

LET'S TALK TRANSIT

EDMONTON'S TRANSIT STRATEGY WHAT WE DID REPORT

2015-2016



Edmonton

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, Edmonton City Council requested that a strategic plan be developed for public transit. This Transit Strategy will provide a long term vision for transit, focusing on what should ultimately be achieved by offering transit service.

The topic of transit can be complex. Weaving these complexities into a plan is a major challenge. It was apparent that a meaningful conversation with Edmontonians about the future of transit was needed, and we needed to engage a wide range of Edmontonians. A significant communications and public engagement component was delivered to support the development of the Transit Strategy.

The communications and public engagement plan took place over three phases in 2015 and 2016:



PHASE 1
Awareness

PHASE 2
Vision

PHASE 3
Explore
Trade-offs

This report highlights what we did to communicate and engage with Edmontonians about the Transit Strategy. A *What We Heard* report will dive deeper into the feedback that we received.

TIMELINE



PHASE 1 Awareness

Jun '15 - Jul '15

PHASE 2 Vision

Aug '15 - Dec '15

PHASE 3 Explore Trade-offs

Jan '16 - Oct '16

PHASE 4 Strategy Development

Nov '16 - Mar '17



Youth share their ideas at Heritage Days



The *What Moves You? Let's Talk Transit* engagement bus

APPROACH

We knew a significant amount of communication and public engagement was needed to support the development of the Transit Strategy. Development of the Transit Strategy is one of the City's top strategic priorities, so communications and public engagement had potential to be one of the largest and most complex consultations ever undertaken by the City. We decided to use this project as a pilot for the Council Initiative on Public Engagement to demonstrate how increased investment and resources positively impacts the results of a project.

Our main objectives:

- **Increase awareness on key topics related to transit.**
- **Gather a diverse range of input on strategic questions.**

Other critical components:

- Reach people who typically face barriers to engagement by going where people are and engaging both riders and non-riders.
- Start without preconceived notions of the end result and go from asking broad questions to asking narrow questions. This enabled us to bring people along on the journey with us.

PARTICIPATION

HOW YOU PARTICIPATED



PHASE 1: AWARENESS

The focus of the first phase was to raise awareness about the Transit Strategy and to spark a discussion about transit's role in helping to build the city's future. This set the context for conversations about transit, its role in city-building, and how choices about how we build and run our transit system have social, environmental, and economic implications.

The official launch of the Transit Strategy project was held at the Art Gallery of Alberta on September 28, 2015 with guest speaker, Taras Grescoe. He shared inspiring stories about creative public transit ideas from around the globe.

PHASE 2: VISION

The conversation moved to discussing an aspirational, but achievable, vision for transit in our city. We engaged Edmontonians about this in both public and targeted workshops. Engagement questions focused on sharing stories and personal thoughts/experiences with transit, both in Edmonton and elsewhere. We used traditional tactics like advertising and a website but also innovative approaches like the engagement bus and street team.



Community partners talk about trade-offs



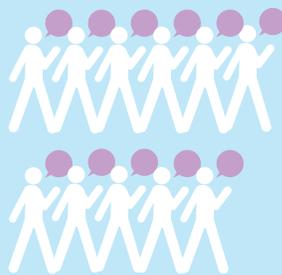
PART 2A: GATHER IDEAS

We gathered “blue sky” ideas about transit from City staff, and a wide range of Edmontonians including seniors and young people, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, and newcomers. The key questions included:

- What are some great things about Edmonton’s current transit system?
- What are some things that could make Edmonton’s transit system greater in the next ten years?
- Why is it important for Edmonton to have a great transit system?



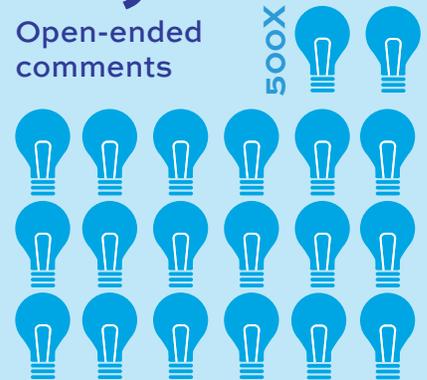
6,085
People engaged
(total)



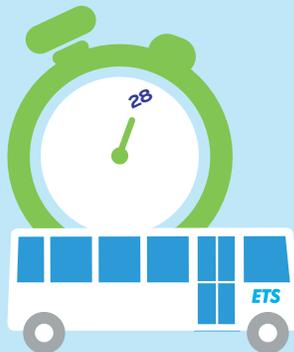
11 Workshops
208 participants

10,000+

Open-ended
comments



21
Engagement
events
1,717 people
engaged



131
Hours the
engagement bus
spent on the road
1,211 people engaged



456
Hours worked by
street team



2,949
Online survey
participants



42
Transit routes
travelled by the
engagement bus

PART 2B: PRIORITIZE IDEAS

Some common themes emerged from the thousands of comments we received in the Gather Ideas phase. In this phase we asked people to identify their top priorities from among these themes. The top priorities were gathered into three sections, and the key questions were:

- Why is it important for Edmonton to have a great transit system?
- What terms best describe your ideal future transit system in Edmonton?
- Which terms best describe your ideal future experience using Edmonton’s transit system?



4
Workshops
117 participants



3,065
People engaged
(total)



63
Hours the
engagement bus
spent on the road
755 people engaged



1,908
Online survey
participants



181
Hours worked
by street team



7
Engagement
events
252 people engaged

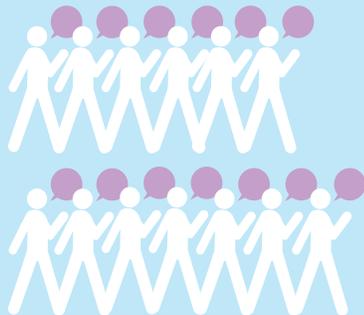


35
Transit routes
travelled by the
engagement bus

PHASE 3: EXPLORE TRADE-OFFS

Once the top priorities were identified, we went back out to gather feedback on and understand what trade-offs people were willing to make and why. We asked participants about the transit network, investment in transit, and fares including these key questions:

- Who should benefit from transit?
- How much should people pay for transit?
- How much priority should buses get on the road?



12,816
People engaged
(total)

363
Hours worked by
street team

13
Workshops
274 participants



9,655
Online survey
participants
4,440 online survey
participants
5,215 direct mail
participants



17
Engagement
events
620 people engaged



253
Hours the
engagement bus
spent on the road
2,267 people engaged



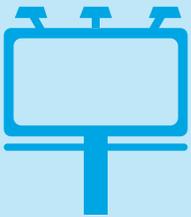
44
Transit routes
travelled by the
engagement bus

HOW WE COMMUNICATED

We used these tools and tactics to get the word out about the Transit Strategy and how Edmontonians could participate and share their ideas. These activities raised awareness about the project and significantly increased participation rates in all public engagement activities.



ACTIVITIES



Advertising

- 14 newspaper ads
- 3 Facebook boosted ads
- 2,223 transit ads
- 3 newspaper website ads
- 90 social media posts
- 34 road signs
- 114,000 direct mail invitations to Edmonton households
- 3,000 postcards distributed at City Hall and through street team



Events

- 1 media launch with Mayor Iveson
- 1 guest speaker event at the AGA



Presentations

- 1 Pecha Kucha talk
- 7 presentations
City Hall School x2, WAVE, Accessibility Advisory Committee, Canadian Institute of Transportation Engineers (CITE), ATU 569 (transit union), ETS field staff
- 12 videos

MEASURING SUCCESS



30
earned media stories



21,607
website visits



483,820
Twitter impressions



175,523
total Facebook impressions



13,582
YouTube video views

WHO PARTICIPATED

It was important to reach a wide range of Edmontonians including transit riders, non-riders and people who may face barriers to engagement. Our approach was to reach out directly to members of these communities, rather than only speak with representatives of these groups. Another important element was going to people where they are, so participants were engaged in locations familiar to them.

The foundation of our approach involves equal respect between Council's long-term strategic direction, the technical expertise of City Administration, and the unique knowledge of Edmontonians and stakeholder groups. When these elements are balanced in a successful approach, the outcome will be closer to the ideal that we are all striving for.

EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- Edmontonians
- Current transit users
- Potential transit users
- Former transit users
- First Nations
- Children/youth/students
- Persons with disabilities
- Low income individuals
- Multicultural groups
- Newcomers
- Seniors
- LGBTQ individuals
- Employers and businesses
- Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- Developers
- School boards
- Post-secondary institutions
- Post-secondary student associations
- ETSAB
- ATU 569 (Transit Union)

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

- City Council
- Senior City Administration
- City staff
- ETS bus drivers, LRT drivers and maintenance





ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Heritage Days
 Animethon
 Cariwest
 Folk Fest
 Fringe Festival
 Dragon Boat Festival
 UofA InfoBus event
 UofA grad students event
 UofA InfoMart event
 CityLab at Claireview LRT
 Viva Italia
 Grant MacEwan New Students
 Grant MacEwan Block Party
 Millwoods Seniors Centre + Library opening
 The Way We Move Day
 Zoo Free Admission Day
 Project launch
 Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation “Meet a Machine” event
 Eskimos Park and Ride
 Bent Arrow Soup & Bannock Event
 ETS Think Tank
 International Day of Persons with Disabilities
 ETS field staff
 High Risk Youth Conference
 Edmonton Motorshow
 Women’s Expo
 Ben Calf Robe Powwow
 Sikh Parade
 Victoria Day at the Zoo and Fort Edmonton
 Pride Parade
 ETS Rodeo
 Seniors Health & Wellness Fair at Northgate Seniors Centre



WORKSHOPS

Millwoods Multicultural Women and Seniors Services Association (MMWSSA)
 Youth/High School
 Bent Arrow Healing Society (First Nations)
 Persons with Disabilities
 Pride Centre
 Seniors
 Public
 ETSAB
 Intercultural Centre

Community Partners
 ETS field staff
 City Staff
 Pride Centre
 Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors Centre
 Seniors United Now
 *Some workshops were held multiple times in multiple phases to engage with stakeholders throughout the process rather than just once.

Mayor Don Iveson and City Hall School students help launch the engagement bus, September 2015.

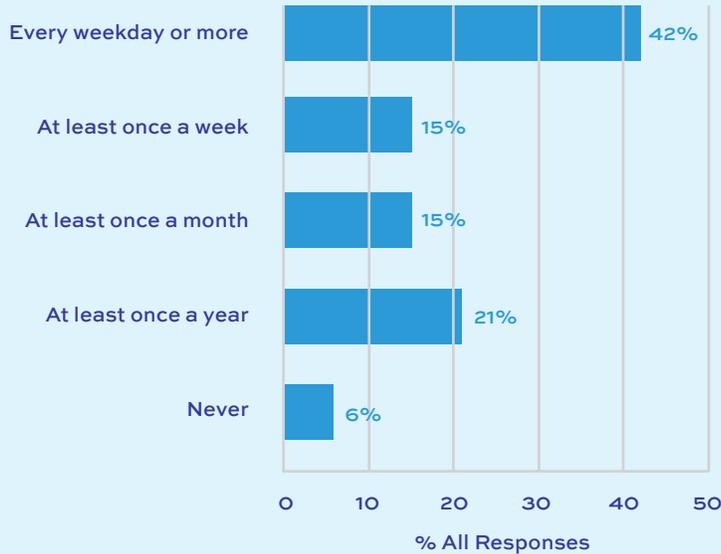


DEMOGRAPHICS OF ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

PHASE 3: EXPLORE TRADE-OFFS



HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE PUBLIC TRANSIT

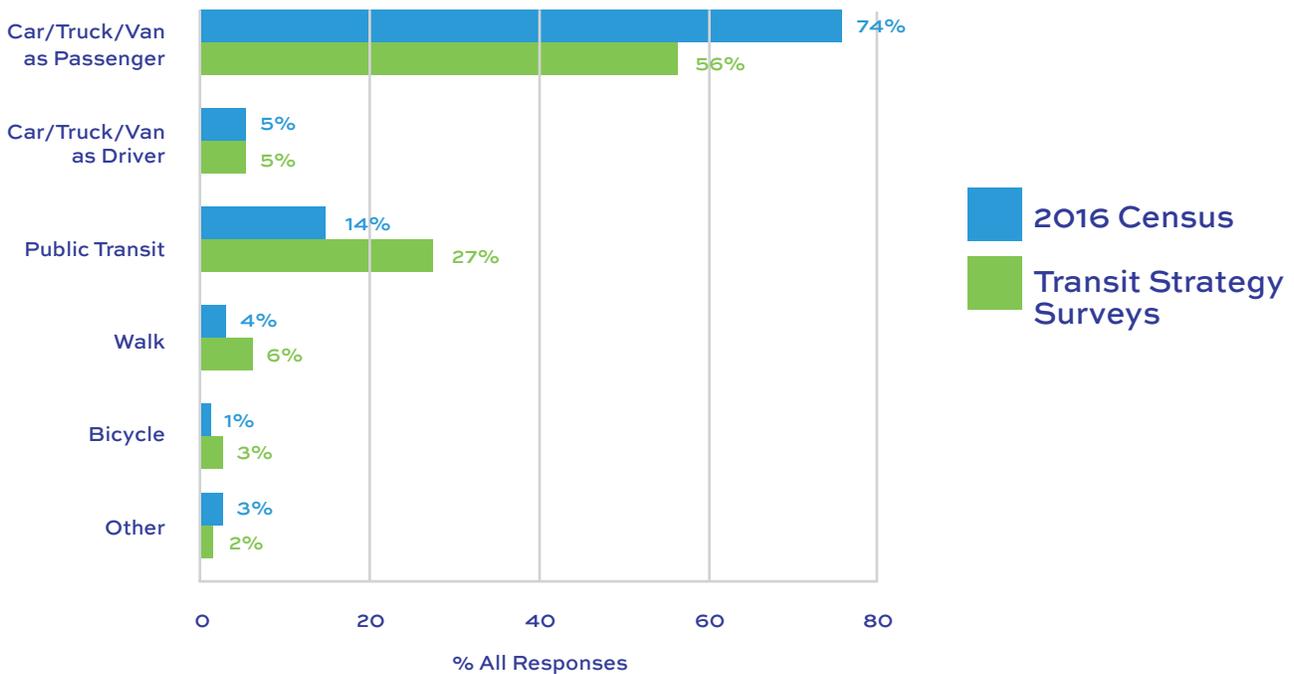


While we heard from transit users, we also heard from many who only rarely use transit.

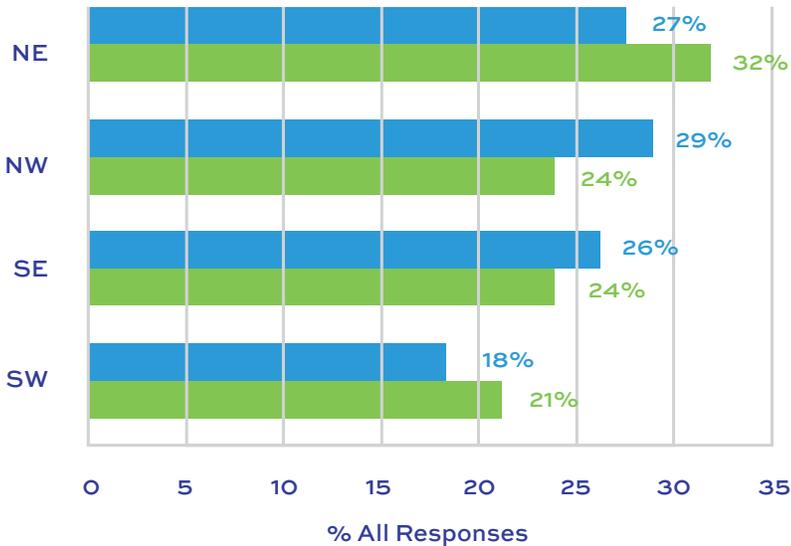
In addition to transit users, we heard from many non-riders, including car drivers. This met an important objective of the engagement plan: to speak to riders and non-riders.



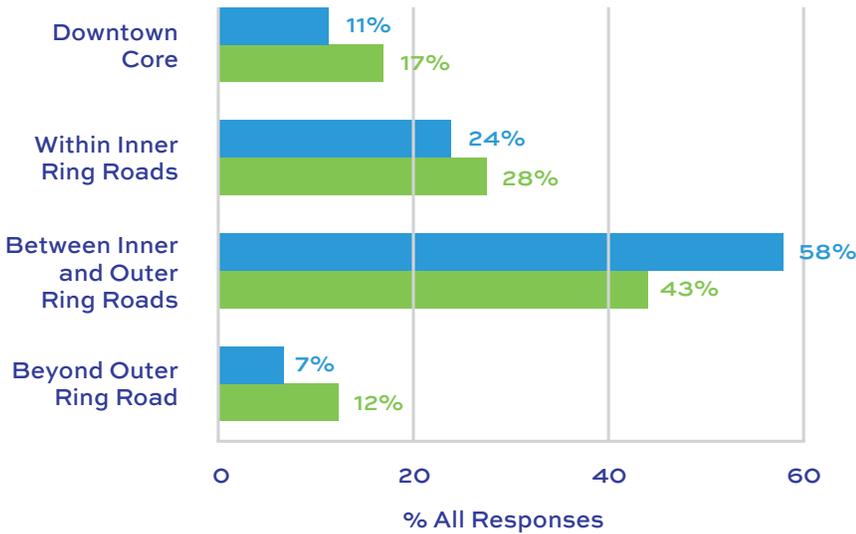
TRIP TO WORK (CENSUS) / PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORT (TRANSIT STRATEGY SURVEY)



QUADRANT



DISTANCE FROM DOWNTOWN CORE



■ 2016 Census
■ Transit Strategy Surveys

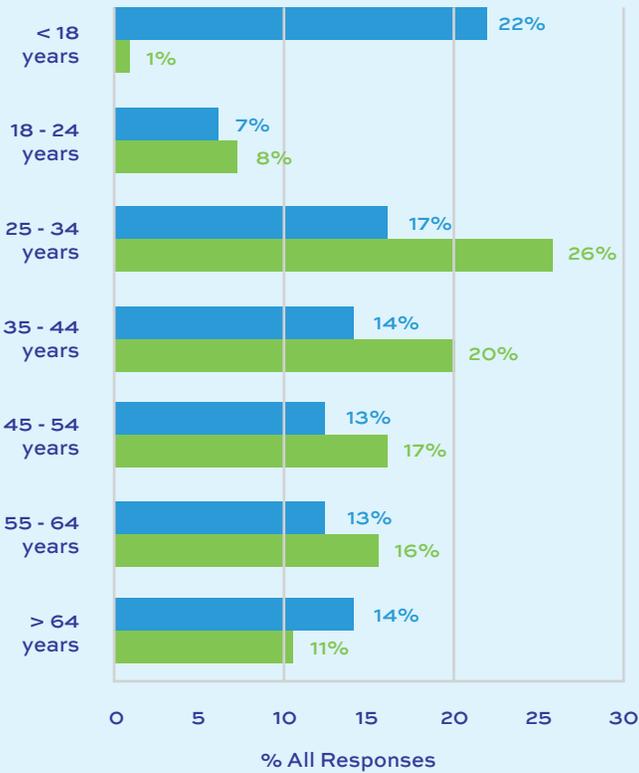
Looking at the 3-digit postal codes of participants shows us that the number of surveys corresponds closely to the population in different areas of the city - both in terms of proximity to the downtown core, as well as the quadrant.

Adults were well represented in the survey results. Children were engaged through targeted workshops with high school students and City Hall School activities. Extra effort was made to reach seniors, through targeted workshops and community events.

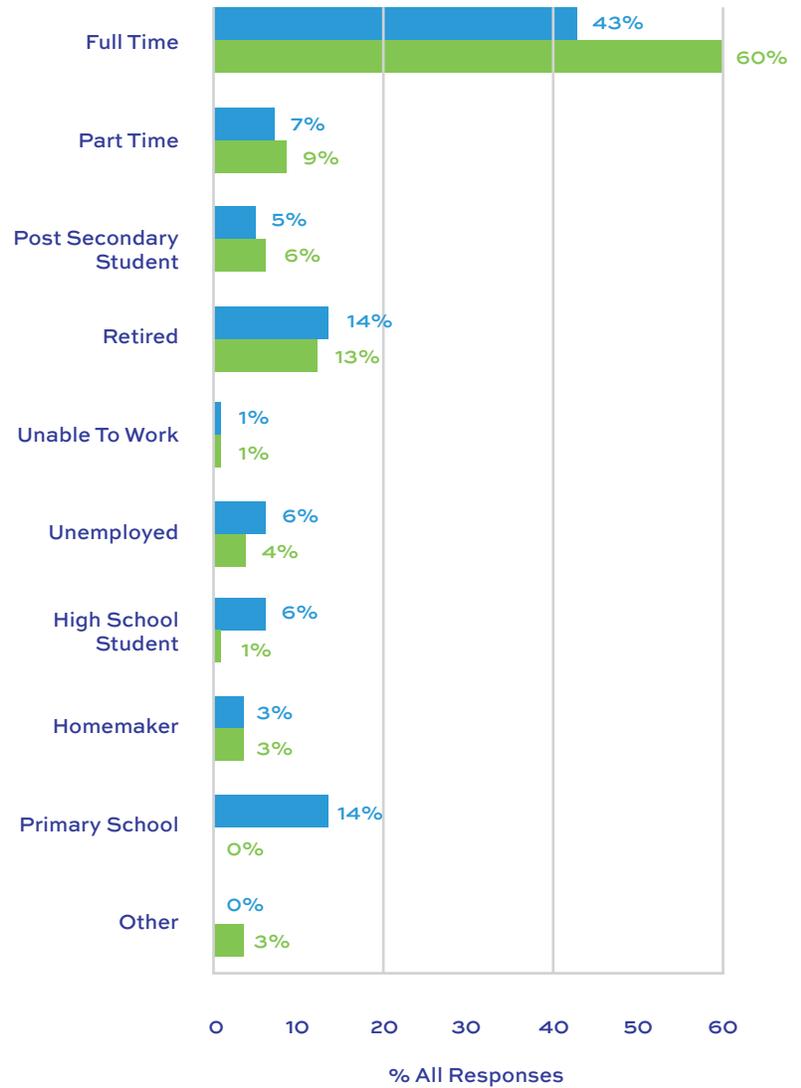
Individuals from all employment categories were represented, with some over-representation of full-time workers and less participation from primary school and high school children.



AGE



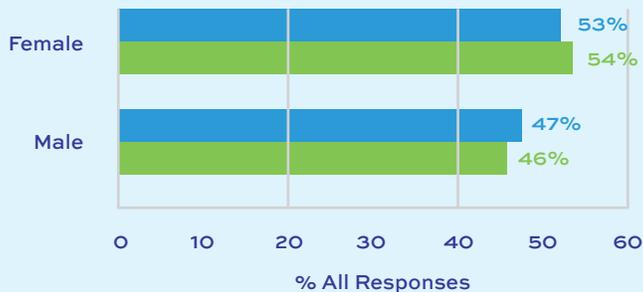
EMPLOYMENT



The gender of survey participants closely matches gender balance of the population.



GENDER



2016 Census

Transit Strategy Surveys