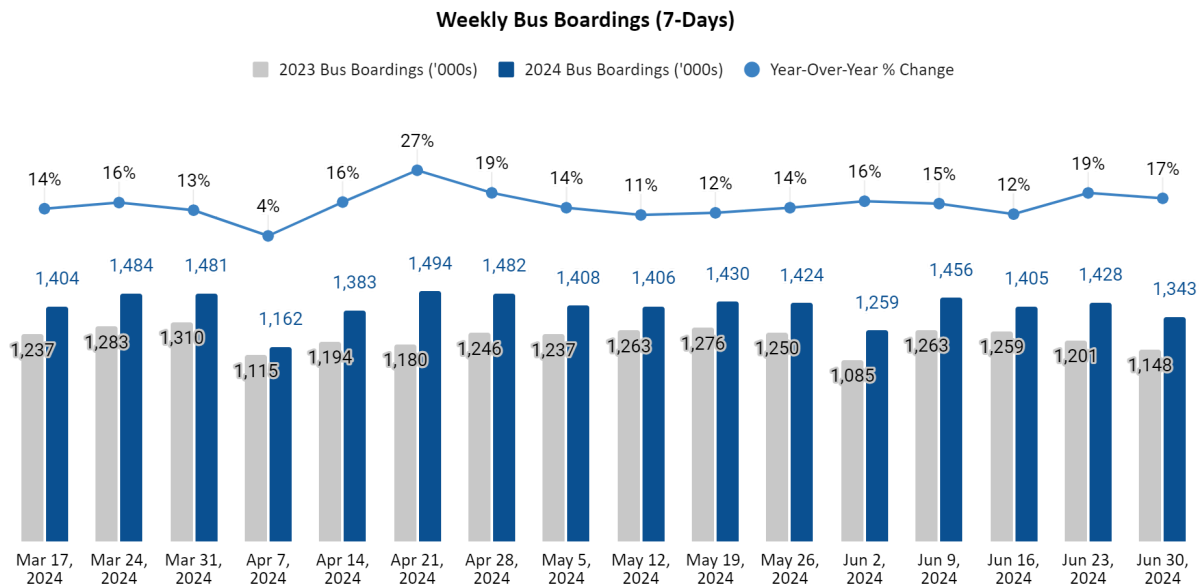


ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: July 29, 2024

1. RIDERSHIP



ETS continues to see strong growth in bus bus boardings year-over-year. In June, bus boardings ranged between 1.26 to 1.46 million per week. The week of June 2-8 observed the lowest boarding levels with 1.26 million total bus boardings due to the Canada Day statutory holiday.

Total bus boardings for the month of June were 5.7 million, representing a 10% increase from 5.2 million in June 2023. The growth in bus boardings was primarily driven by a significant increase in weekend bus boardings, which grew 49% year-over-year. ETS is pleased to welcome more riders choosing transit to get to civic events on weekends. The growth is also attributed to weekend service levels increasing as a result of Council investments to support greater transit access for off-peak and weekend riders.

2. ETS UPDATES

ETS Summer Event Support: KDays

In July, ETS was the Official Public Transportation Provider for KDays. In partnership with KDays and Explore Edmonton, ETS was excited to connect with riders and event attendees through ETS history, nostalgia and free admission to KDays

ETS Exhibit

From July 19 to 28, ETS hosted an exhibit at KDays celebrating the history of public transit in Edmonton. The 8,000 square foot exhibit, with support from the Edmonton Radial Railway Society, created a fun and nostalgic experience for attendees and helped Edmontonians connect to the past, learn more about the present and look forward to the future of ETS. It included a large feature wall with photographs, news articles and historical trivia highlighting key moments throughout ETS' history as well as various ETS historical artifacts.



Transit Tuesday

On Tuesday, July 23, KDays attendees with Arc cards were able to get free general admission from opening to closing by presenting their plastic Arc cards to the guest service attendants at the gates. The purpose was to encourage Arc card adoption and facilitate positive interactions with Arc by connecting people to a well-known Edmonton event.

Other Festival Support

ETS is pleased to support a number of festivals this summer including the Edmonton International Street Performers, Taste of Edmonton, Edmonton Folk Music Festival and the Edmonton International Street Performers Festival.

For the Edmonton International Fringe Festival, ETS provides transit tickets to their community care team to assist vulnerable individuals who are asked to move for the festival. ETS will also have a staged bus on site at KidsFringe on August 19-20 to engage with families at the festival.

Edmonton Elks

As part of the ongoing partnership with the Edmonton Elks, three player appearances are scheduled in select transit centres. Riders can meet some of the players, get autographs and get tickets to an upcoming game (while supplies last). The first player appearance was July 10 at Northgate Transit Centre, with the next two to follow on August 7 at West Edmonton Mall Transit Centre and September 18 at University Transit Centre.

Edmonton Public Library Partnership

Following the success of the *Next Stop: Storytime* initiative in 2023, Edmonton Public Library (EPL) and ETS are bringing it back this summer, and expanding it to eight branches, up from three last year. This partnership takes EPL's storytime program for young families on the road. A chartered bus picks up families from the branch and takes families to a nearby park for storytime and songs. This program provides an opportunity to engage with young families by providing one of their first rides on a city bus.

Participating branches this year include Stanley A. Milner, Heritage Valley, Meadows, Castle Downs, Riverbend, Idylwyld, Lois Hole and Calder. Families interested in participating in the program can register through EPL.



DATS Q2 2024 Update

- Arc validators have been implemented for all vehicles and DATS is actively accepting Arc as payment.
- The DATS online booking platform is in the process of being upgraded and is expected to be launched for use by DATS riders in Q4 2024.
- DATS Operators have merged with Conventional Transit Operators into one classification allowing for more opportunities to address coverage throughout the year.
- DATS is undergoing an audit by the City Auditor with an audit report expected in 2025.
- DATS has developed processes for appointment times and is piloting limited use of this with certain riders with early morning appointments.

Arc Update

Arc for Ride Transit

On July 9, Arc was officially launched for the Ride Transit Program. The Ride Transit Program provides subsidized transit passes to Edmontonians experiencing low income. Over 100,000 Edmontonians have been approved for the Ride Transit Program. Of those approved, nearly

30,000 Edmontonians actively participate in the Ride Transit Program by purchasing monthly Ride Transit paper passes.

The City of Edmonton began offering Ride Transit Program participants Arc information packages including one free Arc card and instructions for creating and using an Arc account. The information packages are distributed at City of Edmonton Community Recreation Centre locations where Ride Transit paper passes are currently sold (Clareview, Commonwealth, Terwillegar and The Meadows) as well as the Edmonton Service Centre. Participants are also able to request to receive Arc information packages by mail.

Support for Ride Transit Program participants in their transition to Arc includes the following:

- Drop-in sessions to provide in-person support for setting up Arc accounts and answering questions at the four City recreation centres and the Edmonton Service Centre from July to November 2024 .
- Arc information sessions offered to external organizations serving individuals and families experiencing low income, including newcomers and other eligible Ride Transit Program riders.
- Information guides for organizations and agencies supporting eligible Ride Transit Program participants.

For more details on Arc for Ride Transit, visit edmonton.ca/ArcRideTransit.

Arc for ETS@Work Program

In partnership with Edmonton employers, the ETS@Work program provides employees with a monthly discount of up to 24% off the cost of a regular adult monthly pass, plus further eligibility for a federal tax credit. Over 1,100 monthly passes are sold each month through the program. The pilot for the external ETS@Work program participants is anticipated to launch in fall 2024.

Next Phases

As the last fare groups transition to Arc, ETS is developing a plan to phase out paper fare products, including monthly passes and tickets. The next phase of Arc will be implementing the open payment system, which is being planned to occur in 2025. More details will be provided at a later date.

Youth on Transit Research

Youth riders are an important rider segment for ETS and represented the largest ridership group in 2023. The City of Edmonton recognizes helping youth riders feel supported and safe can establish transit as a lifelong preferred travel mode.

To help ETS improve access to transit for youth and retain youth as lifelong riders, ETS aims to further understand youth perceptions of transit. In July 2024, ETS is launching a youth in transit research project to understand the perceptions, motivations and barriers of transit use among youth. The research will focus on youth transit riders in Grade 7 during the

2024/25 school year and up to age 24. In August, the project will kick-off with the qualitative research component which will involve focus groups and interviews with youth. Qualitative research is used to gain more actionable insights to inform service and program enhancements.

The second phase of the research project will be a survey to help confirm and quantify the findings from the qualitative research through survey data. These two research methods supplement each other, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

The youth in transit research project is an addition to ETS's comprehensive rider research program which includes several research streams, including a monthly transit rider satisfaction survey, and annual paratransit satisfaction survey.

August Council Reports

In August 2024, City Administration will be presenting the following reports to Council:

- CO02505 Ride Transit Program Funding Gap - an information report responding to the motion passed at the May 23, 2024 Executive Committee meeting. The report outlines options to address the Ride Transit Program funding gap.
- CO02506 Implementation of Transit Revenue Actions - an information report responding to the motion at the May 23, 2024 Executive Committee meeting. The report provides information on the process to implement items P-18 (create an online store for ETS souvenirs or merchandise) and P-17 (enhance ETS fare collection for special events to decrease fare evasion and increase revenues) outlined in Attachment 7 of the April 23, 2024, Financial and Corporate Services report FCS02361.

A detailed schedule of upcoming reports is available in the ETS Council Report tracking section below.

3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

LRT Safety Presentation For Grade 1 Students in Millbourne

Request: Who delivered the LRT safety presentation to Grade 1 students and why was the presentation not focused on accessibility?

The presentation was delivered by an ETS LRT Inspector and Rail Safety Engineer. The request for a presentation was submitted by a Grade 1 teacher at Greenview School. The teacher advised the Grade 1 class was learning about local landmarks as part of their social studies curriculum, and was planning a field trip on the Valley Line LRT to see some of them. To enhance the experience, a presentation about LRT safety, along with an escorted LRT ride was requested. The presentation to the Grade 1 class was adapted from an existing classroom presentation that had been used in the years leading up to the opening of the Valley Line Southeast LRT to promote safety around trains.

Pedestrian Barriers at Bonnie Doon LRT Stop

Request: Are the pedestrian barriers at Bonnie Doon stop permanent to prevent crossings?



The fencing in the photos above is by the LRT tracks and was installed for safety reasons. This fencing is permanent and part of the design of the Valley Line Southeast.



The fencing in the photos above is by the landscaping strip adjacent to the Bonnie Doon Mall parking lot. This fencing is temporary for work being done by Bonnie Doon Mall. This is not part of the Valley Line Southeast.

4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2024

| Report # | Report Title | Meeting Date* | Committee* |
|--|---|--------------------|------------|
| Upcoming reports being led by ETS: | | | |
| CO02505 | Ride Transit Program Funding Gap | August 28, 2024 | Exec |
| CO02506 | Implementation of Transit Revenue Actions | August 28, 2024 | Exec |
| EXT02558 | External report from ETSAB: Perception of LRT Safety | September 17, 2024 | UPC |
| CO02559 | Administration Response: ETSAB Perception of LRT Safety | September 17, 2024 | UPC |
| CO02262 | Infrastructure Enhancement for City Transit Facilities (ETS Fare Gates Pilot) | September 17, 2024 | UPC |
| CO02352 | Rider Experience for Paratransit, Dedicated Accessible Transit Service | September 17, 2024 | UPC |
| CO02481 | Transit Service Needs to Meet Population Growth | October 9, 2024 | UPC |
| Other upcoming reports of interest: | | | |
| UPE02216 | Mass Transit: Implementing for 1.25 Million People | August 27, 2024 | UPC |
| FCS02093 | Multi-Year Transit Funding Plan | October 9, 2024 | Exec |

Note: New reports will be added once a report number has been assigned.

*Subject to change

CC = City Council

CPSC = Community and Public Services Committee

Exec = Executive Committee

UPC = Urban Planning Committee