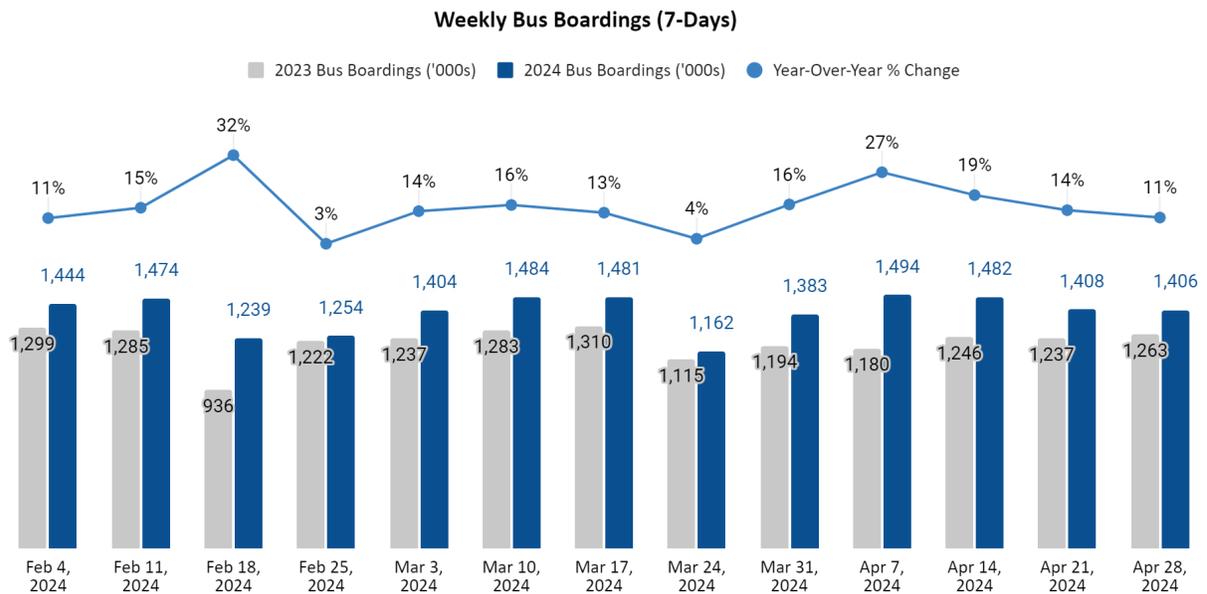


ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: May 27, 2024

1. RIDERSHIP



Total bus boardings¹ averaged at 1.4 million per week during April 2024. Bus boardings were highest at nearly 1.5 million during the week of April 7-13, which saw a 27% growth over the same week in 2023. Overall, there were 6.23 million monthly bus boardings in April, representing a 23% increase from 5.06 million in April 2023.

ETS continues to see significant increases in bus boardings year-over-year. This is driven by rider experience enhancements and investments over the past two years, including safety and security, equity measures, service planning and faring.

¹ Bus boardings refer to the number of passenger entries onto a bus. A bus boarding is counted through Automated Passenger Counters (APC) each time a passenger boards a bus. Meanwhile, ridership refers to the total number of origin-to-destination trips, regardless of the number of transfers/boardings required to complete the trip. A conventional transit rider may board multiple vehicles (buses / LRT trains / On Demand Transit shuttle buses) to reach their final destination.

2. ETS UPDATES

Girl Guides Transit Scavenger Hunt and Rally

On Saturday, May 11, ETS and Strathcona County Transit supported the Edmonton Area Girl Guides transit scavenger hunt and rally. Participating Girl Guides learned how to use transit and build the skills they need to confidently use it, along with having fun doing it. They started the scavenger hunt at Clareview, Davies or Leger Transit Centre, or Bethel Transit Centre in Sherwood Park, before riding a bus and/or LRT to Churchill Square for a transit “rally”. The event was very successful with over 450 Girl Guides and leaders participating. ETS is exploring an annual transit scavenger hunt with the Edmonton Area Girl Guides.



Summer Outreach and Activities

ETS is partnering with a number of organizations, festival and event producers to support dedicated volunteers and promote transit as the way to get there. This includes providing transit passes to festivals and event producers to help their volunteers get to the festival site. ETS also promotes its partners through the “Your ride to summer fun” campaign on the digital screens in the LRT system and on social media. Partners also provide reciprocal benefits to promote ETS and ridership through their own advertising, social and on-site channels. So far, this year’s partners include:

- Alberta Circus Arts Festival
- Art Gallery of Alberta 100th Anniversary Celebration
- Edmonton Elks
- Edmonton Folk Music Festival
- Edmonton International Fringe Festival
- Edmonton International Street Performers Festival
- K-Days
- Leagues on the Line
- Taste of Edmonton
- Van bLoc Party

Throughout the summer, ETS and Edmonton Public Library (EPL) are bringing back *Next Stop: Storytime*. Following a successful pilot at three EPL branches in 2023, the program is being expanded to eight branches this year (Milner, Heritage Valley, Meadows, Castledowns, Riverbend, Idylwylde, Lois Hole and Calder). Led by librarians, ETS takes EPL’s storytime program on the road to a nearby park where they read stories. It provides an engaging way for young children to learn about riding the bus, often for the first time. Interested families can sign up through EPL’s website.

Summer Special Events Service

ETS will be activating Special Events service to support various community events in the summer and early fall. Some events are being supported through LRT service as well as Park and Ride service. Key events which will be supported through Park and Ride service are outlined below:

Date*	Event*
May 25, June 8, June 14, July 14, July 28, August 11, September 7, September 21, October 5, and October 25	Edmonton Elks Football Games at Commonwealth Stadium
June 22	Red Bull Soapbox Race at Queen Elizabeth Park Road
July 1	Canada Day
August 3 - 5	Edmonton Heritage Festival at Edmonton Exhibition Lands and Borden Parks
August 23 and August 25	Metallica Concert at Commonwealth Stadium
August 31	P!NK Concert at Commonwealth Stadium

*Subject to change

Crime Prevention Week

The Alberta Crime Prevention Week promotes community safety through crime prevention. Everyone has a role to play in making our communities a safer place to live, work and raise families. In recognition of Crime Prevention Week from May 6-8, ETS collaborated with partners to establish a consistent presence of safety and security personnel in downtown LRT stations, including Transit Peace Officers (TPOs), Edmonton Police Service (EPS) and security guards. During this period, safety and security personnel provided information and education to riders on ETS fares and safety measures. TPOs have also been increasing fare inspections and educating riders about fares and enforcement since April 2024.

Arc Update

The next few months will see ETS reach new milestones with the regional Arc fare payment system. Arc pilot testing began for the Ride Transit and Providing Accessible Transit Here (PATH) low income transit fare programs, as well as paratransit through Dedicated Accessible Transit Service (DATS). ETS continues to work with both new and existing Arc users to

support their transition to this new payment system and to help ensure a positive experience.

Ride Transit Program

The Ride Transit Program Arc pilot began on May 1 with approximately 250 participants. The program provides eligible participants experiencing low income with a monthly fare discount. To access the discounted fare cap through Arc, eligible participants are required to complete a pre-verification process when they apply the Ride Transit Program fare profile to their Arc account cards. This pre-verification is an important aspect of transitioning the Ride Transit Program to Arc, as eligibility for discounted fare cannot be verified during fare inspections conducted by Transit Peace Officers. This is different from aged-based fares (seniors and youth), which can be verified through identification. The pilot will test various features, including the verification process, account creation and management, as well as Arc support channels.

PATH

PATH (Providing Accessible Transit Here) provides free monthly transit passes to social agencies who support clients who are houseless, at high risk of becoming houseless or those facing critical housing needs. The Arc PATH pilot started in mid-April with the distribution of monthly passes to select partner agencies. The pilot is expected to run for up to three months.

Paratransit (DATS riders)

The DATS Arc pilot began on April 16, with the primary focus of testing Arc handheld validators on all DATS vehicles. DATS riders will be able to tap their Arc cards on the handheld validators when boarding and exiting DATS vehicles. Some riders have expressed concern about their physical ability to tap cards and ETS is working closely with riders and the accessibility community to remove barriers. DATS Operators will also be collecting rider feedback using provided feedback forms. DATS riders are being supported and informed through the Arc call centre, ETS website, DATS newsletter, and DATS Community Relations.

Ride Transit Program Funding Update Council Report

On May 23, City Administration discussed the CO02390 Ride Transit Program Funding Update report at Executive Committee. The reports and supporting documents can be accessed through the [May 23, 2024 Executive Committee agenda](#). Following the discussion, Executive Committee passed a motion for Administration to prepare a report outlining options to address the Ride Transit Program funding gap, including increased program funding, to support growing demand for discounted fare products and long-term program sustainability, with analysis of the implications of changes to fares and eligibility criteria, due on August 28th. A subsequent motion was passed that Administration provide a report 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) as outlined in Attachment 7 of the April 23, 2024, Financial and Corporate Services report FCS02361.

Upcoming Council Reports

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

- CO02358 Quarterly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - a verbal information report which provides an update on ongoing transit safety and security and downtown safety work.
- CO02414 Sub-Committee Resource Options for Council's Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board - an information report outlining a plan for resourcing an ETSAB sub-committee for the 2024 Work Plan.

3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

Valley Line West LRT Construction Update

In 2024, Marigold Infrastructure Partners (MIP) entered their third year of major construction on the Valley Line West LRT and has continued with project-wide design. Work has started at Lewis Farms (with storage building construction), Gerry Wright OMF (with building expansion), 87th Avenue Elevated Guideway (girder erection began in May 2023), civil drainage and road works at various locations along the alignment, bridge construction on Stony Plain Road over Groat Road and 87 Ave over Anthony Henday Drive, and station construction outside of Misericordia Hospital and West Edmonton Mall. As of April 2024, MIP has achieved 17.3 per cent progress as measured by the Independent Certifier.

Hyundai Rotem Company (HRC) is supplying 46 low-floor light rail vehicles (LRVs) for Valley Line West. The final design of the LRVs is expected to be completed in Q2 2024. Manufacturing will begin shortly after the final design completion.

Valley Line Southeast Infrastructure: Reason for Design of Rider Amenities

Transit amenities and infrastructure along the Valley Line Southeast, including benches and shelters, have been set up to support transit riders. All rider amenities are aligned with the Valley Line LRT Design Guide. The designs are based on global best practices, with a focus on creating a more enjoyable experience for Valley Line Southeast riders.

Mill Woods LRT Stop/Transit Centre: Reason for Increase in Tickets for Illegal Crossings

In March, Transit Peace Officers (TPOs) in partnership with the Edmonton Police Service (EPS) supported an EPS initiative to educate the public on crossing tracks safely at transit stops followed by another week of education and enforcement in these spaces. This was in response to concerns brought forward through TransEd regarding identified safety concerns

with people improperly crossing tracks at the Mill Woods stop. The first phase of the initiative focused on education and the second phase, enforcement.

4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2024

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
Upcoming reports being led by ETS:			
CO02358	Quarterly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	June 11, 2024	CC
CO02414	Sub-Committee Resource Options for Council's Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board	June 19, 2024	Exec
CO02481	Transit Service Needs to Meet Population Growth	August 13, 2024	UPC
TBD	Ride Transit Program Funding Gap (TBD)	August 28, 2024	Exec
TBD	Implementation of Transit Revenue Actions (TBD)	August 28, 2024	Exec
CO02359	Quarterly Update on the Transit Safety Plan and the Downtown Core - Verbal Report	September 10, 2024	CC
CO02262	Infrastructure Enhancement for City Transit Facilities	September 17, 2024	UPC
CO02352	Rider Experience for Paratransit Dedicated Accessible Transit Service	September 17, 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	TBD	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