

ETSAB 2019-2020 Sub-Committees Activities and Outcomes

ETSAB held all twelve general monthly meetings in the 2019 - 2020 term. The annual work plan was developed at a half-day retreat held February 16, 2019. To fulfill the work plan, the following sub-committees were formed to conduct research and provide a policy position or recommendation to the appropriate committees of Council:

1. [Transit Communications](#)
2. [ETS' Marketing Strategy](#)
3. [Transit Safety & Security](#)
4. [Vulnerable Users and Transit](#)
5. [Transit Innovation](#)
6. **Integrating Transit and Land Use Policies (cancelled)**
The Board determined this was an overlap with Administration's work.

The activities and outcomes of each sub-committee are described below:

1. Transit Communications

Purpose

The sub-committee scanned transit agency-to-passenger communications best practices in cities of similar size to Edmonton, such as: Calgary, AB, Vancouver, BC, Austin, TX, Seattle, WA, Cologne, DE, and Frankfurt, DE, investigating their policies and operations regarding:

1. Navigating the LRT/Bus Interface/Multi-Modal Travel, including e.g.:
 - a. Communication of train departure times. In other cities, are departure times indicated at locations other than just the platforms themselves, such as at overground entrances for underground stops, or landing & concourse levels? Are announcements given in both audible and visual formats?
 - b. Use of Advertising Space: What is common practice re: advertisements on screens and boards as compared to system-relevant information, such as real-time information and closures/detours/incidents? Currently, most screens throughout transit stations are used to display ads only; these could be used to display real-time information (see also *Integration of Real-Time Information* below), interspersed with ads for revenue if need be.
 - c. Integration of Real-Time Information: What is common practice regarding real-time departure boards at transit centres and/or (busy) bus stops? Is there a minimum passenger volume that warrants boards/announcements? How is the information communicated?

- d. Transfer Announcements on buses. What is common practice in other cities regarding transfer announcements, such as for train lines or between different modes? Edmonton examples could be “Transfer here for the Metro Line” or simply “Corona Station”, such as in Hong Kong: “Interchange station for Tseung Kwan O line”; Boston, MA: “Change here for the Red and Orange Lines”; NYC: “Transfer is Available to the R Train.”) Do announcements include landmarks/points of interest, like big arenas or popular museums? This could facilitate navigation both for tourists and locals new to the system. With the new text-to-speech voice, new items and announcements are easily added.
 - e. [from 2018 Retreat] Communication around where to purchase passes - current physical ETS sales outlets information is spread out over several PDF files, divided by quadrant, simply listing addresses. There is no map or integration with google maps, resulting in low convenience of use on both desktop and mobile even for locals. How are other cities handling this?
2. Navigation within the LRT System: How do other transit agencies facilitate travel on train/LRT/subway lines? E.g. via LED indicators on trains indicating where you are on the line, and where to transfer to other lines? ETS currently only has static print signs both at stations and on trains, and audible/visual “next stop” announcements.
 3. Emergency Communications: What is common practice in communicating emergency messages? Do other cities use e.g. heads-up messaging on the Transit app, or integration with Google Maps for e.g. LRT closures/incidents? Announcements/visuals on platforms? Any innovative communications ideas? How are suggested alternative travel arrangements communicated?
 4. Two-Way Passenger Communications: Do other cities offer two-way communications between passengers and the transit agency? In what medium (phone, twitter, facebook)? What is it used for (trip inquiries, system issues,...)?

Findings will be tied in with ETSAB’s recent Wayfinding report where possible. This report will not be concerned with marketing practices, i.e. advertising or communications with the goal to increase revenue or ridership. The subcommittee will attempt specifically to highlight cost-effective options and “quick fixes,” wherever that is possible.

Activities

Held meetings, drafted Terms of Reference, completed research.

Outcome

- The report (CR_7309 ETSAB Transit Communications: A Scan of Three Cities (June 11, 2019) was presented at the June 11, 2019 meeting of the Urban Planning Committee.
- At the June 11, 2019, Urban Planning Committee meeting the following motion was passed: “That Administration provide a report on options to implement the communications improvements as outlined in the June 11, 2019, Edmonton Transit System Advisory Board report CR_7309.”
- The Administration report CR_7331 Options to Implement Comms Improvements - Response to ETSAB Recommendations was received by the Urban Planning Committee for information on September 3, 2019.

Membership

Chair: Isabell Hubert Lyall

Members: Giselle General, Charlie Kelly, Bob Macklon, Phil Reid, Mariah Samji, Stewart Smith

2. ETS' Marketing Strategy

Purpose

Changes of a large scale such as a bus network redesign and changes in fare, which involves changes in route names, schedule access and availability, can cause discomfort during the adjustment process. Communication is key to ensure that everyone affected, regardless of communication style, language comprehension/ competency, familiarity of city services, are as informed and as supported as possible.

The objective of this sub-committee is to provide recommendations to the marketing plan to ensure that information gets to the intended audience in an effective way. The network redesign can be a meaningful opportunity to increase ridership and trust in the transit system.

Scope of Work

1. The Bus Network Redesign is about making significant changes to how Edmontonians travel from one point to another. Part of the scope is determining the following
 - a. Gathering information about how various communication strategies are used by the City of Edmonton to inform people on the ground of the changes and what tools are used (Posters, digital boards, COE website, social media).
 - b. Identifying which pieces of information need to be disseminated when it comes to changes in transit routes as well changes in fare policy, and the most appropriate communication method to use.

2. To answer these questions, the sub-committee will employ a variety of methods to gather information, which will include but not be limited to:
- a. Getting in touch with currently elected representatives and other municipal organizations who have endeavoured to reach the general population of Edmonton to disseminate various types of information.
 - b. Contact appropriate departments and agencies, both within the city and other cities.
 - c. Conduct personal observations of current tools, such as apps, online content, physical signage to ensure accessibility, effectiveness, and maintain customer satisfaction and trust in the system.

Activities

- Planned Schedule
 - June 2019: First draft of TOR. Confirm if a board member of the Accessibility Advisory Committee wants to contribute. First meeting to get to know each other and what they want to know about.
 - July 2019: Finalize TOR. Meeting to assign tasks to the subcommittee members.
 - August 2019: Individual Research. Third Meeting to divide tasks among members.
 - September 2019: Third subcommittee meeting. 50% completion of document.
 - October 2019: Fourth subcommittee meeting. First Draft document for revision.
 - November 2019: Final document for submission.
- Research was assigned and contributions made for the final report. In person sub-committee meetings were held monthly.
- The report and recommendations were drafted.

Outcomes

- The report (CR_7906 ETSAB ETS' Marketing Strategy: Communicating Bus Network Redesign and Smart Fare Changes) was presented at the February 25, 2020 meeting of the Urban Planning Committee.
- The motion was that the February 25, 2020, Edmonton Transit Service Advisory Board report CR_7906, be received for information.

Membership

Chair: Giselle

Members: Charlie, Isabell, Maurice, William

3. Transit Safety and Security

Purpose

To undertake a high level study to identify safety and security issues within the Edmonton transit system, and to identify potential short and long-term improvements or solutions. Transportation engineers use *safety* when an issue is measurable in an objective manner; and *security* when an issue is subjective (the perception of safety). We will attempt to follow this definition.

Scope of Work

1. Operational Safety issues: This section will identify safety issues related to the transit operations and based on data provided by the City. In example:
 - a. Drivers' Safety (what are the issues, what are the countermeasures?); how that will affect safety of customers or security of customers?
 - b. Safety of bus/LRT routes and schedules (i.e. what routes are more dangerous at what times? Why?)
 - c. Security/Safety customers survey (can we get the latest survey that was completed by the City?)
 - d. How the City is evaluating the success of just hiring more people for security? How do they operate? How do they measure the improvement of safety? How do they identify if safety is a concern?
 - e. What are the security procedures? How do security staff respond to an emergency? How a customer can report an issue in real time depending where they are in the transit facilities or vehicles? (i.e. on main bus stations, on LRT stations, on other stations, on isolated stations, on the vehicles).
 - f. Conclusion on Safety Data (What are we seeing from items a to e?)

2. Operational Security Issues and Visualization:
 - a. Me too movement – issues visualization: what is missing in the surveys? Can we complete a recap of the issues that have been visualized in social media?
 - b. Our member's issues identification.
 - c. Psychiatry segment on trauma. (i.e. we can probably provide some references on trauma as related to abuse – issues like re-victimization, why people don't report, etc.)

3. Calgary and Ottawa approach to improve women safety in transit (Toronto CUTA) – Lessons learned and what is working.
 - a. Calgary
 - b. Ottawa
4. WAVE committee liaison.
 - a. Input on 2a and 2b
 - b. Input on 5
 - c. Input on draft report
5. Recommendations: We will provide strategies that can be successful in the short term to improve safety and security. Examples of known successful strategies are the use of an incident report webpage, the capability to report security issues anonymously; etc.
 - a. Compile input
 - b. Report formatting
6. Document finalization.

Activities

- September 2019: Review the project scope of work. First meeting to assign tasks to the subcommittee members.
- October - December 2019: Submission of complete segment by each member of the subcommittee. Meetings to discuss the recommendations.
- 2020: Final Report

Outcome

A letter to the Urban Planning Committee of City Council is planned for submission by end of April, prior to commencing the next terms' work plan item Transit Safety and Security Part 2.

Membership

Chair: Phil / Jorge

Members: Giselle, Isabell, Bryan, Jarret, Jorge, Phil, Bob

4. Vulnerable Users and Transit

Purpose

To propose systems or processes to assist people who require help in order to introduce them to the transit system. Find out what other transit systems are doing in this regard. To determine if anything is currently being done in Edmonton to assist such potential users of ETS.

Activities

Research and Recommendations

- Subcommittee members spent considerable time discussing the definition of vulnerable users and soon concluded that efforts to establish such a list would be exhaustive and probably still incomplete. We decided therefore to focus on strategies that would be helpful to people who have challenges using the transit system. While such an approach is expected to identify most with physical or intellectual challenges we must recognize there are many others who are reluctant to use the system such as women, young people travelling alone, tourists etc; these groups must also be considered.
- The sub-committee plans to find what approaches are employed by other transit systems around the country and, using this knowledge, attempt to suggest an approach that will work for Edmonton.
- We will seek input from DATS, seniors' organizations, Accessibility Advisory Council, etc.

Outcomes

A report to a Committee of Council is planned for submission prior to the end of the current term, in April 2020.

Membership

Chair: Charles Kelly

Members: Giselle General, Bryan Shepherd, William Agbakoba, Ngoan Do, Jason Pisesky (AAC)

5. Transit Innovation

Purpose

A standing committee to focus is to foster open-ended discussions on how to improve transit. The committee looks at new technologies and trends, innovative approaches taken by other municipalities, and articles/ publications of what other transit authorities are doing.

Activities

- Meetings held were open discussions, and all members were encouraged to participate
- The Committee may invite subject matter experts and outside stakeholders to share experiences, insights and ideas on bettering public transit
- The Committee may on occasion focus on a particular subject or topic to generate ideas and support the work of other ETSAB Committees
- The Committee may suggest to the Board that a recommendation be put forward to City Administration or Council (with Board approval)
- Follow up on motions from recommendations in previous reports

Outcomes

- Letter: Response to CR_6901 Options to Implement Wayfinding (May 15, 2019)
- Letter: Response to CR_7128 ETS' Proposed Transit Fare Policy C451H (October 8, 2019)
- It was determined at the 2020 ETSAB Annual Work Planning Retreat that a separate standing committee for Quick Responses to Council Reports from Administration or emerging issues will be formed for the 2020-2021 term, and the Transit Innovation meetings will no longer be required to be included in the agenda for General Meetings going forward. The purpose of the meetings will be exclusively for team building and informal discussions, as confirmed at the Annual Work Planning Retreat on February 8th.

Membership

Chair: Jarret Esslinger

Members: All Board members