

Public Transit

Led by: Director of Calgary Transit

Service Description

The Public Transit service line provides a network of train and bus transportation for citizens and visitors to Calgary to get from place to place safely, reliably and affordably. Our service includes rapid transit service by bus and CTrain, local bus routes including On Demand bus service and a support system that keeps customers safe, comfortable and informed. We are an environmentally friendly service, with a focus on reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and contributing to the climate strategy.

Service Updates

Key Service Results

Awards

- White Hat Nomination
- Schulich School of Engineering Excellence Awards: Distinguished Collaborator Award

In 2023, Public Transit successfully hired over 800 operators to increase its service levels to meet growing ridership. Council approved new investments for the RouteAhead strategy, innovative fares (e.g., 12 and under free, weekend pass, etc.), and initiated early-stage design and engineering capital projects. Fair Entry processes were updated to align with Council's directive to assess low-income seniors' eligibility based on individual incomes.

Council approved a Public Transit Safety Strategy to improve collaboration and coordination of safety monitoring and response on transit. The Electric Bus Program achieved federal funding approvals and progressed in exploring technical requirements for fleet and charging infrastructure. Additionally, Green Line completed the final design for the new low floor light rail vehicles. These important milestone highlights the commitment to service levels and customer experience that encourage and strengthen transit ridership now and into the future.

Service Challenges

Supply chain lead times and fleet labour (mechanics, technicians, etc.) shortages are impacting Public Transit's ability to procure replacement vehicles and meet service levels. Furthermore, 18 per cent of Public Transit's fleet is in critical or poor condition and requires replacement. Increased state of good repair makes the transit fleet more reliable and contributes to Public Transit's ability to meet long-term ridership and service level goals. Council's recent investments will help mitigate this challenge as we work to issue contracts for vehicle replacement.

Public Transit also faced challenges associated with inflation increasing the cost of vehicles, infrastructure, materials, and labour. Additionally, the service experienced escalating costs in delivering the Low-Income Transit Pass, due to an increase in the number of eligible participants. Continued collaboration with other levels of government is essential to manage the rising costs of equitable service access.

Trends & Potential Uncertainties

Investment in battery electric buses (BEBs) aligns with a broader push for greener and more sustainable transportation options. BEBs come with higher upfront costs compared to traditional buses. The growing demand for BEBs is further driving up the cost and reducing the availability of these vehicles.

An increasing emphasis is on building regional transit networks, driven by initiatives like the Canada Transit Fund. This shift requires collaboration and investment in transit infrastructure beyond the city.

There is a need for a coordinated and multi-disciplinary approach to social challenges. In 2023, the City had a \$32 million shortfall to cover the Low Income Transit Pass demand. Working with other levels of government will be critical for Public Transit to maintain service levels.



Measuring Our Performance

Legend

— Actuals

■ Expected Future Performance

→ Progressing as planned

⊖ Not progressing as planned

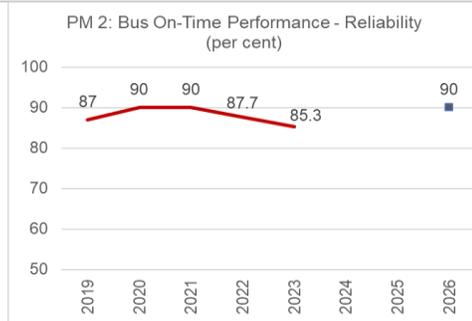
Performance Measures

Story behind the numbers

Status



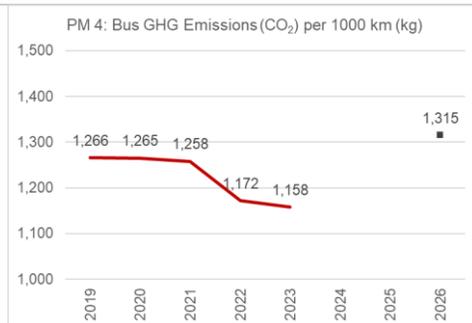
The approval of the Public Transit Safety Strategy in 2023 was a foundational step that will increase the number of Peace Officers by 60 per cent in 2024. This will ensure there are 45 Peace Officers on the system at any given time. The visual presence of enforcement officers, as well as a multi-disciplinary approach to safety are expected to improve this measure in 2024. Perception of safety on CTRain Platforms increased from 56% at mid-year to 71% by year-end. The 2023 mid-year performance report over-reported this value due to a reporting error. The mid-year value was 72.1 per cent, and has held through 2023.



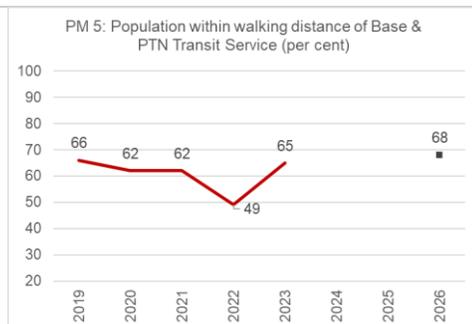
Investments in fleet state of good repair are important to maintain service reliability. This measure is also predictably affected by inclement weather in the latter part of the year. In 2023, the Service hired 800 new operators, and as new drivers continue to learn their routes and duties, this number is expected to recover in 2024.



Operating costs per trip are showing consistent improvement, primarily driven by service improvements and increased ridership per trip. As more passengers use Calgary Transit's services, the overall cost per individual trip decreases, resulting in greater cost-effectiveness and resource optimization. Year-to-year ridership has increased 21 per cent at the end of 2023, and C-train ridership is back to pre-pandemic levels. Bus ridership has also increased, and is on trend to achieve pre-pandemic levels (December 2023 ridership was at 90 per cent).

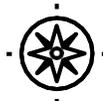


CO₂ emissions slightly increased compared to 2022, attributed mainly to heightened bus usage due to increased ridership in 2023. 2023 saw a notable shift towards biodiesel with 35 per cent usage during the winter months. This resulted in lower emissions when compared to traditional diesel. The service had 171 Compressed Natural Gas buses by the end of 2023; also, diesel use extended until mid-April 2023, followed by a diesel-biofuel blend for the remainder of the year. RouteAhead implementation will increase service levels, which will increase emissions. Alternative fuels and lifecycle bus replacements will offset this increase.



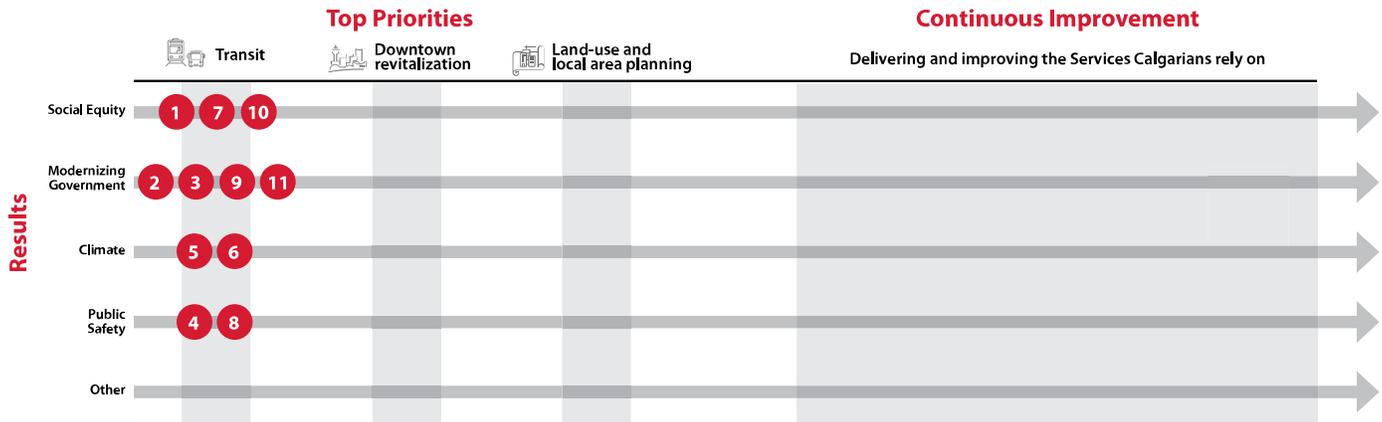
The service continues to invest in service hours and service reviews. The Calgary metropolitan area's population is projected to reach 1,850,000 by 2035, an increase of approximately 14 per cent from 2023. This population increase will require sustained investment in transit to support the mobility needs of a growing population.





Progress on Service Delivery

Alignment with Council Refined Priorities and Result Areas



- Legend**
- Completed
 - Progressing as planned
 - Not progressing as planned
 - Not started
 - Initiative number

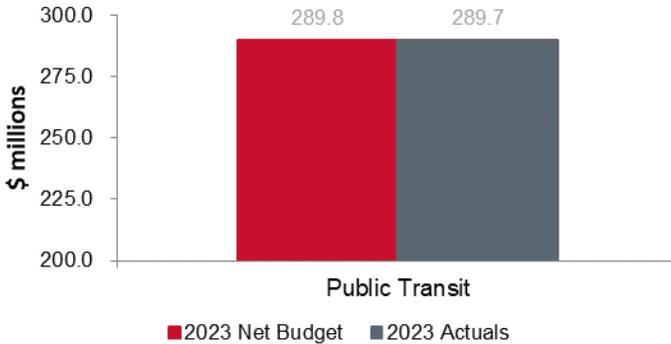
Initiative	Initiative Update	Status
1 Improve service and align service levels with return of ridership by optimizing routes and schedules.	Service levels and ridership continued to grow year over year. Routes and schedules were optimized resulting in better on-time performance in 2023. By year end, LRT weekend service surpassed 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Calgary Transit initiated major service reviews in northeast and southwest communities, prioritizing service improvements, network connections to rapid transit, and route efficiency. Projects included Winsport/Crestmont service updates, and 17 Avenue SW route merging, and stop spacing optimization to align with new road connections.	
2 Improve transit service by investing in innovative service delivery options and technologies.	The service is undergoing a transformation with the emergence of new technology and modes of transportation. In response to this, Calgary Transit is developing a Transit Technology Strategy. This strategy is designed to focus on technological innovation and adoption with the aim of enhancing both efficiency and overall customer experience. Additionally, Calgary Transit completed improvements to the Transit Trip Planning app by enabling the purchase and display of monthly passes including eligibility-based ones (e.g., monthly low-income, annual seniors, and UPass).	
3 Improve employee engagement and safety awareness training by investing in employee commitment.	In 2023, several initiatives were launched to enhance employee engagement and safety awareness training in Calgary Transit. Beyond the Driver's Seat Sessions were completed with all operators to provide safety training and boost morale. The Operator Safety & Readiness Notebook was updated, and training sessions were conducted to increase staff awareness and the ability to recognize and report hazardous conditions. This significantly increased the reporting of such conditions showing the positive impact of this training.	
4 Support transit customer safety strategy, Safety 4 All, by coordinating efforts with Council, other departments and business units.	In 2023, Council approved the Public Transit Safety Strategy: a multi-disciplinary approach that brings together internal and external partners to tackle complex challenges such as social disorder and community safety. Improved coordination means resources are better managed and target multiple outcomes at once. More Transit Peace Officers were hired with expanded authorities, and visual presence of enforcement is expected to improve the perception of safety and improve response times. The City also received a \$5 million provincial grant to improve the cleanliness of transit stations.	
5 Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by transitioning to Compressed Natural Gas, Zero Emissions Bus, or hydrogen buses, leveraging funding support from other levels of government.	Public Transit is proactively adding battery electric buses into its fleet in alignment with the Calgary Climate Strategy and The City's goals of reducing GHGs and transitioning to an environmentally friendly fleet. In 2023, The City secured capital funding of \$165 million from Canada Infrastructure Bank financing, and up to \$325 million from the Zero Emissions Transit Fund grant. This will enable the acquisition of up to 259 electric buses to replace retiring diesel ones. This transition in fuel sources is expected to result in a reduction of up to 13,000 tons of CO2 emissions annually.	

Initiative	Initiative Update	Status
6 Contribute to corporate climate strategy goals by procuring innovative and environmentally friendly technologies.	Calgary Transit implemented a Snow Detection System and rail thermostats at 117 out of 135 track switch heaters. This new automated system ensures the heaters operate only when necessary, resulting in three times less fuel consumption. Since the installation, Calgary Transit's total CO2 emissions have been reduced by 2,728 tonnes compared to 2019 levels. This achievement not only contributes to innovative and environmentally friendly technology procurement but also generates an annual cost savings of \$441,000.	
7 Support developing the Green Line including design and construction.	Calgary Transit established a dedicated team to support technical and operational inquiries as part of the advancement of the Development Phase progression. A member of the Green Line management team is participating on the Transit Service Governance Team fostering the relationship between Green Line and Calgary Transit.	
8 Implement and monitor the accountability framework for Calgary Transit safety areas which are moving to other business units and/or departments.	Key deliverables included ensuring leaders were empowered to conduct workplace safety inspections and workflow enhancements and e-learning opportunities were extended to all staff. This led to a 38% improvement in inspections compared to previous year. Metrics were analyzed to identify operational enhancements and potential mitigation strategies. A plan was executed to increase site visits at higher-risk workplace areas, reinforcing the commitment to safety and proactive risk management.	
9 Implement a continuous improvement framework to improve service delivery while coordinating across the corporation.	Public Transit developed and implemented a Transit Service Governance Team that meets regularly to address factors shaping service delivery across The City. This team covered Council reports, risk management, service awareness, and strategic initiatives like RouteAhead, Green Line, Public Transit Safety Strategy, and the Canada Transit Fund. Several sub-teams were created to focus on Specialized Transit to prioritize advancing service for eligible clients, and the Transit Major Capital Projects team which provided recommendations for BRT and LRT design updates.	
10 Leverage continued support from Provincial government for initiatives like Sliding Scale program while working with corporate partners.	Calgary Transit remained committed to social equity by aiming to remove financial barriers for transit access. Through effective advocacy with the Provincial Government, \$6.2 million in funding was secured for the sliding-scale low-income transit pass program in 2023. The City also contributed an additional \$32 million, culminating in an annual subsidy of approximately \$38 million. An enhanced Fair Entry program update has been implemented enhancing access to the Seniors Low-Income Transit Pass. These initiatives align with The City's dedication to providing an affordable transit network.	
11 Maintain network reliability by investing in infrastructure, system maintenance, and asset renewal programs	The service received funding to advance the design of the Blue Line NE Extension, Red Line S Extension, Max 301/North Central BRT, 144 Ave BRT & Symons Valley Transit Center, and the South Central Maintenance & Storage Facility. Several key initiatives are improving the State of Good Repair (SOGR) of infrastructure including the Haysboro LRV storage facility to store more 4-car trains, Brentwood station canopy rehabilitation, and Sunnyside signal upgrades. Calgary Transit is also implementing a risk-based condition assessment that will support forecasting future SOGR capital investments.	



Service Updates on Financial Performance

Net Operating Budget and Actuals as of December 31, 2023



Operating Budget Updates - 2023 net operating budget vs actuals:

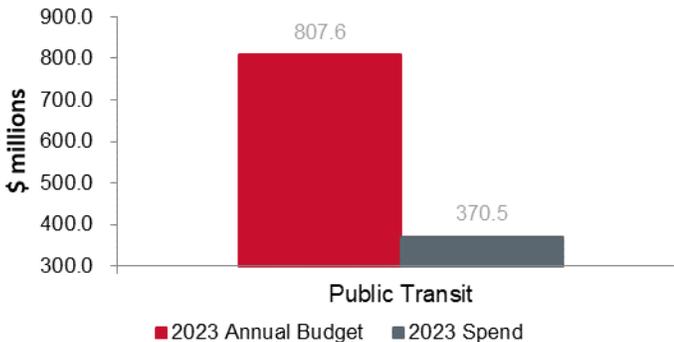
Public Transit has a favourable operating variance of \$0.1 million.

In 2023, Public Transit saw an improvement in ridership, reducing the total fare revenue shortfall from \$66.0 million in 2022 to \$39.1 million in 2023. The total revenue shortfall was \$33.5 million, offset by lower-than-budgeted expenditures and a recovery of \$22.0 million from the Merged Fiscal Stability and Budget Savings Account Reserve.

Public Transit continued to see reduced expenditures as service did not return to pre-pandemic levels until Q3 2023. Lower-than-budgeted salary and wages, utilities, contracted services, parts and fuel amounted to \$25.4 million in savings, partially offset by additional spending of \$15.8 million on operational recovery.

Financial results include \$4.0 million from the Alberta Transit Cleanup Grant and \$4.2 million in one-time budget for increased cleaning, repairs, and security at transit stations.

Capital Budget and Spend as of December 31, 2023



Capital Budget Updates - 2023 total capital budget vs 2023 spend:

Public Transit's 2023 capital spending is \$370.5 million or 45.9 per cent of its \$807.6 million capital budget.

Included in this is \$558.5 million for Green Line. 45.0 per cent or \$249.3 million of the Green Line capital budget was spent, and the remaining funding has been committed. With ongoing land acquisition, utility relocations, 78 Avenue enabling work, Light Rail Vehicle (LRV) manufacturing and final stages of the Development Phase, higher monthly spend rate will continue into 2024. Change in procurement strategy to include a Development Phase resulted in a shift in capital spend and the capital expenditures to offset the current year unspent budget are expected to be incurred in future years.

The remaining \$249.1 million capital budget is attributable to Calgary Transit and Public Spaces Delivery. 2023 spending is 49.0 per cent or \$121.1 million including \$80.9 million in LRV and bus procurement. The 49.0 per cent spend rate is primarily due to timing as the delivery of some materials and fleet were delayed into 2024, as well as challenges faced with procurement and infrastructure cost inflation.