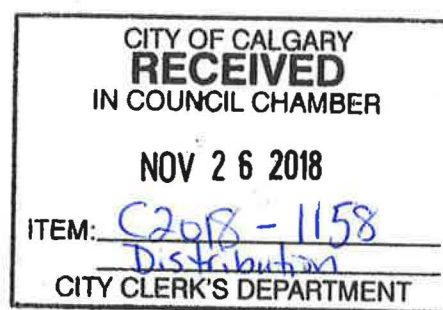


2018 November 26

Calgary City Council
Box 2100 Stn M.
Calgary, AB T2P 2M5



Dear city council,

The Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group (CTCAG) is a diverse group of passionate Calgary Transit users committed to improving transit by making recommendations and advising Calgary Transit on behalf the larger customer body. The CTCAG reviewed One Calgary and the proposed budget for public transit. We have identified several improvements to the customer experience that we support, but have also identified several significant deficiencies.

Firstly, the group would like to express support, in spite of difficult economic times, for:

- Maintenance of base service, including the frequency of CTrains, and the frequency of bus service
- Improvements to snow clearing on Calgary Transit property, particularly surrounding areas for differently-abled riders and high-volume stops
- Allocations for the eventual introduction of mobile ticketing.

Maintenance of base service levels maintains the image and usability of Calgary Transit. Avoiding reduction demonstrates commitment to improving the system, and establishes confidence in current and future riders. Improvements to snow clearing will eliminate weather as a barrier for individuals with mobility impairments, allowing them to safely access jobs and services. Improved snow clearing will also improve the safety of all customers at high volume stops and will help reinforce the convenience of using Calgary Transit. We also believe investments in customer-facing technology are a key part of meeting current and future customer's expectations in their choice of transportation.

Despite these investments in the budget, the CTCAG would also like to voice concern over inadequate operating and capital budget allocations for several key areas of service. Over the past year, the CTCAG has frequently discussed deficiencies in perceptions of safety on Calgary Transit at all times of day (though significantly more often during off-peak times). Calgary Transit can also see recent high-profile incidents negatively impacting perceptions of safety, including the random attack of a customer at Victoria Park station. **Though the CTCAG welcomes proposed increases to the budget of Calgary Transit Public Safety Enforcement, we would like to call for an even greater level of Peace Officer presence, particularly off-peak.** We expect additional officers to bolster daily and nightly coverage while also allowing better patrols at high-risk stations, such as Victoria Park and Westbrook. The current budget only allows for 12 additional Peace Officers. The CTCAG believes this increase is inadequate to improve the perception of safety from crime on Calgary Transit.

Secondly, both the CTCAG and broader Calgary community have expressed significant concern at the possible reduction of 4-car train service due to the necessary retirement of 40-year-old CTrain cars. The city has previously identified the upgrade of the CTrain system to four car trains to be of a high-level priority, an assertion supported by the CTCAG. Thus, we are highly disappointed by the potential threat to four-car service despite council awareness of the aging fleet. Calgarians are seeing capital expenditures intended for the expansion of 4-car LRT service including traction power upgrades and platform extensions *wasted* due to the likely inability of Calgary Transit to maintain (let alone expand) four car trains. The cancelling of other, non-LRV

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dependent capital projects such as the NW-HUB transit enhancement study due to the capital requirements for electrical upgrades exacerbates our disappointment. It is incredibly frustrating to see the city both unable to sustain 4-car trains while also diverting funding from external projects in lieu of 4-car service. **The CTCAG recommends providing Calgary Transit with additional capital funding to continue phasing out the oldest trains in the fleet, or at minimum, to order enough to access volume-discounted LRV pricing.** The CTCAG has also been informed reduced LRV availability will negatively impact service to special events. Decreased service to high-traffic events will both discourage Calgarians from using transit to get to these events and will hinder the public image of Calgary Transit.

Progress on RouteAhead will also stall in the current proposed budget, despite significant efficiencies identified by transit. We question why capital investment will drop in years 3 and 4 of the 2019-2022 budget cycle as this will hinder progress on the main drivers of ridership and customer satisfaction, which include speed and reliability. Improved investment on this level will ultimately allow for improved travel times, frequency, and transit usage through additional rapid-transit measures. **Therefore, we would like to advocate for the provision of additional capital budget from 2021-2022 to allow Calgary Transit to continue to expand rapid-transit corridors part of RouteAhead.** We hope additional capital funds can be found to continue to improve the rapid transit network working off of the success of MAX and associated priority measures. We hope city council will continue to provide Calgary Transit planners with the resources necessary to establish an efficient transit network for Calgary.

Related to additional service, the CTCAG would lastly like to voice concern over how service to new communities is funded. Though the group recognizes the importance of bus service in any neighbourhood, we question if it is necessary for Calgary Transit to bear the brunt of the operating costs for new service given poor efficiency of initial peak-only service as outlined in RouteAhead. **We would like council to consider policy changes to have developers or residents of difficult-to-access suburbs pay for the introduction of transit service so Calgary Transit can continue to improve high-demand service within existing communities.** It is important a strong transit network exists in the inner-city to continue to reduce car congestion on at-capacity roads. This is a problem less applicable to new communities.

Overall, while limited improvements exist within the new budget, the CTCAG is highly concerned about investment in several key areas. Though we are happy to see improvements to Peace Officer numbers, we would like to see this investment bolstered to tackle poor safety perceptions on transit. We would also like to see capital allocations increased to allow Calgary Transit to maintain four-car service and progress on RouteAhead. Finally, we encourage council to revisit policies surrounding how new communities are serviced and how capital and operating expenditures are assigned to Calgary Transit. Improvements to the budget for Calgary Transit within the next four years are needed to improve ridership, reducing car usage towards long-term targets and improving Calgary Transit's public image.

Sincerely,

The Calgary Transit Customer Advisory Group