

## Edmonton Transit System (ETS)



**AUGUST 26, 2013**

### **1. ETS News**

#### **ETS Every Day Way to Take ETS Back to School**

August and September are really busy months at ETS as we ramp up our service for those going back to school and work, and we also start a major outreach program to provide service and program information for post secondary students.

The Fall 2013 U-Pass will be available during the registration process to qualifying students at NAIT, MacEwan, University of Alberta and our newest member, NorQuest.

Starting in late August we'll be at NAIT, MacEwan, U of A and NorQuest providing transit information for students and staff.

Youth monthly passes for elementary, junior high and senior high students are valid for travel every day of the week. Students can buy their passes at the schools they attend.

For more information, look for the ETS Service Changes brochure on buses later this month.

#### **2013 Fringe Ride Home Promotion**

ETS is again partnering with The Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival to offer our Free Ride Home Promotion every day of the festival, August 15-25.

Your Fringe program has a page of ETS vouchers dated for each day of the festival.

The daily voucher can be exchanged for an ETS ticket at the Fringe Information Services after 4 p.m.

With your ETS ticket you can pick the bus stop and the route to travel home from your Fringe venue. (Routes 4, 7, 52, 57 and 94 travel on Whyte Avenue.)

#### **New Health Sciences/Jubilee Pedway**

The new pedway crossing over 114 Street, connecting the Health Sciences/Jubilee LRT Station with the Edmonton Clinic South and Edmonton Health Academy is now open. The pedway, located over the north end of the LRT station, will provide users of the hospital and surrounding facilities with improved pedestrian safety while reducing street-level congestion. The pedway can be accessed by escalator, elevator or stairs from the LRT platform.

Thank you to our customers using Health Sciences/Jubilee Station for your patience while the pedway was under construction.

### **North LRT to NAIT Update**

#### **Testing For Safety**

Starting in July, residents may notice crews testing warning bells and gates at intersections along the North LRT to NAIT right-of-way. The warning bells are necessary safety devices to alert motorists, pedestrians and cyclists that trains are approaching the crossing, with the intent of preventing a collision. While trains won't be running on the track until the fall when testing and commissioning of the Metro Line begins, rigorous testing of the signals and systems is required for public safety and to ensure operational efficiency.

The City of Edmonton recognizes the need to strike a balance between safety and reducing impact to surrounding residential communities. When the City builds a major transportation facility like the LRT, adjacent to or through a residential area, it must follow the Urban Traffic Noise Policy which sets a standard of 65 decibels (dBA<sub>Leq24</sub>), measured over a 24-hour time period, as a threshold. Preventative measures such as electronic bells that are directed to pedestrians instead of railroad-style bells will also be used to limit the potential for noise to carry beyond pedestrian areas. Noise levels will be monitored and mitigated, if necessary to meet City policy.

### **Stations**

Contractors are putting the finishing touches on MacEwan and Kingsway Stations including signage, access ramps, lighting, ventilation and plumbing. When landscaping for MacEwan plaza begins later this summer, residents will see the area evolve into an open space with park benches and grassy areas surrounded by shrubs, perennials, coniferous and deciduous trees.

The temporary NAIT Station is now complete along with the surrounding architectural fencing. Crews are working on grading and paving the sidewalks and plaza adjacent to the station.

### **Tunnel**

Workers have completed pouring the invert and are finishing pouring concrete in tunnel archways and walls along the 700 metres of underground tunnel. Workers are also preparing the tunnels for rail placement.

### **Congratulations on Your Retirement!**

On June 27, colleagues and friends gathered to pass on good wishes to Dennis Nowicki on his last day with ETS before heading off to enjoy retirement. Dennis began his 36+ year career with the City of Edmonton in November 1976 as a Planner. The City's

structure was different back then, but he was involved in planning and coordinating land use and development from a Transit perspective. He held a variety of positions within Transportation and Transit, including a stint in the marketing functions of Transit. Dennis became Director of DATS in 1993, where, among many firsts, he oversaw the transformation of the contractor model to the business model we have today. He started his most recent portfolio as Director of Community Relations in 2006, where he oversaw another major organizational change as the City's various call centres, including the ETS call centre, were transitioned into the City's 311 call centre. Dennis also gets credit for the "job of a century," organizing and implementing the Centennial celebrations for Edmonton Transit.

### **ETS Earns CUTA Safety Award**

Edmonton Transit was pleased to receive a CUTA Corporate Leadership Award for Safety and Security of the CUTA Spring Conference in St. John's this year. The award recognizes transit organizations for their commitment to enhancing the safety and security of transit employees and/or customers through the development of effective safety and security programs.

ETS won the award for its S'No Fun to Fall initiative. This annual awareness campaign was developed to inform and educate employees on the importance of wearing quality, slip-resistant footwear to prevent slips and falls. Credit for the award goes to a coordinated team of Transit and CoE employees who worked on developing the idea and materials for the program and to everyone who makes it a success by getting actively involved in implementing the program each year. We couldn't do it without our Safe Sole checkers! Congratulations and thank you to all.

### **ETS Safe Driving Awards**

#### **The Story of the Ring**

Edmonton Transit has a long history of providing safe, reliable public transit services to the citizens of Edmonton. Safe driving is such an important component of our service that ETS launched a recognition program – the Safe Drivers Awards – to acknowledge operators who maintained a perfect driving record throughout the year. This year marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the Safe Drivers program. As our city grows and our roadways become more congested, the Operator's driving skills are increasingly tested, but they continue to meet the challenges of providing professional, courteous, safe service.

From its inception in 1952, the Safe Drivers program was modified as time went on and Operators achieved ever greater milestones. In 1983, Jacob Wasylycia reached an historic first, becoming the first Operator to achieve a 30-year safe driving record. He was awarded the first gold ring at the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Safe Drivers Presentation held at the Convention Inn South in 1984. The idea for the ring came from then Supervisor of Safety and Training, Jerry Hadley.

Brian Deakin recalls that awards banquet where he watched as Jacob received the very first ring. He had been with Edmonton Transit for three years at the time and was receiving his second Safe Drivers award. "It was quite a record. I saw it as something to strive for," says Brian of Jacob's record.

Brian reached that goal in 2012. He received his 30-year ring in June this year. His reflections on that very first ring award sparked this story.

## **DATS News**

### **Transit 101**

ETS Customer Training continues to offer monthly "Transit 101" sessions at Percy Wickman Garage. These free two-hour classes provide a comprehensive introduction to Edmonton Transit's accessible services, features, and programs, with a one-hour classroom information session and a one-hour hands-on practice session with a bus. Classes include an ETS website navigation introduction, instruction on how to use the online Trip Planner, and information on customer tools, passenger safety and security, and other customer resources. Classes are on September 3, October 1, November 5 and December 10.

For more information, and/or to sign up for a free class, call the Mobility Choices Customer Training office at [780-496-3000](tel:780-496-3000), or email [ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca](mailto:ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca).

### **Seniors on the Go Travel Training**

Since 2007, the Seniors on the Go (SOTG) program has benefited over 2700 seniors in Edmonton. This summer, DATS hosted 28 sessions reaching out to over 450 seniors in the city. The most popular tour destinations included the LRT, High Level Bridge Streetcar, and Callingwood Farmer's Market. The SOTG program is intended to educate seniors on the accessibility and security features of the ETS in order to ensure that they feel comfortable, confident, and secure while using public transit.

Feedback was very positive:

*"This is an excellent way to get information out to seniors!"*

*"Being picked up and returned at our location was great. Loved the LRT tour. Great presentation!"*

*"Good job! Love the program!"*

*"ETS is so convenient and so senior friendly!"*

### **DATS Application Process**

Following a summer of planning, trials, and collecting and implementing feedback, DATS is preparing to launch our new application process. Starting in September, new applicants to DATS will see the following changes:

- Initial Contact to DATS - Potential applicants will contact DATS Customer Care to obtain an application form. This is a chance to provide and receive

more information at intake. It also allows us to share information about the accessible features of ETS, ETS Customer Training, and if appropriate, refer them for training or directly enroll them into a Transit 101 class.

- Application Form - DATS has a new application form package that is based on a person’s specific physical and cognitive abilities to ride transit. Following the Initial Contact to DATS, Customer Care will provide the package that is specific to their needs.
- In-Person Interviews - The majority of applicants will participate in an in-person interview. This provides a more complete understanding of an applicant’s ability to use public transit and will include general observation of abilities, discussion of application form responses, and conversation regarding transit use and abilities and challenges.

**Note:** Informed by public consultations, research, and best practices, the new application process addresses the need to get more information at intake. The changes are also influenced by global trends including a growing and aging population and the movement towards inclusive communities. Fixed-route ETS buses and LRT are more accessible than ever. In fact, this October marks the 20th Anniversary of Low Floor Buses!s the need to get more information at intake. The changes are also influenced by global trends including a growing and aging population and the movement towards inclusive communities. Fixed-route ETS buses and LRT are more accessible than ever.

## 2. JUNE Statistics

Transit Ridership Information for June 2013	
Ridership	Total Year to Date
2012	41,480,675
2013	44,100,505
Change from 2012 to 2013	2,619,830
Percentage Change	6.32

## 3. Minutes from Council and Committees of Council

City Council Minutes – July 17, 2013

3.4

[Smart Bus Implementation – Options for Funding\(A. Sohi/B. Henderson/T. Caterina\)](#) (No Report)

Between 2000 and 2012, Edmonton Transit Service annual ridership increased from 43 million to almost 83 million (a 93% increase) and service hours increased from 1.56 million to 2.1 million (a 37% increase). This growth also brings major challenges such as the number of customer concerns increasing from 8,327 to 14,435 (a 73% increase).

Technology has been identified as the most efficient and effective way to enable the existing staff to meet this challenge. It is also anticipated that smart bus technology will yield financial benefits such as fuel savings; bus operating and maintenance savings; increased ridership; reduced telephone calls to 311; and reduced customer concerns.

Please provide a report to the Transportation Committee in January 2014 with options for funding for Smart Bus implementation on all Edmonton Transit buses through operating initiatives or cost savings over a three-to-five year period. Transportation Svcs.

**Due Date:** Jan. 2014

Transportation Committee

3.5

**Edmonton Transit - Expenditure Reductions and Increased Revenues (A. Sohi) (No Report)**

That Administration provide a report to the Transportation Committee in January 2014, identifying the following:

- What initiatives Edmonton Transit has undertaken in the past five years to reduce operating expenditures?
- What revenue increases have been realized in the past five years?
- Were those expenditure reductions and increased revenues re-invested back into improving public transportation? Transportation Svcs.

**Due Date:** Jan. 2014

Transportation Committee