August 22 and September 12. Public communications on safety and security will also be rolled out to help increase awareness and improve perceptions of safety among Edmontonians.

### **Summer 2023 Activities**

On June 8-11, ETS is partnering with Sustainival to display the hydrogen fuel bus at the sustainability-focused carnival to promote clean energy. Additionally, as part of an effort to enliven spaces and encourage transit usage throughout the summer, transit riders will see performers from the Alberta Circus Arts Festival at select transit centres leading up to the festival, which takes place June 22-25. ETS is currently exploring other partnership opportunities with festivals taking place in July and August including Taste of Edmonton, K-Days and the Edmonton International Fringe Festival to provide transit access to their volunteers, with plans to designate ETS as the official transportation to and from events.

ETS is also exploring a partnership with Edmonton Public Library (EPL) to engage with young families. Over the course of July and August, ETS and EPL will pilot an initiative where ETS participates in a transit-themed storytime for children aged 3-5 at three branches. With programming led by EPL, families will board an ETS bus and take a short ride to a nearby park for storytime then return to the branch.

### **Grade 6 School Outreach**

In May and June, ETS provided grade 6 students at two public elementary schools their first transit experience. This work is part of a pilot to partner with local school boards to help grade 6 students feel more comfortable using ETS when they transition to junior high school in September. Following a short in-class presentation, students simulate the transit experience on a chartered ETS bus. From the moment they leave the classroom, they learn about rider etiquette, how to stay safe on transit, where to get help and transit information, and safe people they can talk to. Students were very engaged in the experience and teachers provided positive feedback. ETS will look to expand this opportunity for more grade 6 classes in the 2023-24 school year.

### **Summer 2023 Special Event Service**

Edmonton is expected to have a busy summer event season this year. Plans and preparations are being made for Special Event Service to support the transportation of

thousands of Edmontonians to and from community events. Between June and August, ETS will be providing Park & Ride service and charter buses to various events, including but not limited to:

- Edmonton Elks football games - May 27, June 11, June 25, July 13, July 29, August 10 and August 27
- Luke Combs Concert - June 3
- Soundtrack Music Festival - June 16-17
- Canadian Road Cycling Championships - June 24
- Canada Day - July 1
- Concert at Commonwealth - July 2
- K-Days - July 21
- PTO Triathlon - July 22
- Concert at Commonwealth - August 2
- Heritage Festival - August 5-7
- Alberta International Airshow at Villeneuve Airport - August 5
- Edmonton Folk Music Festival - August 10-13
- Cariwest Parade - August 12

### Arc Update

Working together with regional partners, ETS is making progress on the roll out of the Arc fare payment system. Arc is currently being used by U-Pass users and Standard Adult fare riders. The youth pilot will be launching in the summer and will be followed by seniors, and participants of ETS' low income fare programs. Arc validators are also being installed on DATS vehicles to roll out Arc to DATS riders. ETS is actively working on education and outreach plans for the wider transition with each of the fare groups.

### 3. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2023

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
<b>Upcoming reports being led by ETS:</b>			
CO01907	Monthly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	June 13, 2023	CC
CO01920	Regional Update	June 13, 2023	CC
CO01834	Implementation of the Edmonton Transit System Safety Plan	June 19, 2023	CPSC
CO01908	Monthly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	July 4, 2023	CC
CO01922	Monthly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	August 22, 2023	CC

CO01337	Edmonton Transit Services in Newer Developing/Developed Communities	August 29, 2023	UPC
CO01551	Developer-funded Transit Service Options to Support Early Adoption of Transit in New Neighbourhoods	August 29, 2023	UPC
CO01562	Bus Service for Youth After School Hours - Approach and Work Plan	August 29, 2023	UPC
CO01923	Monthly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	September 12, 2023	CC
CO01885	Metro Line to Blatchford Operating Options	September 20, 2023	Exec
CO01580	Fare Policy Amendment - Children Under 12	October 13, 2023	Exec
OCM01136	Bylaw XXXXX - Amendments to Bylaw 8353 - Conduct of Transit Passengers	TBD - Fall 2023	CPSC
CO01552	Commingle Paratransit and On Demand Services	November 28, 2023	UPC
CO01632	Direct Downtown to Airport Bus Route	December 6, 2023	CC
<b>Other upcoming reports of interest:</b>			
FCS01246	Revenue Source for Transit - Potential, Risk and Implementation and Intergovernmental Advocacy	September 4, 2023	Exec
FCS01893	Bylaw 20401 to amend Revised Bylaw 19161, as amended by Bylaw 20210, to authorize the City of Edmonton to undertake, construct and finance Integrated Infrastructure Services Project, New Transit Bus Garage	July 4, 2023	CC

\*Subject to change

CC = City Council

CPSC = Community and Public Services Committee

Exec = Executive Committee

UPC = Urban Planning Committee