

ETSAB 2019 - 2020 Annual Activity Report - Background and Overview



Background

The Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board (ETSAB) was established in September 1994 to provide advice and recommendations to the Urban Planning Committee from a stakeholder perspective on issues related to public transit. These include ridership, servicing issues, public transit policies; repair, maintenance and accessibility issues; relationships between City projects and public transit and initiatives of other levels of government and surrounding municipalities that could affect public transit in Edmonton. ETSAB was originally established under Bylaw #12454 in 1994. The Bylaw was replaced by [16929](#) on April 22, 2015, and revised August 27, 2019, including an update to the name of the Board (from System to Service) to align with Edmonton Transit Service' recent rebranding.

ETSAB consists of 12 members, appointed by Council. The President of the Amalgamated Transit Union or a delegate may serve the Board as a liaison member. Members of ETSAB represent a variety of interests, are a positive source of informed participation, and are prepared to address issues on a City-wide basis. The criterion for selection of members is to gain representation that reflects the diversity of our citizens, businesses, labour, communities and organizations.

ETSAB meets on a monthly basis on the last Monday of the month in the Heritage Room at City Hall. For issues that require in-depth consideration, ad-hoc sub-committees are formed as needed. Board members are expected to serve on at least one sub-committee throughout the term, of the two that run concurrently.

In order to fulfill its mandate, ETSAB may:

- Conduct research
- Identify stakeholder groups and seek input from them
- Share information and collaborate with the City Manager
- Receive and consider information and records provided by the City Manager that relates to the Board's mandate and work plan
- Inform City Council of initiatives of other levels of government, surrounding municipalities and other local authorities and organizations that could impact public transit

Overview

ETSAB had a productive year in 2019-20, making several presentations and issuing reports and other correspondence on various topics within its mandate. The Boards' activities to highlight opportunities to improve transit services have led to tangible benefits in Edmonton's transit system with the consideration and response of the Administration and Council. ETSAB looks forward to continuing these collaborative efforts in 2020-21.

Membership and Appointments

Members are each appointed for a one year term from May 1st to April 30th; terms may be renewed up to a maximum of six years. The expected time commitment is around 15-18 hours per month for Board-related activities.

Twelve members served on the Board in the 2019-20 term: Charles Kelly (Chair), Isabell Hubert Lyall (Vice Chair), Brian Curry (resigned in September), J. Philip Reid, Jorge Arango, Stewart Smith, Maurice Vincent (until December), Giselle General, William Agbakoba, Bryan Shepherd, Jarret Esslinger and Robert (Bob) Macklon.

Two members have declined reappointment to the Board for the upcoming term: Stewart Smith (2 years of service), Jorge Arango (3 years of service). Recruitment is underway through the Office of the City Clerk for five new members for the 2020-2021 term, due to the tragic passing of one member, Maurice Vincent, in December 2019, and the retirement of one member, Robert (Bob) Macklon after a second full six year term of service.

In August of 2019, the Board received a letter from the Office of the City Clerk with an invitation to participate in the University of Alberta's Professional Development Work Experience program. The program provides the opportunity for graduate students to be contributing members of the Board. Members were in favor of participating and selected two students (Mudasser Seraj and Ngoan Do) to join the Board in this capacity for one year, to October 2020.

At the first regular Board meeting of 2020, Charles Kelly (4th year of service) was re-elected as Chair, and Isabell Hubert Lyall (3rd year of service) was re-elected as Vice Chair of the Board for the upcoming term.

Activities

ETSAB held all twelve regular monthly meetings in the 2019-2020 term, as well as the work planning retreat on February 16, 2019. The following sub-committees were formed to gather information and prepare reports and letters to UPC. The activities of each sub-committee are described in **Attachment #2**.

1. *Safety and Security*
2. *ETS' Marketing Strategy*
3. *Transit and Vulnerable Users*
4. *Transit Communications* (carried over from the previous term)

Communications with Council

Two new reports were presented by ETSAB to Committees of Council in 2019-20, and two letters were issued to Councillors and copied to ETS Administration.

Reports:

1. **CR_7309** ETSAB *Transit Communications: A Scan of Three Cities* (June 11, 2019)
2. **CR_7906** ETSAB *ETS' Marketing Strategy: Communicating Bus Network Redesign and Smart Fare Changes* (February 25, 2020)

Letters:

3. **Response to CR_6901** *Options to Implement Wayfinding* (May 15, 2019)
4. **Response to CR_7128** *ETS' Proposed Transit Fare Policy C451H* (October 8, 2019)

Councillors were also updated on selected topics that were discussed at the general monthly Board meetings via email submission of "Topics of the Night" from the Vice Chair of the Board. The selected topics for 2019 meetings are listed in **Attachment #3**.

Other activities in 2019

Board members received 11 presentations throughout the year from City Administration and others (**Attachment #3**). Members had the opportunity to ask questions and offer informal feedback at each presentation. ETSAB nominated two delegates to attend the annual UITP/Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) conference in the fall of 2019, and will select representatives for 2020 as well. ETSAB celebrated at the Annual Social in November, attended by current and past members. Members of City Council and Edmonton Transit management staff were also invited.

Budget Projections

Budget information for the upcoming year is included in **Attachment #4**. All budget projections are included within the annual budget submission of the Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) branch of the City's Operations department.

Work Plans

A copy of the 2019-2020 work plan submitted last term for ETSAB is included in **Attachment #5** for reference. **Attachment #6** contains the 2020-2021 proposed work plan. The Board plans to provide deliverables related to the topics of *Transit and Vulnerable Users*, and *Transit Safety and Security* by the end of the current term. *Safety and Security Part 2*, *Free Ticket to Ride*, *Winterizing Public Transit*, and *Transit and Tourism Part 2* have been selected as new topics of study, and various smaller initiatives for research and response were selected to be carried out through the ongoing Transit Innovation sub-committee as well.