

SW Transitway - The Numbers Just Don't Work

The City of Calgary has forecast the following numbers for the SW Transitway:

- 12 million riders per year¹
- 10 minute maximum wait time peak hours² (or 2 minutes³, according to Councillor Colley-Urquhart)
- 100 riders maximum capacity per bus⁴

Here's why these numbers don't work:

1. **Shortfall - Workday riders** - Even if the buses run at 100% capacity, 260 workdays, 15 hours every workday, the maximum number of workday riders would be 4.68 million per year. That leaves a shortfall of 7.32 million riders per year required to ride on weekends. If the average ridership is at 50% capacity (still optimistically high), the shortfall would be 9.66 million riders.
2. **Shortfall - Peak Hours** - Assuming 5 peak hours per workday, even at 100% capacity, the maximum number of peak-hour riders would be 1.56 million per year. That leaves a shortfall of 10.44 million riders.
3. **Buses At Intersections** - Transitway buses will be given priority at intersections⁵. Assuming buses running 18 hours per day, 365 days a year at 100% capacity, the average frequency of a northbound or southbound bus passing through each intersection will be every 1.6 minutes. If the ridership is at 50% capacity (still optimistically high), buses will be passing through intersections every 48 seconds (with priority on signal lights).
4. **Capital Cost of Bus Fleet** - The average time for buses to travel from Woodbine to downtown will be 50 to 55 minutes.⁶ Given Councillor Colley-Urquhart's forecast maximum wait time of 2 minutes, the SW Transitway bus fleet will require at least 50 buses (25 each direction), at a Capital Cost of \$35 Million.

¹ **12 million riders:** RouteAhead "Southwest Transitway" pg 133; City of Calgary Transportation Southwest Transitway web site Open House Display Boards "Key Facts"; Councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart "Update on the Southwest Transitway" 2015/05/22.

² **10 minute wait time:** RouteAhead "Southwest Transitway" pg 133; City of Calgary Transportation Southwest Transitway web site Open House Display Boards "Key Facts"

³ **2 minute wait time:** Councillor Diane Colley-Urquhart "Update on the Southwest Transitway" 2015/05/22

⁴ **100 riders per bus:** City of Calgary Transportation Southwest Transitway web site Open House Display Boards "Key Facts"

⁵ **Priority at intersections:** City of Calgary Transportation Southwest Transitway web site Open House Display Boards "Transitways and BRT service"

⁶ **50-55 minute one-way trip :** Cited by Councillor Brian Pincott, December 2015.