
More changes for the ETS

City administration has five upcoming opportunities to make adjustments to the transit system

By Jack Farrell

THE BUS NETWORK redesign is getting mixed reviews from the public.

A report presented to city council executive committee Jan. 19 reveals positive feedback for the increased frequency of buses and expanded weekend services. However, criticism included concerns over the lack of accessibility to transit and lack of transit service in some areas of the city.

During the presentation to city council, ETS director of planning and scheduling Daniel Vriend, said the new design has already been revised by 20 per cent in response to concerns from transit users.

Being able to revise and change the network easily and quickly was one of the main goals for the new design, Vriend said.

"I think we have a great foundation of service to build on, and to continually react to changing circumstances in the city.

"Of course, it's not done. I think our job is to continually understand and react to the changing needs of council and of Edmontonians, to deliver the best service we can."

There are more changes to come, as Vriend and his team have five opportunities this year to make service adjustments.

Those five chances to make adjustments align with seasonal changes such as the K-12 school schedule and construction season, Vriend said. The five opportunities also align with the shift changes for ETS operators every 12 weeks, which are required as part of the operator's collective agreement with the city.

The five days this year to watch for changes are Feb. 6, April 24, July 3, Sept. 4, and Dec. 4.

Omicron affecting ETS schedule

ETS made significant service adjustments recently because staff shortages caused by the Omicron variant. These affected 63 bus routes, with many weekday trips temporarily removed from the schedule.

A full list of the affected routes and removed trips can be found on the [City of Edmonton website](#).

Before making any changes to the network, Vriend said, his team works with such interested parties as school boards and Edmonton city council to understand riders' needs. Vriend says he also relies on public engagement and feedback to adjust the transit system.

Later this year, Vriend and his team are scheduled to report to city council about the future of transit in Edmonton and present an evaluation of the ETS On-Demand Service. An equity analysis of the transit system will also be presented in the fall.

Changes to transit service that are already planned will be announced in March as part of the 2022 ETS Annual Service Plan.

To submit feedback about the bus network and ETS, Edmontonians can use the 311 app or [fill out an online form](#).

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