

Appendix: Response to Notice of Motion EC2025-0315 - From Riders, For Riders: A Motion to Improve Calgary Transit

PURPOSE

This Attachment responds to initiatives brought forward in Notice of Motion EC2025-0315. It directed Administration to explore suggestions to improve the customer experience on Calgary Transit and report back as part of the RouteAhead annual update.

DISCUSSION

The suggestions focus on enhancing the customer experience through communication and navigation, information availability, operations, and service. All fifteen suggestions would improve the transit user experience, and most align with strategies in RouteAhead. Calgary Transit examined each one by considering the limitations to operational funding, capital funding, and staff capacity. Also considered were constraints related to existing technology and contractual obligations. Upon review, five suggestions are underway, five require further investigation, and five are not recommended or currently feasible.

Summary:

Work Calgary Transit is currently implementing:

- Partner with events/conferences/sports teams to make transit passes part of ticket price.
- Implement GPS use for transit operators.
- Design and publish a step-by step procedure and disruption communications plan.
- Implement timely, weather-resistant, and user-friendly physical signage at stops for all closures and detours, beyond current digital notifications.
- Use consistent destination-based language on physical signage, aligning it with the language used in announcements.

Suggestions Calgary Transit is currently exploring and opportunities to explore:

- Broadcast CTrain locations and arrival times using GTFS-Realtime standards.
- Provide network-wide train and bus status information at all major transit stations.
- Update announcements on all MAX, BRT, and LRT lines to include transfers to other priority transit network lines.
- Restart the 2013 Transit Etiquette Campaign.
- Investigate sharing additional transit data on The City's Open Data Portal.

Suggestions not currently recommended or feasible:

- Extend the duration of a valid fare from 90 minutes to 120 minutes.
- Extend or eliminate digital ticket expiry.
- Install station area context maps at all LRT stations.
- Configure LRT and BRT screens to always display arrival times and, where possible, the next two arrival times.
- Add train departure boards on non-platform areas and in nearby high traffic areas.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Continuing to work towards these suggestions supports the Social Wellbeing Policy by creating an equitable transit network that allows people of all ages and abilities the freedom to move around the city. Enhancing transit service also contributes to reinvigorating the city centre as the cultural heart of Calgary.

Updating announcements on all MAX, BRT, and LRT lines to include transfers to other priority transit network lines and restarting the transit etiquette campaign would improve the accessibility, comfort, and ease of use of transit. Additionally, including transit passes as part of the ticket price for major events contributes to downtown vibrancy and making Calgary a world-class destination.

Environmental

Improving the customer experience through these suggestions supports positive environmental and climate outcomes by reducing emissions. Introducing precise real-time arrival information for CTrains and improving closure and detour signage can help provide a reliable service that more Calgarians choose to use, leading to fewer cars on the road and less congestion.

Economic

The initiatives suggested support economic resilience by improving the ways Calgarians can connect to businesses and opportunities. Publishing a disruption communications plan and implementing GPS use for transit operators supports a more reliable and accessible transit system that encourages greater transit use. This will in turn boost foot traffic in areas served by businesses and enhance access to jobs.

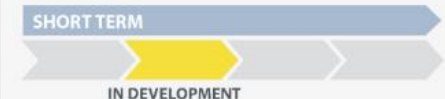

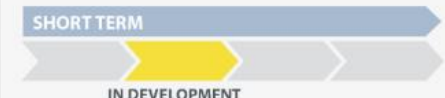

RISKS

The risk of not moving forward with all suggestions is a transit service that does not fully meet Calgary Transit's customer needs and expectations. This could lead to reduced customer satisfaction rates and decreasing ridership.




Despite most of the suggestions aligning with RouteAhead strategies, some are not recommended due to funding constraints, staff capacity, existing contractual obligations, and introduction of risk. Implementing all suggestions, especially the costliest like updating signage across the network, poses a financial impact Calgary Transit's budget cannot absorb and would require Calgary Transit to reprioritize existing work to complete them with existing resources. Additionally, other suggestions do not align with RouteAhead and would require a new scope with supporting funding to implement.




CONCLUSION



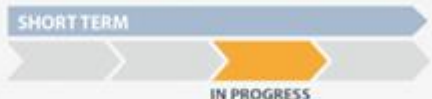

Calgary Transit is committed to improving the customer experience and to making transit the backbone of Calgary's best future. The work currently undertaken to implement these suggestions can have compounding positive impacts on the customer experience and draw more Calgarians to use transit.





Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy			
Extend the duration of a valid fare from 90 minutes to 120 minutes	Not recommended	<p>Calgary Transit understands the 90-minute transfer limit for single-ride tickets doesn't address the travel needs of every customer who uses a single-ride ticket; however, the 90-minute limit is intended for single trips and accommodates most transit trips. Capturing all trip lengths would require an increase in the single-ride ticket fare, and Calgary Transit endeavours to keep fares affordable. Customers who regularly make long trips usually choose alternatives like monthly passes, UPass, low-income transit pass, and the annual seniors' pass.</p> <p>Calgary Transit is currently reviewing and evaluating its current fare policies, fare payment systems, structure, technology, and environment through the engagement of a fare payment consultant. The results of this work may consider potential future changes to the single ticket window.</p>	F5.4	Investigate the potential for fares based on frequency of use, distance, zones, or other criteria.		
Extend or eliminate digital ticket expiry	Not recommended	<p>The seven-day expiry period on single ride tickets is in place to minimize fraud while giving a reasonable amount of time for customers to use their tickets.</p> <p>Calgary Transit is reviewing and evaluating its current fare policies, fare payment systems, structure, technology, and environment through the engagement of a fare payment consultant. The results of this work may consider potential future changes to the digital ticket expiry.</p>	F5.4	Investigate the potential for fares based on frequency of use, distance, zones, or other criteria.		

Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy		
Partner with major events/conferences/sports teams to make transit passes part of ticket price	Currently implementing	<p>Calgary Transit is committed to strengthening partnerships that enhance Calgary’s public transit system. Current partnership programs include fare bundling, bulk fare purchases, and integrated transit ticketing options. Recent partnerships include the 2024 Servus Calgary Marathon, 2025 Sport Event Congress, and the 2024 Association of Zoos & Aquariums annual conference.</p> <p>Calgary Transit has plans to expand its existing partnership strategy to include collaborations with Tourism Calgary and local sports teams.</p> <p>Partnerships will be enhanced by forthcoming technology upgrades, allowing seamless digital ticket integration and smoother operations across partner ticketing platforms.</p>	C9.5	Explore partnerships with sports, entertainment, and tourist venues to include transit fares in event tickets.	<div><div>MEDIUM TERM</div><div>IN DEVELOPMENT</div><div>\$ LOW</div></div>
Broadcast CTrain locations and arrival times using GTFS-Realtime standards, so that third party applications (e.g., Google Maps or the Transit app) can provide better real time train information to customers	Currently exploring	<p>CTrains are currently able to provide generalized location data based on detecting a train occupying a section of track. This system allows Calgary Transit to know where trains are on the network at any given time.</p> <p>Introducing a system on CTrains to capture real time arrival data is costly, estimated at \$7 million to \$10 million. Calgary Transit is exploring solutions, and a funding plan is in development.</p> <p>Calgary Transit considered using data from Transit app users to estimate train arrivals, but this data would be inconsistent because it relies on riders to enable the ‘Go’ feature.</p>	C1.2	Continually improve the availability, timeliness and helpfulness of customer information in-person, on mobile devices, at major stops and stations, over the phone, on the web, via social media and through new technologies as they evolve.	<div><div>ONGOING</div><div>IN PROGRESS</div><div>\$\$ MODERATE</div></div>
			C18.3	Modernize onboard technologies that will help improve CTrain on-time performance reporting and real-time location tracking of trains for customers.	<div><div>SHORT TERM</div><div>IN PROGRESS</div><div>\$\$ MODERATE</div></div>

Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy		
Implement GPS use for transit operators to reduce routing errors, improve detour adherence, and make trips more efficient	Currently implementing	Calgary Transit is currently implementing a new system for buses which includes GPS use for transit operators. This will include turn-by-turn directions (map navigation) for operators, improved detour management, and onboard information displays for customers. Currently, Calgary Transit is in the testing phase, with the new features expected to be operational by Q4 2026.	C1.2	Continually improve the availability, timeliness and helpfulness of customer information in-person, on mobile devices, at major stops and stations, over the phone, on the web, via social media and through new technologies as they evolve.	 <div>MODERATE</div>
Install station area context maps at all LRT stations to allow riders to orient themselves before exiting the station	Not recommended	<p>Paper maps become out of date quickly and need to be replaced, costing money, effort, and time.</p> <p>Virtual maps like those seen in shopping centres were considered to avoid the consistent updates required with paper maps, but this would be cost prohibitive.</p> <p>Paper maps may come with an equity benefit for people without access to, or with limited knowledge of, a smartphone. However, most Calgary Transit customers use a smartphone for wayfinding, which comes with the added benefits of language preference, geolocation, and accessibility features (e.g., text-to-voice).</p>	C2.3	Provide different customer segments with specific and helpful information (e.g., maps, tactile maps, customer information, station area wayfinding, etc.) about types of transit service.	 <div>LOW</div>
Configure LRT and BRT screens to always display arrival times and, where possible, the next two arrival times	Not recommended	<p>The current screen setup already displays the next two train arrivals outside of downtown. At downtown stations where both the Red and Blue Lines stop, only the next train from each line may be shown due to space constraints.</p> <p>Screen advertising is an important revenue source that supports The City’s ability to provide transit service. Specifications for improvements can be reviewed when the current advertising contract ends in 2027.</p>	C3.1	Improve real-time arrival information on CTrain platforms and at major transit stops.	 <div>HIGH</div>

Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy		
Add train departure boards on non-platform areas and in nearby high traffic areas (e.g., malls, campus centres)	Not recommended	<p>Installing screens on non-platform areas has high upfront costs for purchasing and installing equipment and determining their locations.</p> <p>An ongoing digital board pilot at Victoria Park/Stampede Station may lead to future opportunities across the system.</p> <p>Calgary Transit publishes real-time data on The City’s open data portal. Calgarians can access this data to create information screens displaying bus real-time information for display at universities, malls, etc.</p>	C1.2	Continually improve the availability, timeliness and helpfulness of customer information in-person, on mobile devices, at major stops and stations, over the phone, on the web, via social media and through new technologies as they evolve.	 <p>MODERATE</p>
Provide network-wide train and bus status information at all major transit stations	Opportunity to explore	<p>Calgary Transit widely broadcasts localized service disruptions and planned maintenance on social media and the Transit app. Due to technology limitations, disruptions are not broadcast on all displays at stations (e.g., an unplanned CTrain disruption is not communicated on all MAX station screens).</p> <p>Disruption communication strategies are continually being improved and refined, and this suggestion will be explored further.</p>	C3.1	Improve real-time arrival information on CTrain platforms and at major transit stops.	 <p>HIGH</p>
Update announcements on all MAX BRT and LRT lines to include transfers to other priority transit network lines	Currently exploring	<p>Calgary Transit is exploring updating announcements on all MAX, CTrain, and BRT routes 300, 301, and 302 to include transfer information where these lines intersect. This concept is being piloted on the MAX Orange starting in Spring 2025 to determine feasibility. Public comments submitted through customer service requests are also being tracked. At the</p>	C1.2	Continually improve the availability, timeliness and helpfulness of customer information in-person, on mobile devices, at major stops and stations, over the phone, on the web, via social media and through new technologies as they evolve.	 <p>MODERATE</p>

Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy			
		conclusion of the pilot, Calgary Transit will assess expanding the project.				
Design and publish a step-by step procedure and communication plan to manage both small and large disruptions, including temporary stop closures, single track operations and weather updates	Currently implementing	Calgary Transit does have a communication plan to manage disruptions. Next steps include adding the information to the website. Recent updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Planned stop closure information now includes QR codes that lead to digital maps showing the exact location of the alternate stop.Calgary Transit is exploring ways to add a multilingual element to disruption communications.	C1.3	Continue to develop and improve processes and technologies to keep customers informed about delays in a consistent and reliable fashion using real-time information.		\$\$ MODERATE
			C1.5	Frequently monitor and address gaps in visual and audible communication of station closures and other planned or unplanned disruptions on the CTrain system.		\$ LOW
			C16.2	Improve response to disruptions and delays through real-time information, current technology, and communication among staff.		\$\$ MODERATE
Implement timely, weather-resistant, and user-friendly physical signage at stops for all closures and detours, beyond	Currently implementing	Calgary Transit is implementing a plan for more robust signage for major temporary closures/detours at bus stops. While it is not feasible to encompass all bus stop detours/closures (since many are very temporary, scheduled during specific times, or constantly changing due to the nature of construction work), temporary plastic signs are used for those disruptions as much as possible.	C1.4	Improve signage for temporary closures of bus stops due to construction, and clearly identify alternative stops. Ensure information is available early through websites, public announcements, social media platforms and communication with community groups.		\$ LOW

Suggestion	Response	Rationale and Additional Information	Applicable RouteAhead Strategy			
current digital notifications		For major interruptions, stop-specific plastic signage is used, which includes maps indicating alternate stops. Calgary Transit will continue to refine this process.				
Restart the 2013 Transit Etiquette Campaign on an ongoing basis to promote courteous behavior among bus and train riders	Opportunity to explore	<p>Calgary Transit is working with Emergency Management and Community Safety to run a safety campaign this summer. Additional 2025 campaigns, including an etiquette campaign, are being considered and will depend on available resources.</p> <p>The City is also investing to support community safety and well-being to ensure all public spaces, including transit stops, stations and vehicles, are safe, welcoming, and comfortable spaces for all Calgarians.</p>	N/A			
Use consistent destination-based language on physical signage, aligning it with the language used in announcements	Currently implementing	<p>Calgary Transit recently implemented a design refresh to provide a simpler and cleaner approach to its system-wide signage standards. This approach, and decisions related to font, typeface, and visibility, were developed using industry standards, best practices, and focus group feedback.</p> <p>A one-time update of the physical signage across the entire network is costly and time-consuming. For this reason, signage updates are completed in phases as time and resources become available.</p>	C2.4	Create and implement system-wide wayfinding and signage standards.		
			C5.2	Improve wayfinding system-wide with uniform signage and frequent, large, clear signage with high contrast.		
Investigate sharing additional transit data on The City's Open Data Portal	Opportunity to explore	Calgary Transit strives to improve transparency to the public and is open to discussing what data may be missing if it meets standards around data quality, accuracy, and confidentiality.	N/A			



Report Number: EC2025-0315

Meeting: Executive Committee

Meeting Date: 2025 March 11

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: From Riders, For Riders: A Motion to Improve Calgary Transit

Sponsoring Member(s) of Council: Councillor Jasmine Mian

WHEREAS in 2024, Calgarians and visitors took over 100 million trips on Calgary Transit.

WHEREAS Calgary's population grew at a record rate of 5.8% from July 2023-July 2024, which is higher than any other census metropolitan area in the country in at least 20 years.

WHEREAS continuously improving customer service (Direction C.18) and improving the experience of riding in Calgary Transit vehicles (Direction C.14) are council approved strategies outlined in Route Ahead: A strategic plan for transit in Calgary

WHEREAS Councillors have engaged with the advocacy group *Calgary Transit Riders* and Calgarians to hear their feedback

WHEREAS City Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Direction explicitly prioritizes building a worldclass transit system and strengthening relationships with Calgarians

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council directs Administration to:

Include an appendix as part of the RouteAhead annual update on May 14th that responds to the following suggestions:

Operations & Service Suggestions

- Extend the duration of a valid fare from 90 minutes to 120 minutes.
- Extend or eliminate digital ticket expiry.
- Partner with major events/conferences/sports teams to make transit passes part of ticket price.
- Broadcast CTrain locations and arrival times using GTFS-Realtime standards, so that third party applications (e.g., Google Maps or the Transit App) can provide better real time train information to customers.
- Implement GPS use for transit operators to reduce routing errors, improve detour adherence, and make trips more efficient.

Communication & Navigation Suggestions

- Install station area context maps at all LRT stations to allow riders to orient themselves before exiting the station.
- Configure LRT and BRT screens to display arrival time information at all times and where possible display the next two arrival times
- Add train departure boards on non-platform areas and in nearby high traffic areas (e.g., malls, campus centres)
- Provide network-wide train and bus status information at all major transit stations
- Update announcements on all MAX BRT and LRT lines to include transfers to other priority transit network lines.
- Design and publish a step-by step procedure and communications plan to handle small and large disruptions, which may include temporary stop closures, single track operations and weather updates.
- Implement timely, weather-resistant, and user-friendly physical signage at stops for all closures and detours, beyond current digital notifications.
- Restart on an ongoing basis, the 2013 transit etiquette campaign to promote courteous behaviour among bus and train riders.
- Use consistent destination-base language on physical signage as is used in announcements.

Request for Information

- Investigate sharing additional transit data on The City's Open Data Portal.