

Members Present:

Emily Batty (Chair), Rebecca Hardie (Vice Chair), Zohra Jabeen, Eugene Masahkwe, Bruce Hertz, Brooke Leifso, Lexi McFarlane, Shalene Williams, Bailey Gerrits, Joshua Jackman.

Regrets:

Ken Kirk, Councilor Erin Rutherford, Mudasser Seraj (Rafi), Steve Bradshaw (President, ATU 569),

City of Edmonton Staff:

Tammy Smith, Admin Assistant Transit Planning, Ridership and Revenue.

Marc Lachance, ETS Staff Liaison Transit Planning, Ridership and Revenue

Materials & Attachments:

- Land Acknowledgement
- Meeting Agenda and ETS Branch Highlights Report
- DRAFT Meeting Minutes - June 2025

CALL TO ORDER 6:00 PM

Land acknowledgement

S. Williams

Agenda Review DECISION

Moved: by L. McFarlane seconded by J. Jackman to approve the July 28, 2025 agenda as presented.
CARRIED

Meeting Minutes Review DECISION

Moved: by E. Masahkwe seconded by S. Williams to approve the June 23, 2025 minutes as presented.
CARRIED

Presentations:

a) No presentations

New Business/Updates:

a) Councilor Emerging Issues/Updates:

Councillor E. Rutherford

- No updates

b) Governance Review and Honoraria

E. Batty

- discussed a meeting held earlier in the month with the civic agencies team and city clerk regarding the ongoing governance review and changes to honoraria. The review highlighted four main findings: a desire for clearer mandates for advisory boards, more clarity on administrative and advisory committee functions, regular mandate reviews for relevance, and the permanence of advisory committees.
- E. Batty presented a draft framework designed to improve consistency, visibility, influence, and planning stability across committees, which will be presented to council in September. A significant discussion point during the framework presentation was the distinction between advisory and advocacy work, emphasizing that the committee's role is to provide council with information rather than advocating to other groups or other levels of government. Quorum and Honoraria Discussion. This raised a question about whether honoraria would be forfeited if a board did not meet quorum. Also highlighted the importance of participants professionally supporting the board's direction, even if they disagree personally.
- Concerns were raised regarding potential conflicts between permanent committee status and shifting city priorities, as well as how to ensure alignment with council's strategic priorities, especially given municipal elections. While the discussion on strategic alignment was brief, it was recognized as a crucial point for future consideration.
- Confirmed that the governance framework would provide clearer guidelines on committee communication and what activities are permissible, which would be part of the "functions and authorities" element of the framework. B. Hertz reminded the group that members are appointed by council and could be unappointed, reinforcing the importance of adhering to the board's established guidelines.
- A discussion arose about the need for increased resources for working boards like theirs, beyond just honoraria, to facilitate research and surveys for subcommittees. M. Lachance confirmed that an email had been sent regarding a potential research budget for subcommittees, acknowledging that this issue has come up before.
- Z. Jabeen questioned whether the proposed governance framework was entirely new or a re-emphasis of existing guidelines. E. Batty clarified that it is a new draft framework intended to consolidate existing guidelines into a comprehensive structure, and offered to follow up for more details. E. Batty mentioned that compensation is available for childcare and travel expenses, though they noted that the childcare claim process can be challenging. Details regarding travel compensation, such as mileage or specific allowances, were not fully clear but would require pre-approvals for certain situations.

c) CUTA conference November 2025

E. Batty

- E. Batty introduced the upcoming CUTA conference in Montreal November 2-5, 2025. A budget is allocated to send two board members. E. Batty sought suggestions on a fair selection process, discussing options such as prioritizing the chair and vice-chair, a weighted draw based on seniority, or a straight draw, and agreed to defer a decision until next month to allow for further thought.

Working groups/subcommittees:

a) Rapid Responses:

E. Batty

- Nothing to report

b) Sub Committees:

i: Arc Card Review

R. Hardie

- R. Hardie provided an update on the ARC card review subcommittee's terms of reference, stating its objective is to critically assess the ARC card's adaptation and ease of use, including for persons with disabilities. The proposed research methodology includes analyzing tap-on/tap-off data, surveying communication content, conducting a social media scan, and potentially a social media snowball survey.
- The subcommittee plans to gather data on complaints and compliments, acknowledging a potential negative bias in user feedback. There was discussion about avoiding overlap with ETS's existing evaluations and focusing specifically on user perspectives, including those with disabilities. Z. Jabeen suggested utilizing J. Jackman's assistance from the Accessibility Advisory Committee for collecting feedback from the disability community, an idea that was well-received.

ii: Fare Funding gap

E. Masahkwe

- E. Masahkwe presented the terms of reference for the transit funding gap subcommittee, whose objective is to ensure transit affordability and sustainable funding sources, thereby preventing users from being priced out. Their research will involve analyzing previous responses to fare increases, current transit funding sources (including government funding and subsidized fares), and jurisdictional scans of other municipalities' funding strategies.
- B. Hertz emphasized the importance of examining all funding sources, including provincial support for low-income transit users, referencing a past instance where provincial funding was nearly cut but later reinstated. M. Lachance clarified that the low-income transit program receives \$5.5 to \$75 million annually, with current funding secured until March 2026, after which the discussion about its continuation will resume.
- Discussed the challenge of funding transit services without constantly raising fares or pricing people out, particularly due to insufficient government funding. Also mentioned considering factors like property tax increases that affect transit funding.
- Addressed inquiries about recent ridership data and the possibility of breaking it down by fare type, noting that ridership data is based on boardings, which differs slightly from sales data but is

connected. They explained that automated passenger counters on buses, combined with ARC tap data, allow for tracking how much each user group uses the service.

- **Confirmed** that fair evasion data is available, but cautioned that increased checks might inflate the perceived evasion rate. They clarified that increased fair checks are part of an overall program change to limit fare evasion, not directly tied to fare increases.
- E. Batty thanked R. Hardie and B. Leifso for seconding the motion to approve the terms of reference for the fair funding gap, which was then approved by all in favor.

External Updates:

a) ATU 569:

S. Bradshaw

- nothing new to report.

b) Branch Highlights Report:

M. Lachance

- See attached report
- M. Lachance introduced the branch highlights report, noting a minimalist approach for the next couple of months due to an information lockdown. They highlighted continued ridership growth, especially on the Valley Line, and the upcoming ARC open payment pilot launching August 1st.
- **Detailed** the ARC open payment pilot, which will allow passengers to pay using credit cards or mobile payment systems, capping fares at regular adult rates. Mentioned internal checks for concession fares and the recruitment for the pilot, set to launch on August 1st.
- **Announced** that the Canada Public Transit Fund report, detailing a \$3 billion annual federal fund, will be presented to city council in September. Explained the fund's three streams: National growth and renewal of core infrastructure, metro region agreements, and targeted project-based funding, with the report becoming public on September 4th.

c) Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) Update:

J. Jackman

- J. Jackman provided an update from the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), noting new members and a focus on their strategic plan, particularly regarding housing and its connection to transit services.

- J. Jackman raised a question from an AAC member regarding CNIB members' use of the ARC card. CNIB members receive free transit access, a policy that predates ARC and is not tied to the ARC card itself. Also discussed questions about support persons accompanying transit users and confirmed that some accompaniment is allowed, offering to provide more details on the rules.
- J. Jackman mentioned that Doug Rudolph, a former Accessibility Advisory Committee member, is interested in rejoining meetings.

d) ETS Branch Manager/Chair

E. Batty

- Nothing to report

Topics of the night

R. Hardie

- Explained the process for the Canada Public Transit Fund, where the submission must be approved by council, then the province, before the federal government can directly engage with municipalities.
- R. Hardie reported on the city clerk's governance review, which aims to provide clear mandates for city advisory boards and clarify the functions of administration and advisory committees. Noted that a governance framework will be presented to council in September.
- R. Hardie confirmed the approval of the ARC card review committee and the fair funding gap terms of reference. They reiterated that ridership remains up year-over-year, the open payment pilot is launching on August 1st, and the Canadian public transit fund report will go to council in September.

Motion to Adjourn