

ETSAB 2020-2021 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. This year, due to pandemic restrictions, our meetings have been online. 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 2020-21, making several presentations and issuing reports and other correspondence on various topics within its mandate. The Board's activities to highlight opportunities to improve transit services have led to tangible benefits in Edmonton's transit system with the consideration and response of Administration and Council. ETSAB looks forward to continuing these collaborative efforts in 2021-2022.

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), J. Philip Reid, Giselle General, William Agbakoba, Bryan Shepherd, Jarret Esslinger, Bob Turner, Lindsay Vanstone, Michelle Peters-Jones, Guy Milner and Serena Tang.

One member, Charles Kelly, has declined reappointment to the Board for the upcoming term.

Recruitment is underway through the Office of the City Clerk for one new member for the 2021-2022 term. 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 favour of participating and selected two students (Mudasser Seraj and Ngoan Do) to join the Board in this capacity for one year, to October 2020. Mudasser Seraj is continuing to serve in that capacity.

At the first regular Board meeting of 2021, Isabell Hubert Lyall (4th year of service) was elected as Chair, and Lindsay Vanstone (1st year of service) was elected as Vice Chair of the Board for the upcoming term.

Activities

ETSAB held all twelve regular monthly meetings in the 2020-2021 term, as well as the work planning retreat on 1 February 2020 and, due to changing circumstances particularly around the pandemic and the introduction of five new Board members, a revised version our work plan was considered at a meeting on 11 July 2020. 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 #8**.

- *Safety and Security*
- *Returning Safely to Transit during CoViD-19*
- *Inclusive Transit - BIPOC experiences on ETS*
- *Transit and Vulnerable Users*

Other subcommittees were put on hold until after the above were dealt with. These were;

- *Transit and Tourism*
- *Ticket to Ride*

Communications with Council

One new report was presented by ETSAB to a Committee of Council in 2020-21.

Reports:

- **EXT00421** *Returning Safely to Transit during CoViD-19* (24 March 2021)

Two other reports are due to be presented shortly,

- *Inclusive Transit - BIPOC Experience on ETS* (scheduled for 25 May 2021)
- *Transit and Vulnerable Populations*

ETSAB also spoke to Council on the subject of Budget Adjustments on 3 December 2020.

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 2020 meetings are listed in **Attachment #9**.

Other activities in 2020

Board members received 11 presentations throughout the year from City Administration and others (**Attachment #9**). Members had the opportunity to ask questions and offer informal feedback at each presentation.

ETSAB nominated three delegates to attend the annual UITP/Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) conference in the fall of 2020, and will select representatives for 2021 as well. ETSAB’s usual Annual Social in November, usually attended by current and past members as well as members of City Council and Edmonton Transit management staff, was unfortunately cancelled this year due to the pandemic.

Budget Projections

Budget information for the upcoming year is included in **Attachment #10**. 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 revised 2020-2021 work plan submitted last term for ETSAB is included in **Attachment #6** for reference.

The Board plans to provide deliverables related to the topics of *Transit and Vulnerable Users*, and *Inclusive Transit - BIPOC Experience on ETS* by the end of the current term. Subjects for study for the upcoming year will be determined at an annual planning meeting to be held in May 2021.