

Administration Response: Inclusive Transit

Recommendation

That the June 15, 2021, City Operations report CO00547, be received for information.

Executive Summary

This report responds to recommendations made by the Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board's (ETSAB) report EXT00489. Administration is aligned with ETSAB's recommendations, working through direction made by the Community Safety and Well-Being Task Force and committed to further enhancing safety for riders, staff and Edmonton's diverse community.

The City has committed to actions to meet the diverse needs of Edmontonians. This includes Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), the Art of Inclusion framework, the Indigenous framework and the Connected City initiative. Inclusion goals are supported by four pillars: **diversity, skill, equity and growth**. To uphold these commitments, Administration is rolling out anti-racism training, Indigenous Framework commitments and communications. Work is underway to support anti-racism training for City staff, improve communications and create a safer community for all Edmontonians.

Report

ETSAB Recommendation 1: Implementation of BIPOC-friendly human resources practices

- A. Consider hiring a Director of Anti-Racism and Inclusion (similar to the example set by the Toronto Transit Commission).
- B. Develop and implement anti-racism training for staff, in addition to other training such as GBA+ analysis and unconscious bias. We also strongly recommend that anti-racism training is delivered by racialized individuals.
- C. Develop a baseline for BIPOC employment in ETS, including senior staff and strive to have diversity throughout the organization that aligns with the cultural demographics of Edmonton.
- D. Consider sponsoring and kickstarting a COMTO (Conference of Minority Transportation Officials) chapter in Edmonton that will advocate for BIPOC transit operators and staff.

Administration Response: Administration has work underway to support this recommendation.

Diversity and Inclusion Framework

To achieve workforce inclusion, Administration is implementing the *Art of Inclusion*, the City of Edmonton's Diversity and Inclusion Framework (Attachment 1). Our shared vision for inclusion is that it is "fundamental to the way we work. The City is diverse and embraces differences with empathy and curiosity. All employees feel safe, respected and valued for who they are. Inclusion inspires us to do our best work for each other and those we serve."

Diversity and Inclusion remains a high priority for City leadership, systems and processes for advancing inclusion goals are in place. The Employee Services department will lead and implement Anti-Racism and Inclusion efforts throughout the organization, with help from equity specialists and staff who support the goal of advancing inclusion. Rather than hiring a designated FTE for Edmonton Transit Service (ETS), there are dedicated resources within Employee Services to further Diversity and Inclusion for all of the City of Edmonton workforce.

Training for City Staff

Anti-racism strategies are underway at the City, and all Administration senior leaders have completed anti-racism training. In-house training is currently being developed for City staff and will be launched in July 2021. This training will examine and address systemic barriers relating to race. In the meantime, Administration has created anti-racism education resources for all employees (Attachment 2).

Administration recently developed a resource called *Responding to Discrimination or Harassment from the Public* (Attachment 3) as part of the Connected City Program. This resource includes tools, training and support for City staff who interact with the public, and may experience discrimination, harassment or racism while on the job. This resource also offers self-care supports, and provides options to respond to discriminatory comments. Further, the Employee and Family Assistance Program is a confidential service provided by the City that offers help with personal and work-related issues at no cost to employees.

In addition to City resources available to ETS staff, ETS is a member of the Canadian Urban Transportation Association (CUTA) that works closely with the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) to share workforce best practices.

The City is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, vibrant and respectful workplace. The Respectful Workplace Administrative Policy outlines what the City expects of its employees. Workplace concerns can be addressed with the involvement of a supervisor, Employee Services, the Safe Disclosure Office, and/or a Union or Association representative. Administration is developing inclusive practices to ensure

all recruitment is equitable, inclusive, transparent and defensible. Recently, GBA+ and implicit bias training were integrated into the *Hiring Managers Certification Program*, and *Guidelines for Inclusive Job Postings* were developed for leadership positions. Virtual GBA+ training for City employees launched June 1, 2021. In addition to recruitment improvements, the Talent Outreach and Programs team implements talent acquisition programs to increase diversity in the City's workforce, such as, Indigenous Summer Students, Abilities@work and the Newcomers Internship (to begin Summer 2021).

Recruiting Diversity

In December 2019, the City implemented a voluntary diversity survey as part of recruitment. At the time of application and onboarding, candidates and new employees are invited to voluntarily self-identify their gender, race, disability status, age, LGBTQ2S+ and veteran status. Although this information is kept confidential and does not impact their candidacy, this information does support fair and inclusive recruitment. The City uses the data to reduce barriers and enhance inclusion initiatives.

Recommendation 2: Engage in proactive, ongoing communication with Edmontonians related to transit.

- A. Publicly declare that racism and hateful speech is not tolerated on ETS and post these notices in highly-visible spots on buses, LRT and transit centres.
- B. Look at opportunities to incorporate Indigenous names and words into ETS infrastructure such as transit centres, garages and bus routes similar to the recent work done by the Indigenous Ward Naming Knowledge Committee.
- C. ETS community reports should be developed in multiple languages that are reflective of Edmonton and disseminate this information through local community groups such as the Africa Centre, Canadian Native Friendship Centre, Chinese Benevolent Centre and similar organizations.
- D. Gather, track and share data related to BIPOC experiences on ETS transparently through Open Data. This includes statistics on enforcement.
- E. Actively engage with post-secondary institutions to advance debates about racial justice, systemic racism and BIPOC history, specifically related to transit.

Administration Response: Administration has work underway to support this recommendation.

The City has zero tolerance for any form of racism or harassment on transit. Administration promotes safety campaigns and tools to help riders report harassment (whether it is witnessed or experienced).

Transit Watch text message service

Administration recently added a text message feature to Transit Watch to provide a discreet way for riders to report security concerns. A text message can be sent to 780-442-4900. The text will go directly to the ETS Control Centre.

Safety Campaigns

Safety campaigns such as *Safe Person, Safe Place; Zero Tolerance; and Let's Keep Each Other Safe* serve as safety reminders, and encourage riders to report suspicious activities. Further, Administration will consider promoting these campaigns in different languages in multicultural communication channels and publications.

Bystander Awareness Campaign

In 2021, Administration will develop and implement a Bystander Awareness campaign and staff training to help empower bystanders to identify and effectively respond to racism, harassment and sexual violence. This program addresses the Edmonton Safe City Community Collaboration Committee recommendations made through the *UN Women Global Initiative for Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces*.

Indigenous Framework

The City has also recently adopted the Indigenous Framework (Attachment 4). ETS is dedicated to delivering a three-year action plan to uphold the seven commitments in this framework, including increasing staff knowledge of Indigenous cultures, traditions and worldviews.

Administration is currently reviewing recommendations in the *Safer for All* report presented to Council by the Community Safety and Well-being Task Force on April 6, 2021. Administration is preparing recommendation responses, including efforts to enhance race-based data collection and expanding measurement and evaluation of the community safety ecosystem. Responses will be presented to Council in Q1 2022.

Recommendation 3: De-escalate fare enforcement

- A. Direct Transit Peace Officer (TPO) priorities to safety and security, and away from fare enforcement where possible, and encourage drivers to not get involved in fare evasion disputes, as often racialized drivers face racial slurs in these conflicts.
- B. Align fare enforcement fines to similar infractions by single-vehicle users - i.e. fare enforcement will be no higher than a parking ticket.
- C. In situations where persons are given a fare evasion ticket, develop alternate forms of payment through community service, etc., to not further penalize those who may not be able to pay.

Administration Response: Administration has practices in place to de-escalate fare enforcement, and plans to lower fare evasion fines from \$250 to \$150 by June 30, 2021.

Reducing Fare Evasion Fine

Administration will be updating *Bylaw 8353 - Conduct of Transit Passengers* to reduce the fare evasion fines per Council direction provided at the City Council meeting on

April 6, 2021. To help address the root causes of fare evasion, Administration will be working with social agencies to create equitable fine repayment options. Together we will conduct an anti-racism review of current low income fare programs to remove barriers and support equitable participation from those who need support. Improving access to fare passes for those who need them most will help riders comply with payment requirements and minimize fare-related interactions with Transit Operators and Transit Peace Officers.

Role of Transit Operators and Transit Peace Officers

The role of the Transit Operator related to proof of payment is to inform riders of the requirement to pay valid fare. Operators also receive additional training about how to handle difficult and dangerous situations. They do not conduct fare enforcement. Fare enforcement is performed by Transit Peace Officers. Should interactions escalate to a fare dispute, Operators are instructed to notify the ETS Control Centre. Control will dispatch resources, like Inspectors and/or Transit Peace Officers. Transit Peace Officers conduct fare enforcement activities and have a tiered response to fare evasion, starting with education and coaching.

Administration is analyzing recent Anti-racism Advisory Committee recommendations to review policies, processes and approaches from an anti-racist lens and seeks continued input on approaches for the development and training of Transit Peace Officers.

Next Steps

Administration will continue its work, aligned with ETSAB's recommendations, to create a safer transit experience for all in alignment with the actions outlined in the Safer for All: A Work Plan on Community Safety and Well Being which will be presented to Community and Public Services Committee on June 30, 2021. Work will continue to support commitments to Anti-Racism training for all staff, upholding the seven commitments in Indigenous framework, and recruiting and hiring a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve.

In 2021, Administration will develop and implement a Bystander Awareness campaign to empower bystanders to safely intervene if witness to harassment or violence. Additionally, bystander awareness staff training will be developed to help employees identify and effectively respond to racism, harassment and sexual violence.

When residents feel safe, they are more empowered to connect with, and enrich, the community. Through these actions, Administration, aligned with ETSAB, will support ConnectEdmonton's goal of a healthy city.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome(s): Edmontonians use public transit and active modes of transportation			
Outcome(s)	Measure(s)	Result(s)	Target(s)
Reduced operator assaults	Annual number of operator assaults	2019: 82	2021: 71
Edmontonians use public transit and active modes of transportation	Transit Ridership	48,275,563	85,640,000

Attachments

1. The Art of Inclusion
2. Anti-Racism Resources
3. Responding to Discrimination and Harassment from the Public
4. Indigenous Framework

Others Reviewing this Report

- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- K. Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor