

October 21, 2015

TO: Mayor Nenshi
Mayor's Office (#8069)

Doug Morgan
Director, Calgary Transit (#166SG)

FROM: Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group (CTCAG)

RE: CTCAG Report on Activities

The Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group (CTCAG) is pleased to submit this letter as an official Report on Activities to Calgary's City Council.

BACKGROUND:

CTCAG is made up of a diverse selection of regular transit riders, formed in 2011 to provide feedback on customer priorities, challenges and forward planning for Calgary Transit (CT). Unlike other customer engagement techniques such as focus groups or surveys, CTCAG operates as an ongoing semi-autonomous two-way communication channel.

After being formed in 2011, CTCAG members were briefed on transit operating procedures, CT's operational structure and current & ongoing transit initiatives. The group put together five customer priorities - communicated to the Director of CT and Mayor's offices - with unanimous support for RouteAhead and the 30 year vision for CT:

1. Provide information and communication across all mediums in a clear and pertinent manner.
2. Improve the perception of Calgary Transit through a Customer Education campaign
3. Value operators' expertise by granting meaningful venues for input with regard to customer service and system operation.
4. Support the implementation of a primary transit network.
5. Identify and implement "the little things" that improve core customer experience.

UPDATE:

From the five priorities, seven categories were created to focus activities and track and report on progress-to-date.

1. Website & Trip Planner
2. Marketing & Communications
3. Customer-oriented Culture
4. Planning, Policy & Design
5. Promotion, Education & Outreach
6. Fares
7. Connect

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The following are just a sampling of initiatives where CTCAG has been instrumental in affecting change by providing third party committee review and feedback:

CATEGORY	CTCAG Activity-to-date	OPPORTUNITIES
Website & Trip Planner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active in review of and input on the CT website refresh and launch, including recommendations on real-time bus info for riders 	
Marketing & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased signage for CTrain closures - increased CT Peace Officer presence on platforms - improved communications around service disruptions, both planned, and unplanned - implementation of real-time bus information - improved Twitter communication standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - branding of train lines is inconsistent; consistent verbal and visual branding across all forms of marketing and communications, including social media, is highly recommended - too much lost revenue/opportunity in empty advertising space; if not sold could be donated to a not-for-profit for a specific period, or used by CT to further educate riders. - shelter vandalism campaign appears ineffective - signage at stations is difficult to view once a train has pulled up to the platform
Customer-Oriented Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pilot project to keep trains clean; improved general cleanliness - increased presence of Peace Officers on platforms - standardization of garbage and recycling bins - improved snow removal on and accessing platforms - increased hours of operation and shorter line-ups at the Customer Service Centre downtown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - some bus shelters seem designed in a way that causes melting snow to drip and freeze in front of entrance - signage at stations difficult to view when a train is pulled up to the platform
Planning, Policy & Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CTCAG expresses appreciation for Doug Morgan, CT Director's leadership style; regularly attends meetings and provides transparent communication; open to suggestion and criticism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new branding of train lines has been presented to group, however nothing appears to have been implemented - too much lost revenue/opportunity in empty advertising space; if not sold could be donated to a not-for-profit for a specific period, or used by CT to further educate riders. - Driver consistency; some will wait for riders to get from train to bus stop and others will not

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CATEGORY	CTCAG Activity-to-date	OPPORTUNITIES
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - open line of communication for operators to provide feedback still needed - bus shelter design needs to be amended so melting snow doesn't freeze at the entry creating a safety hazard - signage at stations difficult to view when a train is pulled up to the platform
Promotion, Education & Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - April Fool's joke was a good example of culture change in a positive way; encouraging conversation on transit ridership and sharing of that space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - branding of train lines is inconsistent; consistent verbal and visual branding across all forms of marketing and communications, including social media, is highly recommended - payment methods for new and casual riders
Fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tickets that no longer expire at year end - no additional fare required if using an old ticket after fare increase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ticket booklets should be discounted for bulk purchase
Connect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - active in review, input and testing for the Tap Card payment initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continuous delays of roll out - perceived lack of transparency with CTCAG

Going forward, CTCAG will continue to provide valuable feedback from a customer perspective on planned initiatives including, but not limited to:

- Renewed initiative to implement a digital tap-card payment program
- Weather-abating initiatives, including customer comfort at stations, bus stops
- Improved agility of transit in emergency and weather-challenging situations
- Late night service schedules and standards
- Operator communication channels
- Affordable fare strategies
- Customer and driver safety and security

We encourage riders of transit to become active participants in making CT the best that it can be. As a group, we have seen how customer input can trigger change in a number of ways – by participating in surveys, tweeting, volunteering for a focus group, attending a council meeting, taking a CT tour or using the Help Line to report a concern. The more customers are engaged, the better transit can be for all.

Sincerely,

Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group