

## Current Policies - Transportation Services Users - Increased Safety Measures

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### Recommendation

That the November 13, 2020, City Operations report CR\_7026, be received for information.

### Previous Council/Committee Action

At the March 6, 2019, Community and Public Services Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

1. That Administration engage with WAVE and other relevant stakeholders to explore increased safety measures for users of transportation services in Edmonton, including but not limited to vehicles for hire and ETS, and return to Committee.
2. That Administration provide information on current policies regarding ETS, Fleet Services and DATS drivers regarding their eligibility to drive.

### Executive Summary

As part of supporting an accessible and safe city, Administration has implemented changes to enhance transit safety and security over the past three years. The next phase of changes will be developed using a Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) approach, engaging the community to consider the intersectionality and perspectives of diverse voices to explore root causes and develop actions to address safety and security issues.

Administration engaged several groups in discussions about measures that would improve safety for users of transportation services in Edmonton. Suggestions included expanding the number of women who work as Transit Operators, developing a text alert feature to use to report safety and security concerns within public transit and ensuring appropriate background checks are completed for drivers.

Administration has processes in place to assess eligibility to drive during screening, initial hiring and employment for drivers. The steps include driving assessments, police information checks and testing.

## Report

### 1. Increased Safety Measures for Users of Transportation Services in Edmonton

Administration has implemented several changes to improve public transit safety for customers, employees and communities in Edmonton. These changes, which are foundational to supporting an accessible and safe city, include:

- Physical investments including installing security cameras and retractable shields on buses and facility improvements.
- Workforce investments including contracted security guards, Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) personnel coverage, Transit Operator continuous training, Transit Peace Officer (TPO) activities and Edmonton Police Service (EPS) support.
- Initiatives to elevate safety such as critical incident and mental health supports, public awareness campaigns, customer research and governance enhancements.

Taking a holistic approach to safety, Administration will incorporate Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+), customer journey mapping and community stakeholder engagement into the next phase of transit safety and security enhancements in 2021. Community groups and agencies will be invited to participate in root cause analysis exercises, reviewing the customer journey and developing actions to address safety and security issues. Administration will leverage information from current initiatives such as SafeCityYEG to understand perceptions of safety on transit and continue work to deploy resources using intelligence and data analytics that predict hot spots and direct the right resources to the right place at the right time.

Through Edmonton Safe City, under the Gender-based Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Initiative, Administration is committed to increasing safety for women and girls in Edmonton. In 2017, a scoping study to understand the nature of sexual violence in public spaces identified “transportation as sites for sexual violence” as one of the top three priorities identified. From April 2018 to November 2019, a Community Collaboration Committee representing the City of Edmonton, Ministry of Culture and Multiculturalism and Status of Women, Edmonton Transit Service, Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton, Metis Child and Family Services Society, Edmonton Police Service, Women’s Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE), Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General, Uber, and University of Alberta’s Women and Gender Studies, met to develop recommendations to improve safety for women and girls in public spaces. This included a focus on public transportation.

Administration met with WAVE and the Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board (ETSAB) to discuss opportunities for developing increased safety measures for users

of transportation services in Edmonton, including but not limited to vehicles for hire and ETS. The discussion included:

- Ensuring appropriate background checks for Operators/drivers, to assess suitability for employment.
- Increasing the number of women employed as Operators/drivers.
- A text alert application, to allow users to text concerns while traveling in public transit.
- Wanting the opportunity to choose your driver, see the suggested route and leave online reviews/ratings when scheduling a taxi ride, similar to some ride share applications.
- The need to look at first kilometre/last kilometre alternative transit solutions from a GBA+ lens, including the need to consider the intersectionality of different factors that may present different needs such as age, gender, disability, income level, etc.

Further details about the feedback are outlined in Attachment 1.

### **2. Current Policies for ETS, Fleet Services and DATS Drivers Regarding Their Eligibility to Drive**

The City has 2,300 conventional and paratransit operators and 413 employed in Transit Fleet Maintenance. On average, 120 Transit Operators are hired per year to work in conventional transit or paratransit operations as part of regular turnover due to retirements, promotions, resignations and terminations. During the employment period, there are four times when the employee's eligibility to drive may be re-assessed:

- 1) During the training program and probationary period.
- 2) During a regular driving assessment conducted by the employer as part of provincial regulatory requirements.
- 3) Following a preventable collision or service incident while performing the driving duties of the job.
- 4) Following the report of a criminal conviction.

#### **Training and Probationary Period Reviews**

Administration delivers a nationally accredited six-week training program to all newly hired Transit Operators. During the training period and for the duration of the six month probationary period, employees who do not perform to the expected standards are thoroughly assessed and may be terminated from their employment.

#### **Driving Evaluations**

Ongoing driver evaluations are completed to ensure compliance with the City's policies/procedures, the *Alberta Traffic Safety Act* and provincial regulations for employees in transit and fleet with driving responsibilities. The evaluations begin while the employee is a trainee and continue after training has been completed. A third party driver evaluation tool, frequently used in the transit industry, is used by Administration

to conduct these assessments. If the employee does not pass the evaluation, they must complete additional training and are subject to re-evaluation.

**Post-Incident Review**

When an incident takes place, Administration conducts an investigation and, if the behaviour is deemed culpable or preventable, additional corrective or disciplinary measures are taken. Measures may include completing a driver re-assessment, re-training, counseling, or discipline up to and including termination depending on the circumstances and the employee’s performance history.

Considerations - Discipline or Termination for Off Duty Criminal Conviction

When Administration learns of an employee’s off duty criminal conviction, it considers the legal principles and guidance set out below. An employer has less jurisdiction or authority over what employees do outside working hours, unless it can show that its legitimate business interests are affected in some way. Discipline or termination for off duty conduct resulting in conviction is more likely appropriate when the behaviour in question detrimentally affects the employer’s reputation and/or renders the employee unable to discharge his or her employment obligations properly, as examples.

Suspension Pending Disposition of Criminal Charges

Whether the legitimate interests of the City would be affected by the retention of any employee, pending the resolution of the criminal charges in such a way where a suspension may be warranted, will depend upon considerations similar to those discussed above. Each situation is considered on a case by case basis.

**Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management**

<b>Corporate Outcome(s): Edmonton is a safe city</b>			
<b>Outcome(s)</b>	<b>Measure(s)</b>	<b>Result(s)</b>	<b>Target(s)</b>
Improved safety and security for users of City Operations services	Security disorder rate per 100,000 boardings	2019: 17.37	2021: 10
Increase in number of women who work as Transit Operators for ETS	# of employees who self identify as women in the Transit Operator position	2019:313	2021: 345

**Attachment**

1. Response to Stakeholder Feedback

**Others Reviewing this Report**

- R. Smyth, Deputy City Manager, Citizen Services
- K. Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- S. McCabe, Deputy City Manager, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development
- B. Andriachuk, City Solicitor