

EDMONTON TRANSIT SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING #6, June 24, 2013

HERITAGE ROOM, CITY HALL

PRESENT: Amy Mannix, John Vandenberg (partial attendance), Izak Roux, Christopher Dulaba, Bruce Robertson, Cristina L. Stasia, Shannah Sutherland, Vaughan Hoy, Leanne Landry, Anand Pye, Gordon Smith

ABSENT: John Hayes, Stu Litwinowich (ATU Local 569)

ETS AND CITY STAFF: Deanna Crozier (Director of DATS) Gurpreet Singh Goraya (Transportation Services), Doug Tait (Supervisor of Service Deploy), Dennis Nowicki (Director of Community Relations), Troy Shewchuk (Strategic Planning Officer), Vicki Luxton (Recording Secretary)

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ETS ACCESSIBILITY WORK SHOP (D. CROZIER)

- **Highlights:**
 - In 1999, the “Business Analysis and Best Practice Assessment of Accessible Public Transportation” was completed by the firm Sypher-Mueller International Inc.
 - ETS/DATS has convened work on a new “Accessible Public Transportation Study”
 - The study includes:
 - ❖ Edmonton Transit facilities (bus stops, shelters, transit centers and LRT stations)
 - ❖ Edmonton Transit vehicles (conventional buses and LRT)
 - ❖ Customer path of travel to transit
 - ❖ Accessibility features, policies and practices used in day-to-day operations
 - **Research Objectives:**
 - ❖ Stakeholder feedback on the best methodology and the standards to be used
 - ❖ Recommend strategies to improve operational practices for Edmonton Transit
 - ❖ Recommend infrastructure improvements and layouts to current and future Edmonton Transit facilities like:
 - Pathways to bus stops
 - Bus shelters
 - Transit Centers
 - LRT Stations
 - Park and Ride
 - **Timelines:**
 - ❖ Project Commencement – April 15, 2013
 - ❖ Project Workshop/Stakeholder Session May 21, 2013
 - ❖ Delivery of draft report – September 3, 2013
 - ❖ Presentation – September 23, 2013
 - ❖ Final deliverables to ETS – October 15, 2013
 - **Questions/Comments:**

- (VH) *You stated you were going out to stakeholders in this process?* We invited the agencies that DATS works with: ETSAB, the DATS Advisory Group, the Advisory Group for Persons with Disabilities and some users that are well known to DATS. In total nineteen agencies were invited who DATS currently networks with. As well as the project team with Edmonton Transit. *At the last Board meeting we had a presentation from the training people from ETS, so is DATS training a different training process?* Edmonton Transit does the training for all operators including DATS drivers but the training is tailored to the actual service that they would deliver.
- (BR) *To get to the path to Edmonton Transit there is a distance of 175 to 250 metres; can I ask where that number comes from?* This distance came from the original report from Sypher Mueller. *The new proposed West to Southwest LRT line using low floor LRT cars which poses challenges as compared to the high floor because the inside door is relatively smaller. Are you going to be looking at what you are buying and making sure the train cars will meet your criteria?* We anticipate that other areas of transit including LRT will use what comes out of this report.
- (GS) *The Park & Ride situation at Century Park facility that I have used frequently the parking lot there is gravel and it would be very difficult for a wheel chair to navigate across the aggregate to get to the LRT.* (DC) this needs to be taken into consideration. *The other situation that exists at Century Park as well as at Southgate is the emergency exit ramp down to the platform at the end of the station. There is a section of very large aggregate between there and the sidewalk so my wheel chair got caught in this situation twice. The elevators were not working so I cannot get off the platform to get to the bus to take me home. The aggregate is too big so you cannot get across the aggregate to get to the sidewalk. This should be looked at to see what can be done. The only alternative was to get back on the LRT to go to Southgate to get a bus to take me back.* (DC) The Century Park & Ride is leased by the City, they do not own it. This is certainly something that needs to be looked at.
- (AP) *Since it is an Edmonton Park & Ride whose responsibility is to ensure that this parking lot is paved?* (TS) Even though ETS leases the parking lot there is an obligation for Edmonton Transit to maintain it, for snow removal and to ensure there are minimum or no potholes and to ensure we are painting the lines on the parking lot so there is an obligation of Edmonton Transit to maintain it so that it can be used. *It would be better for a disabled person to access the LRT to take the DATS bus to Century Park and get on the LRT.*
- (IR) *Do you address physical accessibility only or do you also look at accessibility to your service that means booking a bus and getting a bus compared to a benchmark on other systems?* (DC) Yes for Edmonton Transit it is a physical facility and a vehicle but also the operating practice.
- (AM) *I would like to enquire about the washrooms.* Yes there are washrooms at the LRT stations and that is part of the evaluation. *To do with strategic planning having measureable goals is that part of the process?* We want to measure against standards and actually determine where we are and where can we go from here. Best practices from other transit properties are also helpful.
- (GS) *On the LRT system the downtown elevator buttons do not light up so when you push the elevator button you do not know whether it is working or not working.* Yes, that has been brought up and I have seen emails about that and this

- is something that they are working on. T. Shewchuk to follow up.
- (GS) *On the big buses the location behind the driver even when the seats are folded up is not long enough for the electric wheel chair to back in. For a manual wheel chair it is long enough. The distance is too short between the barrier and the seat to back into the tie-in position. On the other side it is longer. There needs to be an additional six inches to get the electric wheel chair in. The staging for the stop at the LRT stations where there is a big wheel chair symbol on the platform - if I position myself there the train will stop within ten feet on either side which is very convenient. In other stations this does not seem to be the case and you do not know where the wheel chair accessibility is located. If there is a crowd and the train stops and you try to get to the door already the doors are closing and you cannot get on.* (DC) We will certainly make note of that because that priority boarding area is not intended to line up with the accessible door on the LRT car – if you have a mobility issue it is a visible place to wait so when the train operator pulls into the station they will see you and ensure you have time to board the train. *The proximity is fine and I understand but if I am 25 feet away as opposed to ten feet away then I do not make it.*
 - (VH) *This whole issue around the priority boarding - is this information given to mobility users about this priority boarding and how it works?* (DC) this is on our web site but what I am finding that there is a gap in communication and it does need to be more readily available. At DATS we will be ensuring that people will have that information going forward if they do want to use ETS's conventional services.
 - (BR) *The pathway to travel- this report comes back recommending you need to have x, y, and z to get to the bus stop, is Transportation responsible for accessible sidewalks and curbs and are they aware of this study?* (DC) Transportation Services is part of the steering committee and we do work closely with them now. We have two students in Customer Training for 'Seniors on the Go' and an Alternate Transit Project so when they encounter a missing curb cut for example that is perhaps preventing an entire Senior's residence from getting to the bus. Transportation Services will add it to their work plan for the upcoming year. The resident can also call 311 and advise 311 that they cannot get to the bus stop because there are not curb cuts.
 - (SS) *Is this study going to look at emergency procedures?* (DC) If you mean contingencies, yes. An example is a pass-up where a person with a disability cannot board the bus. We have already worked with transit to update procedures. When the operator has done everything he can to get everyone on the bus and if it is inclement weather, if it is an isolated area or when the person is in distress, the operator needs to ensure they tell ETS Control that they cannot board a customer in a wheelchair so appropriate action can be taken (call an accessible taxi or DATS dispatch).
 - (VH) *Is it ETS's policy that transit security can no longer help the rider in distress?* (DC) I have actually worked with Transit Peace Officers and I am not aware of this – what they have advised me is that most of their contact with customers with disabilities is to provide assistance. T. Shewchuk will follow up with the Board members on this issue.
 - (GS) *The City is attempting to repair the pot holes but where the curb cuts are quite often that is where the drainage basin is so water is going down right where the curb cut is and quite often the pavement is eroded next to the sidewalk which is*

concrete and nothing is done. Just across from the Chateau Lacombe an ETS bus operator had to get out of his bus to help me get out of a pot hole where my wheel chair was stuck. (DC) You need to call 311 or email them.

- ETSAB members thanked D. Crozier, D. Tait and G. Singh Goraya for their presentation.

3. **AGENDA REVIEW**

MOVED:

by B. Robertson/L. Landry to approve the agenda.	<u>CARRIED</u>
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Agenda
Approved

4. **REVIEW OF APRIL 29, 2013 AND MAY 27, 2013 MEETING MINUTES**

MOVED by

I. Roux/C. Stasia to approve the April 29, 2013 and May 27, 2013 Minutes.	<u>CARRIED</u>
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Minutes
Approved

5. **MANAGER'S REPORT (D. NOWICKI)**

- **Highlights:**

- At the June 19th City Council meeting the draft minutes have been posted and with respect to the Southeast LRT project the motion that was approved by Council:
“That administration work with the Mayor to develop an implement of focused advocacy strategy to obtain a letter of support from the Province of Alberta and the Government of Canada to fund the remaining \$515 million necessary to move forward on the Southeast LRT project and to include options to backstop provincial/federal commitment with Municipal Sustainability Initiative or other funding sources and that a report be provided to City Council by August 28, 2013.”

- **May Year-to-Date Ridership:**

2012 – 35,883,033 rides
2013 – 38,077,031
2013 - 6.11% increase

- **Calgary Aid Request**

- ETS did receive a request from Calgary and ETS and Edmonton Fire Rescue Services (EFRS) assembled a contingent of employees and equipment to provide assistance in Calgary.
- ETS is providing logistical support to EFRS with the transport of staff and equipment.

- **Questions/Comments:**

- (AP) *Funding for Southeast to West LRT the recommendation was to ask the Province and the Federal Government for more money?* For a firm commitment as in order to go forward with a P3 they actually need a promissory note and that is what they are looking for. If the City was funding it the normal way we might precede but you cannot do that with a P3. You need to have all the money upfront in order for these multi-national companies to be serious about coming to the table. On August 28th, if that commitment is not coming forth, then what are we going to do. There is land acquisition that is going on and planning is well underway. This is something that ETSAB needs to keep on top of down the road

and if that funding is secure you need to brush up on P3 funding.

6. ETSAB PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR 2013

• Marketing Standing Sub-Committee (C. Stasia):

- This group met with P. Waismann over a month ago and C. Stasia made a rough draft of a letter which will be going to P. Waismann on some of the group members' thoughts regarding marketing ETS.
- The Marketing group thought ETS's slogan "The Every Day Way" was awkward and did not reflect the various ways that people use transit. This slogan sort of sides steps the way people who are occasional users use it to special events. Also the generic images are not really reflective of transit users.
- A. Mannix thought "The Every Day Way" is not relevant to a lot of passengers if they only use it on weekends. There is possibly a better slogan out there that can be used to increase ridership.
- D. Nowicki stated the Marketing Communications consulting firm that Edmonton Transit used to come up with this slogan actually sold Edmonton Transit on the idea that this tag line could be used in a variety of ways. If you look at the web site or advertising material you will see "The Every Day Way" to the Jazz Fest. This was a team of marketing communicating experts that ETS bought service from. With the organization change you should be going to N. Walters with any of your questions.
- A letter will be drafted by C. Stasia to N. Walters but will need to be revised. Please send V. Luxton a copy of the letter.

• Transit Planning Sub-Committee (C. Dulaba):

- Nothing to report from the Committee this month. One item that is worth discussing is the Revitalization of the Downtown Conference. This was a two day conference held in Edmonton that V. Hoy and C. Dulaba attended. There was one presentation from a gentleman from Trans Link in the Greater Vancouver region talking about their transit centre planning and integration with some very good information. C. Dulaba will pass this presentation to all members of ETSAB.

• Park & Ride Sub-Committee (G. Smith):

- There was a survey done a short while ago as to where the parking spots are and how many are available. It was a consensus of the group that we have something that is more current. Once that is established on spaces that are available then maybe from a satellite stand point and not thinking that Century Place is the only place to park that other parking spots might be available on already established routes. The committee would like to know what the future plans are for some of these Park & Ride situations because it was mentioned tonight that Century Park's Park & Ride is eventually going to be gone and there does not seem to be a plan to replace it.
- There is no study at present for monitoring traffic of how many people end up there and how many people leave. At Century Park if you are not there by 6:30 am you will not get a spot to park. So from that point of view are people coming and going on an ongoing basis during the day and should we be looking at a certain percentage of the parking spots to be metered for short term parking during the day time.
- It was decided that we complete this study by the end of August so G. Smith

suggests there be two more meetings, one in July and one at the beginning of August.

- G. Smith put together a Terms of Reference outline and V. Hoy did one as well from the notes from this group's last meeting. There were twelve points narrowed down to eight points altogether. So the plan is to put together a short White Paper with observations and suggests that could go to Transportation Committee.
- C. Dulaba commented on taking an inventory on what are the current practices and information on demand points and how to correlate some of that based on locations of these facilities. C. Dulaba's assumption the higher demand for parking is more related to neighborhoods and the proportionate usage from outside the community. The Sub-Committee to circulate some of their points to the Board members in the next couple of weeks.

- **Fare Structure and Payments Sub-Committee (A. Mannix):**

- A. Mannix indicated that the report was not ready to be released to the Transportation Committee in its present form. The fare structure report portion is ready but the group members have not met to talk about the payment section of the report.
- Comments:
- B. Robertson stated that this report could be done in a two stage process – Fare Structure in the first stage and Payment System in the second stage as per the Terms of Reference of this Sub-Committee. The Fare Structure part is done and that can come to the Board and be signed off.
- J. Vandenbeld stated he was very pleased about this year deciding on the work agenda by quarters of the year with the idea of wrapping up one committee and going onto another. This committee was going to be a two quarter committee and at the end of quarter two J. Vandenbeld would not like to see this going forward beyond quarter two. We need to put a firm end date so this does not go until December.
- S. Sutherland indicated that this committee might have taken on too much for two quarters. Because we have completed only half of what we expected to do S. Sutherland would like to see it go forward until its completion.
- A. Mannix will be organizing a meeting in the near future to discuss the payment system. A. Mannix anticipates this committee to be concluded in about two more months.

- **Alternate Transit Modality Sub-Committee (J. Hayes):**

- No report.

- **Long Term Fare Strategy (J. Vandenbeld)**

- J. Vandenbeld has been in discussion with Todd Burge from the City of Edmonton in Finance. He is involved in the "The Way We Finance". J. Vandenbeld is attempting to set up a meeting with T. Burge and this sub-committee to see what the City of Edmonton is doing on this subject. Also gathering some data for a hopefully useful one page summary of comparable transit system transit fares, do they have a U-Pass, low-income pass, senior pass, what is their cost recovery. This will be completed in the next couple of weeks and then will be circulated.
- Questions/Comments:
- T. Burge stated they are behind and everything is at the conceptual stage at the

present time and did not give J. Vandenberg a time line. T. Burge did mention he wants to coordinate ETSAB with the Transit Review in September.

- This is a small window of opportunity and need to get this done by September.
- T. Shewchuk stated the White Paper is around user fees and it is in the “current state” stage. From that there are seven different white papers and from that they will be constructing “The Way We Finance”.

Public Art (V. Hoy)

- The Terms of Reference were drafted by V. Hoy and provided to all ETSAB members.
- The Sub-Committee members are J. Hayes, B. Robertson, C. Dulaba, A. Pye and V. Hoy (Chair).
- This group plans to focus on is a general review of transit oriented public art opportunities that could be realized in existing and aged facilities of the current LRT line, and that would offer potential facility environmental enhancements in and around the existing stations that have not incorporated public art to date.
- The sub-committee does not intend to duplicate effort currently underway by ETS / CoE (City of Edmonton) and the EAC (Edmonton Arts Council) on new LRT stations that may have already addressed public art as the 1% for Art program administered by the EAC. The objective is to look at existing aged infrastructure, with a current status update related to Edmonton Art Council’s (EAC) current program in and around stations.
- The following would be part of the sub-committee work culminating in a short white paper that would go to Administration and possibly the EAC:
 - 1) Get a general overview through meeting with the EAC on the current status of the Public Art Program as it concerns transit facilities (both Lewis Estates and Mill Woods Transit Centres have public art in them).
 - 2) Undertake a quick pictorial overview with summary notes of the current urban stations exhibiting environmental enhancement opportunities through the incorporation of Public Art.
 - 3) Provide the sub-committee and ETSAB members with a high level overview of precedents that benchmark Transit Public Art.
 - 4) Provide an executive summary level assessment of the facilities in 2) above that are candidates for Public Art for the ETSAB board to review and approve.
 - 5) Submit review to Administration and make available to the EAC.
- Questions/Comments:
 - ❖ *D. Nowicki asked if this group will be looking at the retrofitting situation and not just the future. Yes, that is correct. With respect to future the City/ EAC has been under a lot of criticism because they do not have real people selecting the art. This is criticism over the Quesnell Bridge balls there and the Commonwealth Stadium one. It would be helpful if the board understood the current policy and if there is an intent to review that because as City Administration just add the 1% to the total budget. One of the things ETS tried to do at the Meadows Transit Centre was looking at functional art. What this means is some of the places they have had some funky looking sculptures and things done that you can actually use to hook up your bicycle. We could only do that if it was unique one-off and not bought from a company.*

8. TIMETABLE FOR ETSAB BYLAW (DRAFT) COMMENTS AND

PREPARATION OF PROPOSED 2014 WORK PLAN

- V. Hoy, D. Nowicki and T. Shewchuk discussed this today and decided that it would be a good idea to wait for the Executive Committee Meeting on August 19th when the City Policy Report will be tabled before the Board submits their Work Plan.
- ETSAB's comments are still due with respect to the Bylaw. The Board withheld comments because you wanted to see the approved City Policy and so you would know how to tailor your comments. If you want to make the August 19th dead line your comments need to go to the Office of the City Clerk (OCC) in early July.
- The OCC has you coming forth in August but if you want to defer it until January or February 2014, the OCC will make the change.
- Questions/Comments:
- *(JV) In terms of the City Policy with regards to Advisory Committees, at the end of July would the Board be able to review this report.* No, at this point in time you would just have the normal access on the Thursday prior to. They are trying to get this Agenda Committee to have that made public sooner. It is prudent for the Board to wait to see the approved City Policy because you can make your comments on your bylaw versus the City Policy. And then you can determine your internal procedures. *J. Vandenberg agreed that this was important to wait.*
- That would mean your report would be due shortly before Christmas as a rough time table.
- D. Nowicki stated the other part is the Work Plan, and last year was the first time you had a Work Plan approved by the Transportation Committee (TC) and that was submitted in October. This year we run into the situation where there is no October meeting because of the Civic Election. The other part is the approval by OCC of the terms of Advisory Boards to May 1 – April 30th from the calendar year. The thought here is to push your Work Plan to coincide with that. The discussion that we had was OCC is still looking for you to submit your Annual Report in March and what you may want to do is piggyback with that and also submit your proposed Work Plan. It is a very natural fit and you can tell them what you just did and this is what we are proposing in the upcoming year. The other thing you need to give some thought to is whether you want to add additional items on for those three or four months in the New Year or are you going to use this additional time to maybe complete a pretty aggressive work program for this year.

MOVED: by A. Pye/J. Vandenberg to submit the proposed 2014 Work Plan and the 2013 Annual Report in March 2014. The Board will withhold comments on the Bylaw pending approval of the City Policy.

Motion
Approved

CARRIED

8. INFORMATION SECTION (V. HOY)

- ATU Local 569 Report (D. Nowicki for S. Litwinowich)
 - No report.
- Gerry Wright Better Transit Award Letter Update (V. Hoy)
 - C. Dulaba spoke about this award about being worthwhile to adopt this award and look into the logistics in pursuing it.
 - D. Nowicki stated there is no official commitment by the City. Based on the past history ETS had permitted the Citizen's for Better Transit to make the

presentation of the award at our annual conferences. When ETS went to the Community Fair model it was done once but did not go beyond that so the award had been presented internally.

- D. Nowicki - Sponsorship money – what can ETSAB use this sponsorship money for? ETSAB needs to talk to T. Shewchuk to see if this same function could be handled by a City Budget. The sponsorship may be a non issue depending upon what it was used for. D. Nowicki does not believe the recipient of the award was given a cash award. He believes the recipients were given a plaque or trophy, so maybe there is where the cost was. If it is a matter of coming up with some money for a plaque maybe talking to T. Shewchuk about the merits of using the City devices plus your web page to promote it. D. Nowicki suggested the Board discuss this with the Office of the City Clerk just to see if there is anything in the current bylaw about a proposed policy that may pose an obstacle.
- It was decided to organize a teleconference with V. Hoy and C. Dulaba with Edmonton Transit Coalition and come back to the next board meeting with a decision.
- ETS Skills Competition (June 5) (B. Robertson/J. Vandenbeld)
 - B. Robertson stated he had a new respect for ETS operators in maneuvering around the City. The brake on the bus was very heavy. In the car industry you should be able to move from a Nissan to a Toyota to whatever and be able to drive that car without having to look to find out where the controls are. There are natural places for things in a car. On the bus the turn signal was on the floor and you had to reach everywhere to find things in order to drive the bus. Then there were other buttons that you never touched that were right in front of you. The bus could be a lot easier to drive. B. Robertson stated the operator who was his coach was phenomenon. J. Vandenbeld said they had a good conversation with the first female bus driver. Both indicated it would be of value to the Board to doing this again next year.
- August 21, 2013 Luncheon with Transportation Committee (TC)
 - After discussion it was decided that members C. Stasia, A. Mannix, J. Vandenbeld, B. Robertson, C. Dulaba, A. Pye and L. Landry would be interested in attending this luncheon with TC on Wednesday, August 21, 2013.

9. TOPIC(S) OF THE NIGHT

- We had a presentation from a few representatives with DATS discussing various aspects of their service from driver training, customer service, etc.
- Discussions on work plan, park n' ride, fare strategy and marketing and transit planning.
- Recognition to D. Nowicki for his administration support to ETSAB for the last six and one-half years and 36 years of service in providing service to the citizens of Edmonton.

MOVED: by B. Robertson /A. Pye to adjourn the June 24, 2013 ETSAB Meeting at 8:12 pm.

CARRIED

Motion
Approved

Next meeting: Monday, July 22, 2013 in the Heritage Room, City Hall

MEETING DATES

January 19, 2013	August 26, 2013
January 28, 2013	September 30, 2013
February 25, 2013	October 22 (Tuesday), 2013
March 25, 2013	October 28, 2013
April 29, 2013	November 13 (Wednesday), 2013
May 27, 2013	November 18, 2013
June 24, 2013	December 16, (3 rd Monday) 2013
July 22 (3 rd Monday), 2013	January 18 (Saturday), 2014