

BRIEFING

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Transportation Briefing to
Combined Meeting of Council
2022 July 26

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Calgary Transit's Recovery Strategy: Focus on Safety

Safety is a key component of Calgary Transit's customer commitment and an important part of delivering a world-class transit system to serve our citizens. As ridership continues to grow, investments in ensuring the transit system is safe and reliable will help rebuild confidence with customers.

Calgary Transit's Recovery Strategy, announced in June, is aimed at supporting the growth of ridership post-pandemic and improving transit service to meet customers' needs. The Recovery Strategy is broken down into four categories:

1. Returning service to pre-pandemic levels
2. Improving safety on the transit system
3. Improving the customer experience
4. Improving transit service through innovation and service investments

Ridership has been steadily increasing, and currently sits at approximately 70 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. Calgary Transit anticipates this trend will continue through the fall.

Calgary Transit understands that customer perceptions of safety onboard transit vehicles and at stations is a key factor in the decision whether to ride transit. Over the last six months, Calgary Transit has implemented several improvements to help with ridership recovery and customer safety.

- Safety 4 All: Aimed at improving system safety through increased patrols by security guards, CPS, Transit Peace Officers and Bylaw Officers. In addition, partnering with local agencies to connect people experiencing vulnerabilities with support resources and shelters.
- The creation of a new Transit Security Guard role.
- Increased safety presence during the Calgary Stampede, which helped make transit the preferred travel option as we saw ridership return to historical levels.

Calgary Transit's New Safety Investments

Calgary Transit has heard clearly that safety is important to customers. To address transit customer concerns related to safety while riding the system, Calgary Transit will be making significant investments into public safety resources.

- Increasing the number of Peace Officers by 25 per cent from 113 to 141.
- Hiring 31 Transit Security Guards to actively patrol the system and provide customer service. Transit Security Guards will have a higher level of authority and training than regular contracted guards but not at the same level as Transit Peace officers. They will work together with Peace Officers to increase our presence on the system.
- Increasing back of house resources to help support the increase of infield safety resources. This includes additional Inspectors, Sergeants and Dispatch agents.

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With these additional public safety resources, customers will see an increase in officer presence, an improvement to incident response and an increase in outreach to connect people with vulnerabilities to resources, especially during the winter months. To fund this investment, Calgary Transit will be re-allocating part of the unutilized growth funding originally approved by Council for 2020-22 service investments. The re-allocation will provide an additional \$5.9 million in annual operating funds and \$0.37 million in one-time capital funds towards these resources.

Because they require extensive training and legal knowledge, it will take approximately 25 weeks to hire, train, and deploy the additional Peace Officers. It will take approximately 13.5 weeks to have the Transit Security Guards hired and deployed on the system. It is expected to have the full complement of resources, as outlined in this briefing, deployed on the system by the end of Q1 2023.