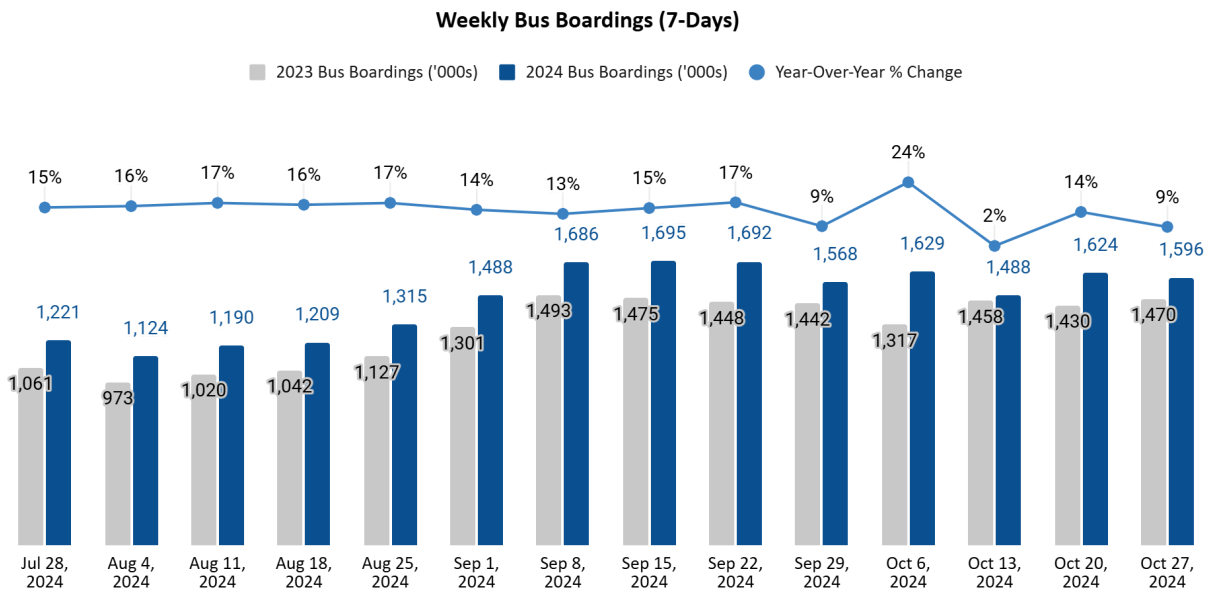


ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: November 25, 2024

1. RIDERSHIP



Bus boardings¹ averaged at 1.58 million per week in October 2024, with each week showing consistent growth from the previous year. The week of October 13-19 saw a slight dip in boardings as it coincided with the Thanksgiving holiday.

Overall transit ridership¹ reached a new monthly record of 6.4 million in October 2024. This replaces September 2024 as the most monthly trips on record. This figure represents a 22% increase in ridership from October 2023, and a 14% increase from October 2019 levels. Ridership is on track to exceed 60 million in 2024.

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

30 Years of Stuff a Bus

This year marks the 30th year of the annual [ETS Stuff a Bus campaign](#) in support of Edmonton's Food Bank. The annual fundraiser, running from November 27 to December 1, is near and dear to many ETS staff who enthusiastically sign up to volunteer as a way to give back to the communities they serve. For one day every year, buses are parked at Save-On-Foods stores across the city to be 'stuffed' with food donations, and Edmontonians are encouraged to leave non-perishable food donations on the bus. This year, the buses will be out on Saturday, November 30. Aside from buses, from November 27-29, Transit Peace Officers cruisers will be stationed at three Save-On-Food stores during the day for "Cram-a-Cruiser". As well as, on November 30 and December 1, two decorated LRT cars will be parked at Century Park and Clareview stations, respectively, where riders can "Stuff a Train" with food donations. The Stuff a Bus campaign is a collaborative effort across the branch and sections supporting ETS.



Holiday Lights Tours

ETS' annual Holiday Lights Tours are back. Tours are being offered December 13 and 15 where guests can view festive light displays from the comfort of an ETS bus. Departing from City Hall, the bus stops at the Alberta Legislature, travels down Saskatchewan Drive and takes riders through Candy Cane Lane. Proceeds from the tours are donated to Edmonton's Food Bank. Similar tours are offered by DATS for their clients to experience the lights.

For the third year in a row, ETS is also offering private tours to social agencies who support our riders. Many agencies work tirelessly to ensure their clients have access to transit services. As a token of our appreciation for the work they do, agencies are offered a private charter at no cost for their staff and clients to enjoy the lights.

Transit Rider Appreciation

Post-Secondary Rider Appreciation

To show our appreciation and to celebrate our growing ridership, ETS visited post-secondary campuses to talk to and provide rider information to students. Transit peace officers joined the ETS outreach team to foster positive relationships with faculty and students. Those



who stopped by the table were offered a cookie sourced from a local bakery.

Valley Line Southeast Anniversary Rider Appreciation

To mark the first anniversary of the Valley Line Southeast LRT, ETS staff with members of the, [Edmonton Transit Riders](#) group were onsite handing out cookies at the Churchill, Bonnie Doon and Mill Woods stops. TransEd staff were also at Davies Station handing cookies to riders. Teams handed out nearly 1,800 cookies to thank riders for choosing transit and taking the Valley Line Southeast.

Post-secondary Winter Orientation

In early January 2025, ETS will be participating in several winter orientation events hosted by post-secondary schools. These events offer an opportunity to connect with students new to Edmonton or ETS as they start their programs in the winter term. Similar to fall orientation events, staff will assist students with trip planning, answering their questions about ETS and providing rider information.

Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival

For the second year in a row, ETS is pleased to partner with Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival produced by Arts on the Ave. This annual winter festival takes place January 18-19, 2025, on 118 Avenue. To support festival volunteers, ETS will provide free transit access so they can get to and from the festival site. ETS is also planning an on-site activation that includes parking a bus on site during the day.

December Service Adjustments

Five times a year, ETS implements adjustments to make service more efficient and reliable for riders based on feedback and seasonal fluctuations in demand.

Beginning December 1, ETS will implement winter service adjustments to various bus routes. Some of the more significant adjustments are outlined below:

School Service

ETS continues to work with Edmonton Public and Edmonton Catholic School Boards to address busy school routes. In October, ETS made minor adjustments and additions to school service to respond to changes in student travel to help student riders get to their destinations this winter season, conveniently and reliably. These changes will be made permanent in the December service change. In addition, other minor adjustments to school service will be made throughout the transit network to help improve reliability and schedule adherence.

On Demand Transit

Starting December 1, a new On Demand Transit stop will be added in the Alces neighbourhood at 34 Street and Charlesworth Drive SW. In addition, Route 914 will return to

its original routing which means the Aldergrove neighbourhood will no longer receive On Demand service.

Construction/Detours

Due to Capital Line South LRT construction, a number of routes are currently experiencing delays at the intersection of 111 Street and 23 Avenue. These delays are expected to increase as construction intensifies around Century Park Transit Centre. To help reduce delays, the following routes will be placed on long-term detour:

- Routes 56, 707, 715, 716 and 717 will detour east on 23 Avenue and northbound on Saddleback Road to Century Park. Riders can board and exit these routes at bus stops #4075 (119 Street and 23 Avenue EB) or #4168 (Saddleback Road & 23 Avenue NB). Routes 56, 707, 715, 716 and 717 operating in the opposite direction will see no change to their routing.
- Route 708, heading southbound, will detour south on 112 Street and then east on Saddleback Road to Century Park. Buses heading north from Century Park to Southgate are unaffected.
- Routes 56, 518 and 519 will detour north on 111 Street, eastbound on 29A Avenue, south on 109 Street, and east on 23 Avenue. Routes 56, 518 and 519 operating in the opposite direction will see no change to their routing. Riders can board and exit at bus stop #4301 (109 Street and 23 Avenue EB) or Century Park Transit Centre.

More information about bus stop closures can be found on the [Transit Alerts](#) page.

Other bus service changes:

- Route 5 (Downtown) will now end its trip at stop 1393 (96 Street and Jasper Avenue eastbound) instead of at stop 1188 (95 Street and Jasper Avenue southbound). This improves schedule efficiencies and will help give operators more route options of roads they can take to get to their next route.
- Routes 7, 9 and 506 had additional trips added in October to help alleviate overcrowding on these buses.
- Route 560 - Spruce Grove's new transit centre will open on December 2 and will serve as a hub for all commuter service. More information is available on the City of Spruce Grove's website.
- The following adjustments were made to school service in early October:
- Route 664 - A new trip was added to this school route to Father Michael McCaffery Catholic High School from the Cashman/Cavanagh neighbourhoods.
- Route 669 - A brand new school route was created to help students get from Keswick to Father Michael McCaffery Catholic High School.
- Routes 645, 646, and 647 had their service to Elder Dr. Francis Whiskeyjack School reduced due to low ridership demand.
- Route 914 will return to its regular routing in Aldergrove.

Riders are encouraged to start planning their trips early by using the trip planner on edmonton.ca/transit or Google Maps and selecting a date after December 1.

Transit Service Needs to Meet Population Growth Report

On October 30, City Administration presented the CO02481 Transit Service Needs to Meet Population Growth Council report at Executive Committee. The report and supporting documents can be accessed through the [October 30, 2024 Executive Committee agenda](#). The report was received for information.

Wrapping Up 2024 and Preparing For 2025

Fall 2024 Supplemental Budget Adjustments

On November 13, City Administration presented the Fall 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment and Fall 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget Adjustment. The reports and supporting documents can be accessed through the [November 13, 2024 City Council agenda](#).

Attachment 7 - Options to Address the Transit Fare Revenue Gap of the Fall 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment report responds to the September 10 Council motion for Administration to bring forward options to the Fall 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment for reallocation within the existing operating budget to support the low income transit pass, Ride Transit Program, on a one-time basis in the amount of \$10.2 million. The four options include one-time use of LRT Reserve; defer planned transit service improvements; revisit transit fare prices; and using tax levy.

Changes to ETS previously approved user fees are also included in the Fall 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment report. To generate additional revenue, ETS will introduce a three-day and five-day Arc transit pass. Additionally, ETS will change the Youth (non-U-Pass) maximum age from 24 years to 18 years, to better align with other transit services across Canada; riders aged 19 to 24 years will have regular adult fare options available. A planned report about the Transit Fare Policy in Q1 2025 will provide additional details.

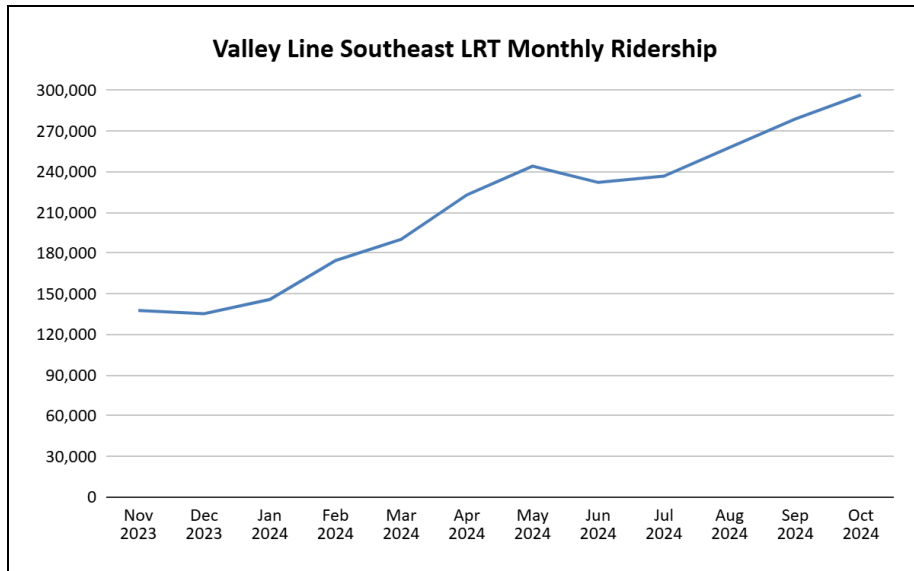
2024-2025 Annual Service Plan

ETS is preparing the 2024-2025 Annual Service Plan which will highlight ETS' achievements initiatives to improve the transit experience in Edmonton in 2024 and 2025. The Annual Service Plan also outlines some of the key service adjustments and growth opportunities planned for 2025 in response to rider feedback, operational performance and ridership patterns. The report is anticipated to launch in Q1 2025.

3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

Valley Line Southeast Ridership

Valley Line Southeast LRT ridership continues to grow month over month since the opening of the 13-kilometre LRT line in November 2023. Monthly ridership on the Valley Line Southeast LRT grew from approximately 138,000 in November 2023 (excluding opening day) to nearly 297,000 in November 2024. The LRT line currently represents 5% of total bus and LRT ridership in Edmonton.



4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2024/2025

Report #	Report Title	Meeting Date*	Committee*
Upcoming reports being led by ETS:			
EXT02558	External report from ETSAB: Perception of LRT Safety	TBD	UPC
CO02559	Administration Response: ETSAB Perception of LRT Safety	TBD	UPC
CO02718	Options to Further Enhance LRT Safety	Q1 2025	CC
CO02675	ETS Fare Policy Review	Q1 2025	Exec
TBC	Administration Response to DATS Audit	Q1 2025 (tentative)	Audit
CO02673	Increasing Efficiency of the Top Bus Routes	Q1 2025	UPC
N/A	ETS Annual Service Plan 2025	Q1 2025	N/A

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

Audit = Audit Committee