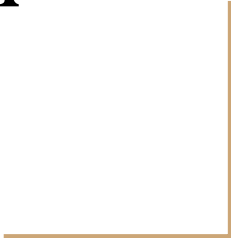


Youth  
Perspectives on  
Transit in  
Edmonton: A  
Report



# Overview

- Survey conducted March-June 2022, received 193 responses
- Wide age and racial diversity, and varied transit usage represented.
- Questions and responses covered issues and solutions to Routes and Timings, Comfort and Security, and Payment and Affordability



# Routes and Timing: Concerns, Statistics and Recommendations



# Bus Frequency

Concern: Insufficient access to transit because of:

1. Lower frequency transit in neighbourhoods during non-peak hours.
2. Transit stops aren't walkable or far from their starting distance.

Data:

- **16%** of respondents viewed bus frequency as needing improvement.
- **Only 8.26%** of respondents believe that ETS is handling frequency well.
- **71.1%** of youth are disincentivized to be on transit because of long bus wait times (i.e. lower frequency).

Recommendations:

- **Increased frequency of transit for non-peak hours, especially in neighbourhoods where there is an insufficient amount of existing buses.**
  - This would make the bus routes more accessible to all users and encourage transit usage.
  - Increasing frequency at night was a big issue mentioned
- **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lanes on important youth routes (i.e. school specials or buses that travel to the universities in the city).**
  - This would be an effective way to ensure that buses are on time. It would also improve speed, making transit more convenient, especially at times with high traffic.

# Route Diversity

Concern: Insufficient access to the train system or transit stations.

Data:

- **20.5%** said that a lack of access to public transportation disincentivized them from using it.
- **30.0%** said that changes in bus routes disincentivized them from using it.

Recommendations:

- **Bus routes that connect universities to areas which don't yet have a convenient, one-bus connection.**
  - This is missing particularly in the general southwest region of the city, both north and south of the river.
  - Increased frequency when most people are commuting to school, from around 7:00-9:30.
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lanes on important youth routes (i.e. school specials or buses that travel to the universities in the city).
  - This would be an effective way to ensure that buses are on time. It would also improve speed, making transit more convenient, especially at times with high traffic.
- Institute a "Bikes to Transit" system which allows youth to use bikes to make transit trips quicker and more convenient.

# School Related

Concern: Above-capacity transit especially for school specials.

## Data:

- **20.7%** of respondents expressed that school specials are something that ETS is doing well. (A majority mentioned that it requires improvements in capacity. )
- **76.4%** said that more accessible bus routes, such as school specials, would incentivize them to use transit.

## Recommendations:

- **More school special bus routes for high schools.**
  - Certain areas that are underserved for school specials should have new routes planned.
  - For high schools that have them already, increase capacity.
  - For high schools that don't have a school special, plan new routes
- **Bus routes that connect universities to areas which don't yet have a convenient, one-bus connection.**
  - This is missing particularly in the general southwest region of the city, both north and south of the river.
  - Increased frequency when most people are commuting to school, from around 7:00-9:30.



# Payment: Concerns, Statistics and Recommendations



# Fare Prices

Concern: Fare prices are too high and should be decreased

## Data:

- 39% said that high fare prices disincentivize them from using transit.
- 46.1% of said that fare decreases would incentivize them to use public transit.

## Recommendations:

- **Reduced fare prices or reasonable fare increases**
  - Increasing the supply of discounted or free transit slips or passes for economically disadvantaged communities.
  - Decreasing the youth pass if bought through an ARC card, incentivizing their use.
- **Offering arc cards to high schools at a discounted price**
  - The convenience and price would significantly increase ridership
  - There would be a risk of overcrowding, so increased funding and frequency may be necessary.



# ARC Cards and Payment Methods

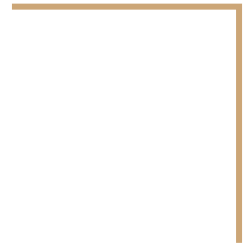
Concern: Paying with cash is inconvenient and ARC cards do not apply to everybody.

## Data:

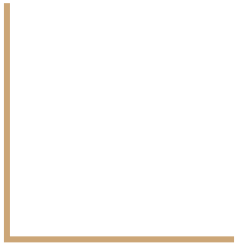
- 38% thought that Arc Cards were something that was being done well.
- 26.2% said they would use transit more if they had access to Arc Cards.

## Recommendations:

- **Improve arc card readers (increased speed and reliability)**
  - Concerns about tapping on and off for arc cards.
  - Improve the speed and ability for it to register payment.
- **Have more education and awareness for younger riders regarding ARC cards and preferred forms of payments.**
- **Have “more collaboration between ETS and schools” encourages ARC card use.**
  - Having an efficient rollout of arc cards to schools will be crucial to increasing ridership. (Supported by ETSAB 2023 Youth concerns report.)
- **Introducing a variety of payment methods**
  - Creating a digitized version of a transit card that one can add to their mobile wallet (used by cities such as Vancouver and New York City)



# Comfort and Security: Concerns, Statistics and Recommendations



# Importance of Increasing Safety and Security

## General Data:

- **69.5%** said that safety concerns disincentivize them from using transit.
- **76.4%** of people expressed that improving safety and security would incentivize them to use transit.

# Drug Usage and Homelessness in Transit Centers

Concern: Drug users and homeless people can make youth feel unsafe.

Data:

- **61.3%** said that drug use, houseless people and dangerous people made them feel unsafe.

Recommendations:

- **Build more supportive housing for houseless individuals.**
  - Having a stable home ensures that they do not need to rely on transit stations.
- **Bring back safe consumption sites.**
  - This will decrease drug-related behaviours on public transit, the biggest safety concern involving other individuals.

# Harassment

## Concerns:

- Some older men stare at or harass younger women, threatening their safety.
- Physical or verbal harassment of transit users regardless of identity.

## Data:

- **60.7%** of respondents think that ETS should prioritize improving general safety.
- **38.21%** said that a lack of security/law enforcement made them feel unsafe.
- **82.8%** of respondents believe that having more security guards/peace officers would improve their perceptions of safety on transit.

## Recommendations:

- **Increase cameras around bus stations.**
- **Easier access to emergency services and individuals.**
  - Panic buttons etc, greater education about 311 and transit watch services could be placed in buses and at stations.
  - Having authority figures can improve youth's perception of safety by giving them someone capable of protection.
  - Transit mentors could act as a protective figure for younger students taking transits from schools or busy locations [from ETSAB].