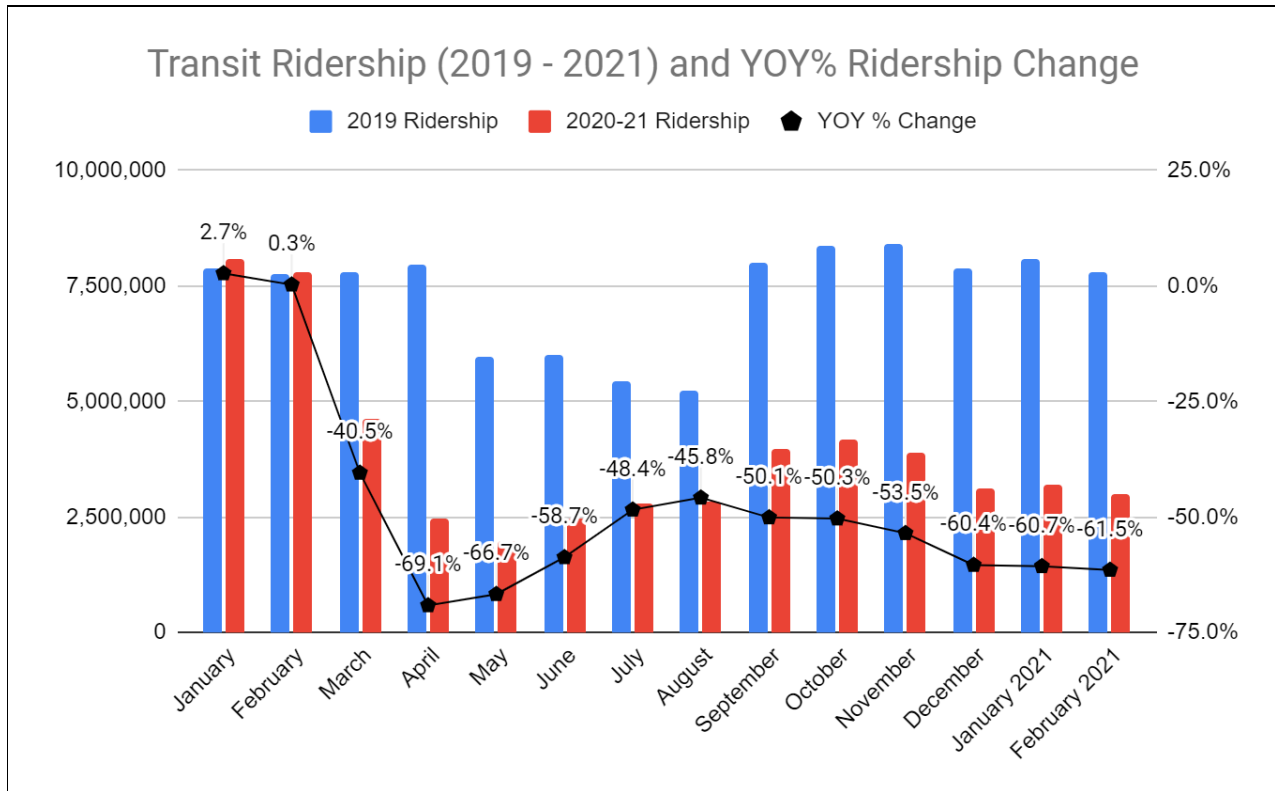


# ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: March 29, 2021

## 1. RIDERSHIP



ETS ridership continues on a similar trend as the previous months. The December restrictions sent numerous organizations into a remote work environment including the Government of Alberta, which may explain some of the continued drop as employees remained at home through February.

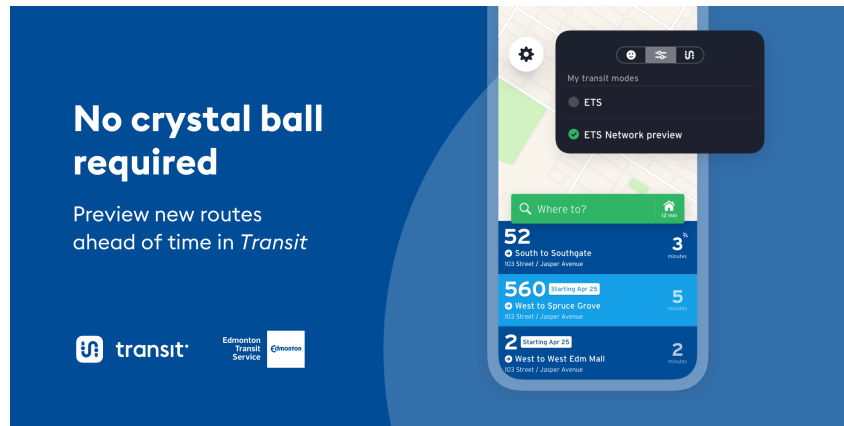
## 2. ETS UPDATES

### BNR Trip Planning Tools Updated

As Bus Network Redesign (BNR) launch date approaches on April 25, ETS is preparing customers to better understand how their routes will be impacted and how they can reach their destinations on the new network. Customers can now use Transit app to preview what their transit trips will look like when the new bus network starts. Transit app is highly recommended for those customers who have a smartphone because its future trip schedules are accurate. Some trips in

other digital tools, such as Google Maps and the ETS Google-powered trip planner, are not accurate for this purpose due to technical issues with the Google platform. We are working to resolve this issue as quickly as possible. Transit app and Google Maps also have accessibility features that can be turned on for customers who need them. This will show trips with less walking distance. **Note: No trip planning tools show On Demand transit trips until April 25.** For more information, visit [edmonton.ca/newbusroutes](https://edmonton.ca/newbusroutes)

Throughout the remainder of March and April, ETS will continue to advertise and bring awareness to the new bus network. Advertisements have been placed online and in social media platforms as well on transit property. Later in April, ETS and City staff will also be doing in-person information sessions at various transit locations to assist transit users with any questions they may have.



### **On-Demand Transit Update**

Coinciding with the launch of the BNR on April 25, On Demand Transit service will start in 37 neighbourhoods and 16 seniors' residences. On Demand Transit trips can be booked starting April 25 and customers will have three options to book a trip: they can download the *Edmonton On Demand Transit* app, book online at [edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit](https://edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit) or phone the On Demand Transit call centre at 780-496-2400. These channels will be ready mid-April so customers can create an account in preparation for when the service launches on April 25.

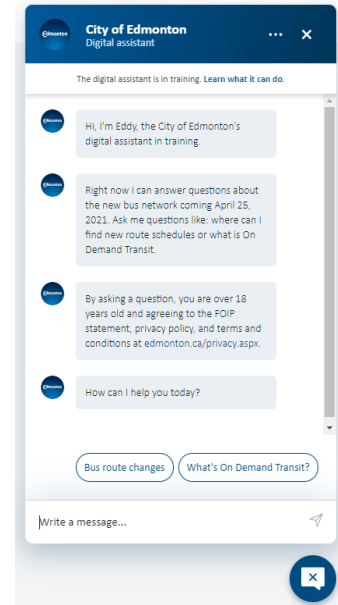
### **ETS Branch Manager Update**

The City of Edmonton has recently announced that Carrie Hotton-MacDonald has accepted ETS' permanent Branch Manager position. Carrie is no stranger to ETS and has been serving as the acting Branch Manager for several months, following several years in the Director of Business Integration and Workforce Development section of ETS. Carrie has been in public transit for nearly a decade and has experience in all three levels of government. Originally from New Brunswick, Carrie moved to Edmonton with her husband and son, as well as their two dogs.

As a result of this change, Sarah Feldman has accepted the position of Director of Business Integration and Workforce Development. Sarah currently serves as the Director of Planning and Scheduling and is overseeing the Bus Network Redesign and On Demand Transit projects.

## City of Edmonton Launches New Digital Assistant

The City of Edmonton has launched a new digital assistant that can answer basic questions about the new bus network and On Demand Transit service. To use the digital assistant, click on the icon (speech bubble with three dots) in the bottom right corner of the webpages [edmonton.ca/newbusroutes](http://edmonton.ca/newbusroutes) and [edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit](http://edmonton.ca/ondemandtransit) and type your question into the text field. The digital assistant responds best to short, simple requests. The digital assistant is currently “in training,” which means the more people use it and ask it questions, the better it will learn to adapt and become a more useful tool for our customers.



## Additional Security at Transit Centres and LRT Stations

ETS takes an integrated multi-layered approach to safety and security on transit, and is currently in the process of increasing the number of police officers, peace officers and security guards on transit. Police officers and peace officers conduct proactive patrols on transit property, while security guards provide oversight at 19 transit facilities, and report directly to the ETS Control Centre. In addition, community engagement teams, in conjunction with the Edmonton Police Service (EPS), are doing in-person engagement sessions at various transit facilities throughout March and April. They are helping to further activate transit facilities and handing out safety-related information. As a reminder, if you see a security concern on transit, if you can text or call the **Transit Watch** number at 780.442.4900. It connects directly to the ETS Control Centre.

As discussed at the March 23 Urban Planning Committee, Administration will be reviewing security measures to report on their effectiveness. This report is expected in May 2021.

## U-Pass Update

The current COVID-19 vaccination schedule is giving some hope to a return to in-person instruction at Alberta’s post-secondary institutions. ETS has been working with post-secondary institutions throughout the pandemic to ensure students have access to transit while they are not participating in the U-Pass program that has been suspended since April 2020. If in-person instruction returns in fall 2021, the U-Pass program will resume. The U-Pass provides ETS with a significant portion of ridership and revenue.

In spring 2021, the students at U-Pass participating institutions voted to ratify new U-Pass Agreements which would take effect in fall 2021 until 2025.

### 3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

None.

#### 4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2020-21

| SIRE     | Report Title   | Meeting Date    | Committee |
|----------|--|-----------------|-----------|
| 6778     | Update on the Bus Network Redesign - Valley Line SE Increased Service Level Operations | April 12        | Exec      |
| CO00444  | Transit Fee Schedule   | April 12        | Exec      |
| CO00410  | Transit Statistics 2019 and 2020   | April 13        | UPC       |
| IIS00416 | ETS Fleet Storage and Maintenance Facility Project                                     | May 10          | Exec      |
| COxxxx   | Transit Safety and Security Measures   | May 11          | UPC       |
| EXT00489 | Edmonton Transit Advisory Board: Inclusive Transit                                     | May 25          | UPC       |
| COXXXX   | Administration Response: Inclusive Transit   | May 25          | UPC       |
| COxxxx   | DATS Program Service Enhancements Update   | June 2021       | TBD       |
| 8198     | Bus Network and On-Demand Service Implementation Update                                | August 11, 2021 | CPSC      |
| COxxxx   | Transit Safety and Security Annual Update  | October 2021    | TBD       |
| COxxxx   |  | Q1 2022         | TBD       |
| COxxxx   |  | Q1 2022         | TBD       |

\*Not an ETS lead report

AC = Audit Committee

CC = City Council

CPSC = Community and Public Services Committee

Exec = Executive Committee

IRCD = Inter-municipal and Regional Development Committee

UPC = Urban Planning Committee