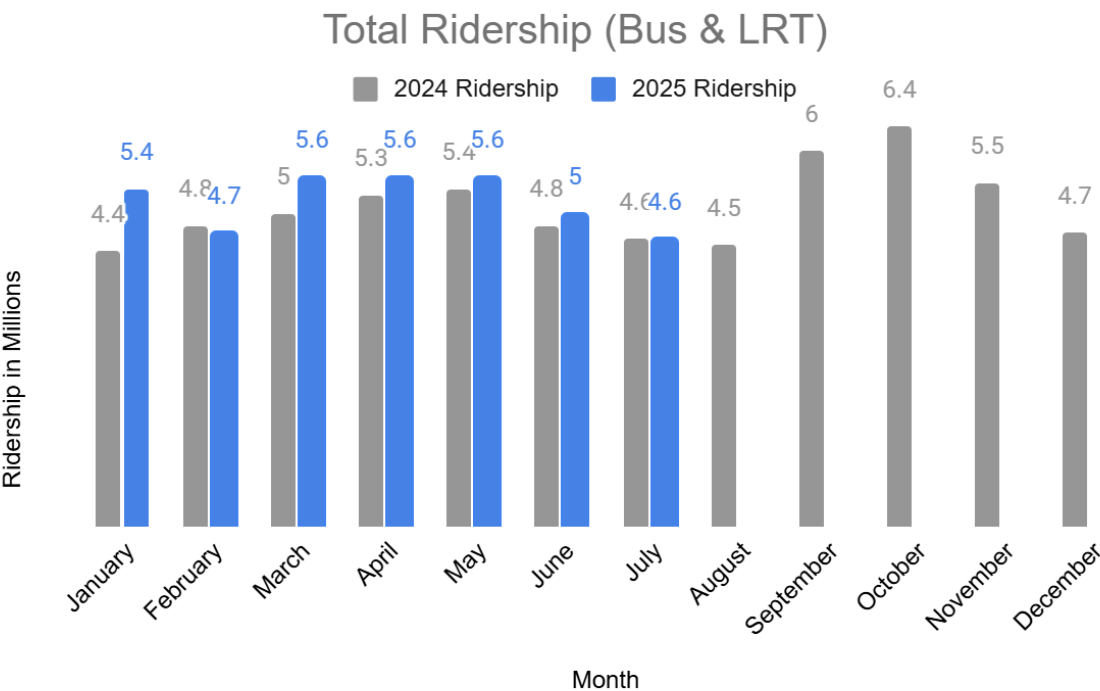


# ETS Branch Highlights Report

Date: August 25, 2025

## 1. RIDERSHIP



In July 2025, total ridership was 4.65 million, a 2 per cent increase from 4.58 million in 2024. Although bus ridership slightly decreased by 4 per cent from the previous year (which may be attributed to the pleasant weather this year and summer travel patterns), LRT ridership continues to grow. Specifically, the Valley Line Southeast LRT saw a 9 per cent increase in ridership from the previous year, with approximately 258,850 rides in July.

ETS will continue to monitor ridership patterns as the weather begins to cool and students return to school in the fall.

## 2. ETS UPDATES

### Fall Service Adjustments

On August 31, various bus routes, including school special routes, will see service adjustments to reflect typical fall ridership patterns.

#### School Special Routes

Three new school routes will begin on September 2:

- Route 611 - This route will serve Cardinal Léger Junior High from the Lago Lindo and Klarvatten neighbourhoods via Eaux Claires Transit Centre.
- Route 628 - This route will serve Steele Heights School and will operate through the Cy Becker and McConachie neighbourhoods.
- Route 638 - This route will provide service to J. Percy Page and Holy Trinity High Schools and will run through the Aurora, Orchards, Summerside and Ellerslie neighbourhoods.

The following routes have been adjusted to more accurately link neighbourhoods with their designated schools, based on updated student enrollment numbers:

- Route 612 - This route will be rerouted through the Mayliewan, Ozerna, Matt Berry and Hollick-Kenyon neighbourhoods and will no longer stop at 95 Street and 132 Avenue (Queen Elizabeth School/Killarney School).
- Route 614 - This route will be rerouted through the Griesbach, Beaumaris, Lorelei, and Baturyn neighbourhoods. It will continue to access O'Leary, St. Cecilia, Killarney and Queen Elizabeth schools.
- Route 620 - This route will now end in the Brintnell neighbourhood instead of travelling to Clareview Transit Centre. This rerouting will allow the bus to better serve the Matt Berry, Hollick Kenyon and Brintnell neighbourhoods.
- Route 626 - Due to growing ridership demand, this school special will be slightly rerouted to better serve the McConachie and Cy Becker neighbourhoods. Riders in the Matt Berry neighbourhood travelling to O'Leary and St. Cecilia schools are encouraged to take Route 612.
- Route 630/631 - These routes have been rerouted to better serve Ottewell Road.

As mentioned in the [2024-2025 Annual Service Plan](#), underperforming school routes that fall below the ridership standard for school service were reviewed with school board partners. Routes 623 and 675, which have low ridership, will be cancelled and their service hours will be reallocated to serve higher demand areas of the network.

For those who took Route 623, the area around Londonderry and M.E. LaZerte continues to be served by Routes 54, 107, 113, 114, 620, 621 and 626. Route 114 is also an alternative to Route 623 for riders along 82 Street. For those who took Route 675, On Demand Transit

service may be an option for students travelling to S. Bruce Smith School. Riders who travel along 97 Street to Queen Elizabeth and Killarney schools can take Route 130X.

Updated route brochures will be available on the [School Special Bus Routes](#) webpage starting August 24.

### Construction and Detours

Several construction projects that started in the summer will continue into the fall, leading to ongoing transit detours. This includes construction related to the 132 Avenue Renewal Project, Low Level Bridge Rehabilitation work and Building Great Neighbourhoods projects in Baturyn and Gariepy.

### On Demand Transit

As of August 31, weekday On Demand Transit service in Riverdale will start one hour earlier at 6 a.m.

Starting in late September, riders in the Glenora neighbourhood will have temporary access to On Demand service along 102 Avenue due to the Wellington Bridge closure. Riders living on the west side of Wellington Bridge will have 142 Street as their hub and those on the east side will have 124 Street as their hub. Route 2 will detour in both directions via 142 Street, 107 Avenue and 124 Street. More information will be available in September.

### Holidays and Special Event Service Changes

Transit service is reduced on holidays and in alignment with public, Catholic and post-secondary school calendars. More information can be found on the [Transit Service Changes](#) webpage.

### Other service changes

- Route 4 - Short trips between University and Bonnie Doon will no longer use 79 Street, which means that bus stop #2299 will close. Riders instead can board the bus at bus stop #2196 (83 Street and 90 Avenue southbound) or disembark at the new bus stop #28080 (85 Street and 85 Avenue northbound). This will provide faster connections to the Valley Line LRT and Bonnie Doon Mall.
- Route 106 - Due to traffic congestion at 97 Street and 137 Avenue, Route 106 will be permanently rerouted between Belvedere Transit Centre and Northgate Transit Centre and will now operate along 90 Street and 135 Avenue instead of 97 Street and 132 Avenue.
- Route 114 will provide coverage on 132 Avenue between 97 Street and 90 Street. This means the route will be more reliable for riders.
- Routes 114/123 - Routes 114 and 123 will be combined into a single route, Route 114. The current routing between Clareview Transit Centre and Northgate Transit Centre will remain the same. From Northgate Transit Centre to Coliseum Transit Centre, the combined route will operate along 97 Street, 132 Avenue, 90 Street, 130 Avenue and 82 Street before continuing on to Coliseum Transit

Centre. This will allow riders in these areas to reach more places without transferring and receive increases to frequency and hours of operation.

- Route 111 - This route will now operate clockwise on the major roads around Kingsway Mall and will no longer directly access the mall parking lot. This change avoids congestion in the mall parking lot while providing increased access to additional mall entrances.
- Route 111 will also be extended from Stadium Transit Centre to Concordia University of Edmonton to provide midday service in this area.
- Route 501 - This route will have its frequency adjusted to reduce layover time at transit centres and improve efficiency.

Riders are encouraged to plan their trips early by using the trip planner on [edmonton.ca/transit](https://edmonton.ca/transit) or Google Maps and selecting a date after August 31.

### **Back-to-School Outreach**

During the last couple of weeks of August and first week of September, ETS will be participating in several activities to welcome students to transit and help them navigate the system. These activities include:

- Partnering with the Edmonton Public School Board and Edmonton Catholic School Division for their *First Riders* events. Families traveling to school by bus have an opportunity to learn about using ETS (junior and senior high school students) and yellow bus (elementary school-aged children). The ETS portion includes a conventional bus, On Demand shuttle bus, information tent and Transit Peace Officer cruiser.
- Attending new student orientation events at post-secondary schools. ETS is invited to numerous student information fairs to answer questions from students about trip planning, how to use the transit system, Arc and making the most of their U-Pass. ETS will participate in events at the University of Alberta, MacEwan University, NAIT, NorQuest College and Concordia University of Edmonton.
- Assisting students in transit centres during the first week of classes. From September 2-5, teams will be stationed at key transit centres around the city from 7-9 a.m. They will help students find their buses, and answer questions about trip plans and schedules.
- From September 2 - October 11, ETS Inspectors will be providing direct communication and support to schools across Edmonton. This includes working closely with school administrators, Transit Operators and the ETS Planning and Scheduling teams to support the smooth operation of service to connect them to/from home and school.
- Following its success in 2024, the Here to Help campaign will be running again in 2025. As part of the campaign Transit Peace Officers will conduct high-visibility and high-engagement patrols in transit spaces to support students returning to school and provide a safe environment.

## **United Way Stuff a Bus for Schools**

On August 23, ETS supported the City of Edmonton's United Way campaign with a Stuff a Bus event to support students in need. This event collected school supplies in high need for the United Way's *All In For Youth* program. Buses were parked outside of eight Staples stores across the city, and shoppers were invited to leave a donation inside of the bus. All donations collected during the event will go to students in need across the city.

## **Summer Festival & Community Outreach**

ETS participated in several festivals and community events throughout the summer. These provided opportunities for riders and non-riders to ask questions about trip plans, Arc, school service, as well as share feedback about the service. It was also an opportunity to engage with families and talk to children about transit. ETS participated in the following festivals and events:

- Edmonton Public Library *Next Stop: Storytime* partnership
- Alberta Circus Arts Festival
- The Works Art & Design Festival
- Edmonton International Street Performers Festival
- Taste of Edmonton
- KDays
- Edmonton Folk Music Festival
- Servus Edmonton Marathon
- Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival

ETS also partnered with the City of Edmonton's Community Recreation and Culture branch to offer engaging and informative tours about the Edmonton Grads, an amateur women's basketball team that played from 1915-1940 and went on to be world champions for 16 years. Participants visited important sites and landmarks while curators told the story of this winning team.

## **ETS Ticket to Ride Program**

Starting this summer, the ETS Ticket to Ride program was implemented for major events at Commonwealth Stadium. The program allows concert attendees to use their ticket as fare for their transit journey. Transit costs are covered by a \$1.50 "facility use fee" included in the ticket price. This fee was approved by City Council in August 2024 with the purpose of streamlining the fare collection process and encouraging concert attendees to use transit to travel to large events.

Tickets for The Weeknd's concert on July 19 included the additional facility use fee for the first time. Approximately 54,200 tickets were sold for the concert, and the ETS Ticket to Ride program allowed thousands of riders to travel to Commonwealth Stadium using the LRT more conveniently without having to purchase fares.

## **Auricle**

Auricle is a prototype developed by InWithForward, a social design organization, and the City of Edmonton's RECOVER Urban Wellbeing Initiative. This year, InWithForward has partnered with ETS to collect stories from transit users about connections between transit, safety, and their wellbeing. Stories were collected by "Local Listeners" (community members who are trained and supported to engage and listen to what matters to people) at various transit species in early 2025.

InWithForward hosted a "Transit Jam" at the Parkdale/Cromdale Community League on August 16. It was designed as a lively, one-of-a-kind event that considers transit as more than just a way to get from A to B, but as a space of connection, joy, and belonging. Participants experienced stories that were collected over three years from 270+ Edmontonians in transit and had the opportunity to connect, brainstorm and collaborate with fellow transit enthusiasts in a rotating world-cafe format.

## **Transit Infrastructure Rehabilitation**

Over the summer, several LRT track rehabilitation and repair projects took place to maintain the safety and reliability of Edmonton's LRT network and improve its longevity:

- From May 16-20, the LRT crossing at 111 Avenue and 106 Street was repaired.
- From June 28-30, major track repairs were completed at the LRT crossing at University Avenue and 114 Street. The work involved replacing a section of broken track and repairing the concrete underneath.
- From April 27 to late-September, crews will be conducting rehabilitation work on the Coliseum LRT bridge. This included removing the southbound track to rehabilitate the bridge deck and bridge girders.
- On August 24, a section of rail near Bay/Enterprise Square LRT Station was replaced.

The rehabilitation work resulted in LRT service disruptions along some segments of the LRT network due to track closures. To minimize travel delays, ETS adjusted service frequencies and ran increased LRT replacement service on certain days to compensate for the additional traffic.

In addition, construction work to rebuild the deteriorated busway at Century Park Transit Centre took place from June 29 to August 30. Concrete on the east side of the transit centre was removed to replace the grading underneath with new fill. This required all buses from that area to be temporarily relocated along 111 Street and to a new, temporary bus stop. To ensure accessibility for all riders, including those with mobility challenges, temporary asphalt was installed for boarding and exiting buses. The rebuild also led to the closure of the Kiss and Ride zone along 111 Street, and riders were encouraged to use alternative transit hubs like Heritage Valley, Southgate and Davies transit centres for pick-ups and drop-offs.

## **Valley Line West Light Rail Vehicle Delivery**

In early August, the first Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) for the Valley Line West LRT arrived in Edmonton, marking a major milestone for the project.

Shipped in two sections from Hyundai Rotem Company's facility in Changwon, South Korea, the vehicle underwent extensive testing before being loaded on July 1 onto a roll-on/roll-off ship designed to carry wheeled vehicles. The ship crossed the Pacific Ocean and arrived at the Port of Tacoma, Washington, on July 20. The LRV was then transported by truck to the Gerry Wright Operations and Maintenance Facility in southeast Edmonton.

Hyundai Rotem will supply 46 Valley Line West LRVs. Currently, there are 16 LRVs at various stages of manufacturing in South Korea. Delivery to Edmonton will continue into 2027. The 46 new vehicles will complement the current fleet of 26 LRVs operating on Valley Line Southeast. Both vehicles are designed to be fully compatible with the infrastructure of the entire 27-kilometre Valley Line.

In 2023, Edmontonians were invited to participate in user testing and interact with a full-scale mock-up of the vehicle. Participants' feedback directly shaped the final design, helping ensure these vehicles are accessible, comfortable and inclusive for all riders.

Upon arrival in Edmonton, the vehicle was offloaded and will undergo final assembly. Testing and commissioning will occur on the Valley Line Southeast tracks at a later time, with measures in place to ensure this does not impact existing passenger service.

## **Valley Line West LRT Construction Updates**

The intersection of Stony Plain Road at 142 Street reopened to traffic on Thursday, August 14. With that, the City and Marigold Infrastructure Partners (MIP) are heading into the third and final phase of the Valley Line West accelerated roadwork plan for 2025.

### Phase 3: Stony Plain Road at 149 Street (temporary partial closure)

Starting on or around August 15, the intersection of Stony Plain Road at 149 Street will be partially closed to traffic for approximately nine weeks. Similar to already-completed intersection work, overnight work will be required. Stony Plain Road at 142 Street will operate at full north/south capacity while the 149 Street intersection undergoes construction. More information on traffic and pedestrian impacts at 149 Street, including a map, can be found in [MIP's construction bulletin](#).

During this work, ETS Route 7 will detour from stops on 149 Street between Stony Plain Road and 107 Avenue. This route will detour using 149 Street, Stony Plain Road, 142 Street and 107 Avenue.

Road signage is posted near the affected intersection, providing advance notice to the public, commuters and businesses about upcoming traffic impacts.

### Phase 1 update

104 Avenue between 105 and 121 Streets continues to be reduced to one lane in each direction. Overnight work on 104 Avenue is scheduled to continue until the end of November. MIP is making every effort to mitigate noise and other disruptions during nighttime hours.

### Phase 2 update

Work continues at 95 Avenue at 156 Street and crews are working 24/7 to reopen this intersection by early October.

The three-phased accelerated roadwork plan started in mid-April and is scheduled to continue until the end of November. The plan will reduce the overall duration of traffic restrictions by more than half, and take many of the roads into their final configuration by the end of 2025.

## 3. ETSAB INFORMATION REQUESTS

### **Valley Line Southeast LRT Oscillation**

*At the July 2025 ETSAB meeting, a question was asked on why there was oscillation on the Valley Line Southeast LRT around the Connors Road area.*

A thorough investigation was conducted and no mechanical or infrastructure-related causes were identified. A recent track geometry survey confirmed there are no track irregularities that would contribute to this issue. Operator handling appears to be the most likely contributing factor to the issue.

### **DATS and CNIB Rider Companion**

*At the July 2025 ETSAB meeting, a question was asked on why individuals accompanying CNIB members do not get free access to conventional transit.*

Companion is a specific term defined for DATS registrants, in which an individual who has been deemed eligible for DATS may choose to have a companion travel with them. All DATS registrants can ride with a companion on conditional transit and their companion does not need to pay fare. This includes DATS registrants using CNIB cards.

ETS is currently working on updating our website to further clarify this policy.

#### 4. ETS COUNCIL REPORT TRACKING - 2025/2026

Report Number	Report Name	Committee / Council	Council / Committee Meeting Date
CO03139	Canada Public Transit Fund Update	CC	September 16/17, 2025
CO02980	Advancing Bus Rapid Transit and Transit Priority Measures	UPC	Q1 2026

*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