

EDMONTON TRANSIT SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING #8, SEPTEMBER 5, 2012
AUGUST 2012 MEETING
HERITAGE ROOM, CITY HALL

PRESENT: Izak Roux, Gordon Smith, Vaughan Hoy, John Hayes, Leanne Landry, Christopher Dulaba, Bruce Robertson, Brian Marcotte, Jon Reay, Stu Litwinowich

REGRETS: John Vandenberg, May Lin

GUESTS: Chris Ashdown, Edmonton Radial Railway Society, Michael Hendry, Professor, University of Alberta

ETS AND CITY STAFF: Dennis Nowicki, Director of Community Relations, Vicki Luxton, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER

- V. Hoy called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

2. EDMONTON RADIAL RAILWAY SOCIETY (ERRS) PRESENTATION (C. ASHDOWN)

- Edmonton Radial Railway Society Background:
 - The original name for the transit system in Edmonton was the Edmonton Radial Railway because the street cars radiated from the centre of the City on single tracks going out to the suburbs at that time. So that is where the radial name comes from.
 - It is an all volunteer organization with 120 members and about 42 members are qualified to drive the street cars.
 - Our mission is to preserve and interpret the history of street rail technology with particular emphasis on Edmonton.
 - We collect and restore significant artifacts, and maintain and operate street car railway with two lines – Fort Edmonton and High Level Bridge.
 - There are nine operating street cars which includes four Edmonton cars. We have cars from 1908, 1912 and 1930 and are currently restoring two street cars at Fort Edmonton Park, where our main shop is, one from Regina and one from Saskatoon.
 - There are three street cars that operate on the High Level Bridge line.
 - Fifteen street cars in our collection will eventually be restored which includes six additional Edmonton street cars.
 - The proposed extension would cross 103 Street and terminate just north of Whyte Avenue.
- Proposal for Extending the High Level Street Car Line:
 - The current line operates from the Farmer's Market in Strathcona to south of Jasper Avenue west of 109 Street, using the existing abandoned CPR rail line.
- Significant Dates with ERRS:
 - In 1979 ERRS operated the first street car over the High Level Bridge.

- From the success of this initiative the ERRS Society was formed in 1980.
- Regular street car line in Fort Edmonton Park started in 1984.
- In 1997, service started across the High Level Bridge terminating at our Grandin stop which is just north of the High Level Bridge, and the line was extended to our Jasper Avenue terminus in 2005.
- In 2011, ERRS got an Edmonton street car running on the High Level Bridge; Street Car no. 33 took \$153,000 and 35,000 volunteer hours to restore the street car. It has been restored to how it looked when it was brand new. It is a doubled ended car which is fun to drive.
- Interesting Statistics:
 - In 2011 ERRS had almost 11,000 volunteer hours for different areas of the organization. ERRS carried over 165,000 passengers – 111,000 in Fort Edmonton and 53,000 on the High Level Bridge line.
 - The ERRS is set to go well over this number on the High Level Bridge line this year.
 - Since 1981, ERRS has carried over 3.5 million passengers in Fort Edmonton Park on street cars and over 109,000 miles of street car driving. On the High Level Bridge, since 1996, ERRS has carried over 540,000 at the end of 2011.
- Current Street Car Line:
 - The line runs from Strathcona north from the Farmer's Market to north of 100 Avenue and west of 109 Street.
 - The line follows the old CPR rail line over the High Level Bridge which originally opened in 1913 and CP abandoned in 1985.
 - ERRS leases the line from the City of Edmonton; the property is owned by the Province for the possible construction of high speed rail between Edmonton and Calgary.
 - ERRS is responsible for all maintenance costs and utilities. ERRS has spent over \$350,000 in the last year and a half on tie replacements on the High Level Bridge line.
 - ERRS operates daily from Victoria Day weekend to Labour Day, and in September on Friday, Saturday and Sunday until Thanksgiving Day. We also operate charters outside of our service time and this business has sky rocketed since last year.
- Why the extension?
 - ERRS hears a lot of complaints from visitors and tourism in Edmonton that they have difficulty finding the street car in Strathcona. We are hidden away behind the Arts Barns and a couple of blocks from Whyte Avenue.
 - The new line will bring visitors to the heart of Old Strathcona rather than dropping passengers off at this isolated part of Strathcona.
 - Much better tourist link – 25% of week day service is visitors from out of the country.
 - There will be a visible presence of the street car operation on Whyte Avenue and 103 Street which would really add a lot to this important intersection in Strathcona.
- The Project:
 - First thing to be completed is to replace the level crossing at 103 Street (Gateway Boulevard). Unfortunately, the crossing was removed by the City thinking there was no need for the tracks to go across. Fortunately the grade

is still there.

- Much of the old track still exists, but a lot of the ties and rail needs to be replaced.
- CP still runs freight trains across Whyte Avenue. There are two tracks and CP uses the east track. That track happens to bend towards the line to run our street cars on and we will look at realigning their track and CP has agreed in principal to doing this.
- Overhead power needs to be installed for the street cars and construct a new street car terminus which will be the most visible feature of the whole line.
- ERRS is working with Edmonton Transportation to look at what type of signals are required for this intersection, and hoping for lights only and not gates, as gates are more difficult to maintain over time.
- This site for the terminus is very narrow and not much room between the track and the boundary where the washroom facility is so a narrow platform has been designed by Shelter Belt Architecture firm that ERRS has engaged to design the terminus.
- ERRS wants to emphasize proper signage about scheduling, and entrance and exiting from the terminus.
- Traffic will be influenced on 103 Street but the street car will not be crossing Whyte Avenue.
- ERRS has had a lot of support and communication from ETS and other City Departments.
- The ETS LRT group has been assisting with looking at crossing signal standards.
- Cost Elements: (\$1,175,497)
 - ETS donates a lot of overhead equipment from the trolley buses that can be used for the street cars.
 - The biggest cost is tracks and signals which includes the crossing over Gateway Boulevard. Depending on the signaling, this cost may drop but needs to be confirmed in the next few months.
 - Costs for permits and realignment of the CP track.
- Funding, where is it coming from?
 - Funding from Heritage Canada up to \$500,000, September 2012.
 - Community Facility City of Edmonton Capital Grant Program looking at \$294,000, and if successful will go to City Council for approval in October.
 - Alberta Culture Grants up to \$250,000.
 - Balance from ERRS - \$131,497 (casino revenues, reserve and contributions).
- Time Frames:
 - Construction starting as early as April, 2013.
 - Project complete by late July for testing on the line and opening in August.
 - Opening Ceremonies to be timed with the Centennial of the opening of the High Level Bridge in August, 2013.

Questions/Comments:

- (IR) Are the street cars privately owned or owned by the society? They are owned by the society but ownership would revert back to the City if the society terminated.
- (BM) The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates street cars, why can't you adopt their standards for crossing signals? The difference is TTC

is operating on the road and in our case we are crossing a thoroughfare. TTC does not have crossing signals because they are part of the traffic. The Ontario Traffic Act does address street cars but for Alberta this is not the case.

- (BR) *What increase in ridership do you expect?* ERRS are looking at a guess of 10-20 percent increase.
- (VH) *The High Level track is it inspected regularly?* It is inspected on a monthly basis and every four or five years PNR RailWorks, the company who installed the South LRT track, do major inspections and reports. This past year all the ties in the tunnel were replaced and then 350 ties to Strathcona. And on the High Level Bridge 250 ties were replaced last year at a cost of \$783.00 per tie.
- (BM) *Do you envisage the street car going south of the CP station?* ERRS has thought about it but where would it go? South of the CP station is all industrial and not much there.
- (JR) *Is there anything that ETSAB can help you with, such as endorsements?* For the Heritage Application endorsements from the Municipal organizations, this is something that ETSAB could draft as another sign of support from the City. The deadline for submitting this application is September 30th.
- (BR) *The signaling at Gateway Boulevard crossing, how far north of the Whyte Avenue crossing are you?* The big problem we are facing with crossing Gateway Boulevard is the visibility. It is not until the street car is almost at the sidewalk before you can see down Gateway Boulevard. Signaling is still the best option for this intersection. Many people keep on driving when they see a street car. Signaling is very expensive.
- *Is the terminus going to look very modern?* The right of way is very narrow with six feet between the track and the property and there is not enough room for a traditional type shelter. The shelter must be easy to maintain, that will withstand the elements as well as graffiti artists.
- (IR) *Of your members what is the average age and how sustainable is this society to continue with service?* The first generation members, there a still a few around. We have six to eight motormen who we train every year, as well as some additional members. We have been able to recruit some rather young members but have not had a real strategy for volunteer recruitment which we want to work on in the near future. Volunteers in the restoring these old cars, this is an area that is starting to be a lost art.

3. **AGENDA REVIEW**

- The following items were added to the agenda:
 - Add under Item No. 9 Information Section “Comment to Edmonton Radial Society”.
 - Add “Succession Planning” under Item No. 9 Information Section.
 - Add under Item No. 8 – “Budget Review”.
 - Add “Renaming of the South Campus Station” under Item No 9.

Amended
Agenda
Approved

MOVED: by J. Hayes/ C. Dulaba to approve the amended agenda.

CARRIED

4. **APPROVAL OF THE JULY 23, 2012 MINUTES**

MOVED: by G. Smith/I. Roux to approve the July 23, 2012 minutes.

CARRIED

Minutes
Motion
Approved

5. MANAGER'S REPORT (D. NOWICKI)

- **Highlights:**
 - Service Changes: came into effect on September 2nd.
 - DATS Open House: September 13, 2012 in which the members have been invited to attend.
 - Smart Bus: The Trapeze Group has been awarded the contract to bring Smart Bus technology to Edmonton Transit. ETS will immediately be moving forward with Phase 1 implementation of Smart Bus. Trapeze has the capability to provide a total product for ETS, with minimal or no customization. Our staff and customers will reap the benefits of improved safety, service reliability, accessibility and real-time customer information. Smart Bus Phase 1 is now planned for April 2013. The initial deployment involves 45 buses on routes 111 and 128 operating out of Mitchell Garage.
 - Council endorsed the CUTA 2040 Resolution at their meeting held August 29, 2012.
 - Executive Committee: The appeal to the Naming Committees decision not to go forward to change the name of South Campus LRT Station to South Campus/Fort Edmonton Park LRT Station was approved by the Executive Committee today.
 - Report on the Stadium Station oriented Development Project: This report was received for information. Three options were presented including the old Muttart site and what can be done with it. Associated with that is a pedestrian crossing right by Canadian Linen which would mean the City would need to acquire part of the Muttart site. And also a suggestion put forward about making available the north parking lot of Stadium Park 'n Ride site. There are a number of vacant properties in the area and there is no interest so why would the City be moving Park 'n Ride where they have a heavy demand and replace with possible development when no one is expressing any interest in right now.
 - Public Consultations for the Southwest LRT: Starting on –
 - 1) Wednesday, September 19, 2012 at the South Edmonton Alliance Church, looking at Mill Woods Town Centre to Whitemud Drive and Whitemud Drive to Argyll Road.
 - 2) Thursday, September 20, 2012 at the Four Points Sheraton, looking at Argyll Road to Strathearn section.
 - 3) Monday, September 24, 2012 at Old Timers' Cabin, looking at Strathearn to City Centre West.
 - 4) City Centre West to 149 Street is not scheduled until November.

6. ETSAB'S BYLAW REVIEW AND PROPOSED 2013 WORK PLAN

- **Highlights:**
 - L. Landry has done a lot of work on this project.
 - D. Nowicki outlined the different segments and framework of the report to the Board members which was supplied by the Office of the City Clerk.

MOVED: by B. Marcotte/L. Landry to approve the Bylaw Amendments. **CARRIED**

Motion
Approved

7. ETSAB's 2013 WORK PLAN

- V. Hoy went over the drafted 2013 Work Plan with the Board members.
- Additional content is needed for this attachment to the Advisory Board report going to Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

8. ETSAB'S PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR 2012

- Marketing Standing Committee (J. Hayes for J. Vandenberg)
 - J. Vandenberg arranged a tour of Route 747. The Marketing Committee had two opportunities to address it before it was in action and made several recommendations to N. Walters who took all the recommendations positively at all of those meetings. However N. Walters indicated to J. Vandenberg that he was not interested in another meeting and thought that the matter was essentially closed. J. Vandenberg thought it was a good idea to go out and have a look at the actual service. Three members plus a guest did go out and it was a fairly positive experience. The system works reasonably well, it is quick and easy to access in some ways but there are serious issues with the signage. These are itemized on J. Vandenberg's report that was given out to all members in attendance.
 - J. Hayes went over J. Vandenberg's report with all members. Report is attached at the end of these minutes.
 - Highlights:
 - At Century Park there is no indication where any of the stops are and they are not in any numerical order, not logical and if you are standing at the foot of the escalator/stairs it is over to the right behind several trees. There is no way of actually seeing it even if you know what you are looking for, which is a different coloured sign that cannot be read from that distance.
 - There are no route finding suggestions within the station unless you go to the specific panel and look at the specific diagram for the station, if you would know to do that.
 - The signage does not have a plane icon (white plane on a blue field, standard all over the world). An Edmonton International Airport (EIA) logo is being used. A quarter of the sign is taken up with a picture of a bus which says Everyday Way to Go to Cancun. It is unclear as you need visuals. EIA, how many Edmontonians know what EIA stands for?
 - Directional signage at the Airport is inadequate and what signage that does exist is mostly obscure. Better eyelevel signage is needed especially when entering and exiting the airport from gate 8. The signage is one sided and faces the bus.
 - The 747 pick-up/drop off area is located in the airport smoking section. So to walk out to wait for a bus in a smoking section is not very appropriate.
 - The bus fare box is set up to take coins, yet it would appear that the majority of users are paying with bills mainly five, ten and twenty dollar bills. It is a security issue and it is hard to get the bills not going all the way into the fare box.
 - The operator did not welcome riders onto the bus and in most cases it is the first time people are arriving in Edmonton, perhaps there should be a

recording saying welcome to Edmonton with some kind of orientation such as where the bus is going.

- The volunteer staff at the airport did not know where the airport bus stopped. The fellow that sold the fare product did not know where the bus stopped. The group tried to buy an airport transit pass and the group were told that they could not buy a pass if they were not employees of the airport.
- J. Vandenbeld's recommendation is these recommendations be forwarded to P. Waisman, ETS Business Development with a copy to C. Stolte, ETS Manager and EIA administration, and that the Board look at them in three months to determine if they have been addressed and to perhaps to send it to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in a couple of months based on what has taken place.
- The members suggested a couple of minor edits to the wording of this report.
- Transit Planning Sub-Committee (C. Dulaba)
 - C. Dulaba plans to set up a meeting of this Sub-Committee next week to discuss some of the CRB transit planning initiatives. C. Dulaba knows the New Neighborhood Design Guidelines (NNDG) had another meeting and had some comments from the stakeholders last week and C. Dulaba plans to follow these up. The workability design guidelines should be incorporated with the complete street guidelines. There should be some discussion as well on Southeast LRT extension and grade crossings.
- Transit Centres and Amenities (J. Hayes)
 - This report has not been completed as yet but he plans to have a report in place at the next meeting at the end of September. A lot of the suggestions we put forward have already been done or were assured that were in process. Some of the art work installations have not been complete with the name of the artist and the date of acquisition. J. Hayes did look at four or five schedule panel boxes and the schedules are printed in numerical order as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 but they are not in order, because the pieces of paper have not been put up in numerical order and are in the wrong place. J. Hayes will send the completed report to D. Nowicki in the next couple of weeks.
- Low Income Transit Pass (J. Vandenbeld)
 - No meeting was held.
- 2012 Budget
 - C. Stolte will meet with ETSAB after the 2013 budget has been released. He will hold a special meeting with ETSAB to discuss the budget prior to the public hearing at which time ETSAB can make comments.

9. **INFORMATION SECTION (V. HOY)**

- Renaming of the South Campus LRT Station:
 - J. Hayes suggested that the City call the station South Campus for Fort Edmonton Park. The Naming Advisory Committee did not support renaming the South Campus Station. All members agreed the renaming of the South Campus Station was unnecessary.
- Succession Planning:
 - V. Hoy encouraged members to think about leadership opportunities on the Board for 2013.
- Comment to the ERRS

MOVED: by J. Hayes/B. Robertson to draft a letter of support for the Edmonton

Motion

Radial Railway Society and submit it through a fast action to the Board by
September 15, 2012. **CARRIED**

Approved

- **ATU 569 Report:**

- S. Litwinowich stated he was elected to the position of Director of the Amalgamated Transit Union of Canada, for a three year term. S. Litwinowich will be taking office on Monday, September 15th looking after 30,000 union members. His duties include:
 - 1) Provide education to union members;
 - 2) Organize new properties;
 - 3) Lobby federal, provincial and municipal governments;
 - 4) Vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress;
 - 5) Vice-president of the Ontario Federation of Labour;
 - 6) Sits on CUTA and Motor Coach Carriers committees.In S. Litwinowich's absence B. Bruce, Vice President of Maintenance, will represent ATU 569 on this Board until the conclusion of the election to replace S. Litwinowich. S. Litwinowich thanked the members.

9. TOPIC(S) OF THE NIGHT

- The Board members completed their bylaw review and proposed 2013 work plan which will be submitted in the near future.

MOVED: by I. Roux/J. Reay to adjourn the September 5, 2012 ETSAB Meeting at
8:25 p.m. **CARRIED**

Motion
Approved

Next meeting: Monday, September 24, 2012 in the Heritage Room of City Hall.

TO: ETS ADMINISTRATION
FROM: JOHN VANDENBELD
SUBJECT: TRANSIT TO THE AIRPORT
DATE: SEPTEMBER 4, 2012
CC: ETSAB MEMBERS

On Monday, August 27 three members of the Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board (ETSAB) and one guest took the 747 bus out to the airport. The purpose of our trip was to see firsthand how the new service was being marketed and how the trip felt from a user perspective.

We found that there are a number of areas for improvement; they are listed below:

- When departing from Century Park station we found little indication that the 747 is an airport bus; there is only a small EIA logo on the bus stop itself. We recommend that a plane icon be added to both the bus stop and any way-finding signage.*
- We suggest that ground level way-finding signage be introduced to guide passengers from the doors of Century Park station to the 747 bus stop, some 50 feet away.*
- The directional signage at the airport is somewhat inconsistent, and what signage that does exist is mostly obscured. Better eye-level signage is recommended, especially when entering and exiting the airport from gate 8.*
- The 747 pick-up / drop off area is located in the airport smoking section. This leads to an unpleasant first experience for users and could be a disincentive to use. We recommend that the EIA move the smoking area to a different location, or, alternatively, relocate the bus stop.*
- The fare box is set up to receive coins, yet it would appear that majority of users are paying with \$5 bills. We recommend modifications in this regard.*
- The driver did not welcome riders onto the bus nor thank them for riding when departing. Nor did the driver orient the passengers. We suggest that the driver do this (or alternatively play a taped message that accomplishes the same objective)*

We hope that ETS and the EIA (when appropriate) will consider our recommendations and move to implement them.

Sincerely,

John Vandenbeld (on behalf of the ETSAB Marketing Standing Committee)