



The Transit Times

ATU Local 1505



July, 2022

Issue # 1

Wins

We are “won”ATU!

We’ve had some major wins recently!

30% in-house: In the late 90s Transit Plus (a.k.a Handi-Transit) was completely privatized, which eliminated positions within our membership. Last year (2021), we convinced City Hall that our members do a superior job at providing this service, and we got 30% back in-house of service beginning in 2023 (after 30 years of privatization)! But we still want more – it is our hope to have it brought back to 100% in-house one day.

Canada Day Grievance: In 2018 Canada Day landed on a Sunday. Labour Standards state that when this happens, Monday will be observed as a holiday – but many of our members were forced to work that Monday. Through mediation, we arrived at a settlement for those who worked that Monday to receive compensation – keep an eye on your paycheques, this is coming soon!

Unions are the greatest defense against arbitrary treatment and unfair policies from employers. When workers unite, we accomplish great things for ourselves, all workers, and society!

Do you have an issue where your workday conflicted with Labour standards? Have you been treated arbitrarily by your employer? Contact a steward or board member found on atu1505.ca or the ATU office at office@atu1505.ca or 204-943-5064 for representation.



Romeo Ignacio

Let’s Catch Up...

It’s been an eventful couple of years.

Sisters, Brothers, and Friends,

It is incredible to look back on the last two years and see how much the world has changed. In 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. As a labour movement, unions have fought for the protection of workers during the unprecedented strain and uncertainty of the coronavirus.

It is amazing to reflect on the challenges that our union has faced, endured, and overcome. The safety and health of our members are a top priority.

During the global shortage of PPE in the plight of the pandemic, we fought for and received additional PPE for our members, including medical masks and test kits.

Additionally, in 2020 we achieved

recognition for our members as Heroes and received Hero’s pay. Moreover, we fought for COVID leave for members affected by the virus and negotiated emergency and operational funding for Transit. When the City of Winnipeg banned over-time due to the pandemic, our collective voices worked to allow operators to attend sign-up relief.

Furthermore, in the middle of the 2020 pandemic, a one-year contract (2021) was negotiated for Brandon, and just recently concluded the ratification of a 2022-2024 contract. Moreover, at the height of the vaccination mandate frenzy, we fought to keep members employed who were unable to get vaccinated.

More recently, we challenged the City of

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Romeo Ignacio

Let's catch up, continued...

Winnipeg on the contradictory mask mandate initiated on March 15th, 2022, which required bus operators to wear masks, while riders were not – the mandate was removed on June 16th, 2022.

Unrelated to the pandemic, our union has been involved in many other activities. For instance, a first contract was negotiated with Alberta Transit for 2021-2022, with a renewal currently in the works. We won the Unfair Labour Practice Grievance regarding Strike Action and obtained settlements for a number of other grievances.

We also won the Interview Pay grievance that will allow operators to be paid overtime when being called in by supervisors for attendance and performance interviews.

Other accomplishments include the electronic sign-up for P&E, the live-

stream Pilot Trial, a rear door camera and video monitor for articulated buses, and the implementation of emergency notifications.

Our union members have also made significant contributions to support community projects with the Transit Employee Community Fund administered by the Winnipeg Foundation. Since 2019, Transit workers have made contributions to the West Broadway Youth Outreach, West Central Women's Resource Centre, and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre. Our members wanted to have the TECF included in payroll deductions, and we got it!

Importantly, the union has been able to engage with community advocates through the TECF program, enabling our Transit workers to make positive, lasting changes in our city! The current long-term goal is to purchase a new outreach van for the

Main Street Project by December 2023.

Our union has also been active in re-establishing positive, constructive working relationships with City Councillors and the Mayor, which are essential to advancing our interests as a labour movement.

In planning for the future, the union savings were invested with a high rate of interest prior to the onset of the pandemic. More recently, a new contract was negotiated with COPE 342 to include a Communications position that was previously under UFCW 832, which will allow for more engagement with members, the media, and elected officials on behalf of our union.

As president, I consider myself privileged to have represented ATU Local 1505 over these last years. Sincerely yours, Romeo.



Upcoming Member Events

Brought to you by your Social Committee!

Your Social Committee is proud to appreciate our ATU members with some fun in the sun over the summer months. Mark your calendars!

→ July 17th: Goldeyes Game @ 1pm - ATU has partnered with the Goldeyes to bring you the ATU Appreciation game! ATU Transit workers hit a "home-run" in keeping Winnipeg moving! Look for your flyer for more information on reserving tickets.

Keep a look out for the Vintage Heritage Bus on public display at Shaw Park that day!

→ July 24th (Rain date August 7th): Annual picnic at Grand Prix Amusements - 3...2...1...GO! Enjoy UNLIMITED activities with a wristband from 10am-1pm. Bring your own lunch, but water and chips will be provided. Stick around for the Bike Draw at 1pm. Look for your registration forms for more information.

Are you interested in becoming involved in the social committee? Got some fun, engaging ideas for our members. Join us!

Contact support@atu1505.ca or call 204-943-5064 to set something up!

Go Bombers Go!

Cheering for Transit

How about "GO TRANSIT WORKERS GO"! ATU Transit workers bring thousands of Bomber fans to and from the game - often picking up extra shifts to do it! It is amazing to consider the sheer number of people Transit helps to provide rides for. Our members drive Winnipeg!

In recognition of this, ATU Local 1505 has teamed up with Corus Entertainment for an in-game Bombers announcement package. Our ATU messages will be announced on 680 CJOB's Blue Bombers broadcasts in the live credits, play-by-play's, game-day announcements, and in the coaches and sports show starting in the August 11th home game!

Also included in that package are digital impressions that will play on Corus' online and mobile platforms such as the Global TV app on mobile and connected TV.

Keep your eyes and ears open as you cheer on Transit workers....oops, we mean the Bombers...



From your Executive Board

What's going on?



Your Executive Board has a lot on the go!

We are very aware of the ongoing safety concerns, the need to improve working conditions, and low morale at the workplace. Alongside arbitrations for grievances (travel time, premiums, terminations, etc.) we are preparing to leverage off the upcoming municipal elections and contract negotiations to address the concerns of our members.

The 2022 Negotiations survey has been instrumental in identifying what is most important to our members in preparation for contract negotiations. Keep an eye out for another more narrowed-down survey in

the coming months!

We are currently working on advocating for key safety improvements, such as a Transit Security Force, updated radios, and also have an active pilot trial for extended operator shields. Also, we are working on getting equipment replacement for bus shelter servicers.

We are aware that a non-work/life balance is a problem and are working on proposals for trades, static day off, four-day workweek (10-hr shifts), Sunday crews, and improvements in scheduling.

In an effort to improve morale, we are working on getting a Mentorship program started in collaboration with Winnipeg Transit. This would help new members to get additional support from senior workers, and hopefully build relationships and community among members.

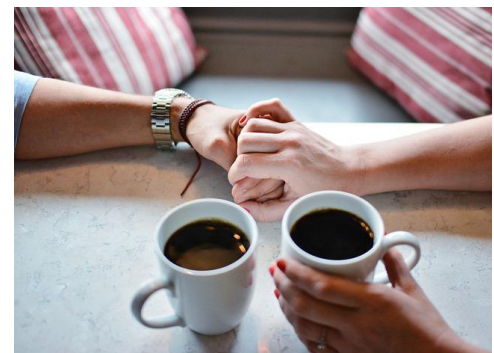
Want to get more involved? Have ideas for improvement? Your voice matters! Join a membership meeting or contact any of your stewards or board members found on atu1505.ca. Or, contact office@atu1505.ca, or call 204-943-5064.

Stewards Corner

Every member has a right to union representation when meeting with your supervisor, that's why we have a Steward at Large program. A steward is available to you every Tuesday at the FRG cafeteria during office hours (8am-4pm). Your steward can help you with immediate representation or answer any questions you might have.

A full listing of your stewards and their contact information can be found on atu1505.ca.

Do you want to become more active with your union? Do you have ideas for improvement? Ask a steward or email office@atu1505.ca for more info!



Lawn sign for the onboardwpg.ca campaign

Political Action

A perfect storm

The upcoming municipal election, negotiations, and officer elections make this a busy and pivotal time for our membership!

Over the last two years, it has been all too clear that politicians can make or break the Transit system. We have seen that our elected officials do not prioritize our Transit system as they have failed to utilize the full benefits from the federal government. We have been advocating for years for a better system.

A media campaign is underway and will launch in the coming months. We are coming down hard with lawn signs, flyers, radio ads, billboards, transit bus signs, the Labour Day march, and the heavy-hitter, in-game Bomber's announcements - all of which will use onboardwpg.ca as a central hub.

It is paramount that we get the right people elected that will work with ATU - this will not happen on its own. Our membership needs to work together to campaign for Transit-friendly, Labour-friendly candidates! Bringing the 30% transit plus service in-house is a testament to what we can do when we work with politicians to advocate for our interests.

The municipal election, negotiations, and officer elections combined make for a perfect storm. Every vote counts, now more than ever!

Talk to a steward, board member, email or call the union to get involved!



Transit Advisory Committee

Behind closed doors

The Transit Advisory Committee is under the Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works that is composed of representatives from a number of stakeholders including ATU, WPS, WAPSO, and Transit Management, to name a few.

In 2020, TAC recommended to Council the approval of funding to implement a Transit Security Study.

The study recommended a number of safety measures including the provision of a Transit Security Force, External 911 Emergency notifications, Radio upgrades, an App-based Safety Alert System, Incident-Driven Bus Camera Streaming, and more.

Consultation with stakeholders resulted in additional recommendations including provisions for security oversight, a proposal for a pilot trial of extended shields, and bus shelter safety.

There is an existing motion to make the TAC meetings publicly available, as live-streamed and clerked meetings for transparency and knowledge-sharing.

Brain Bites

Laying down the law

Did you know that ATU Local 1505 has a program that is offered jointly by Myers Weinberg LLP which enables members and their immediate families to obtain legal services at preferred rates?

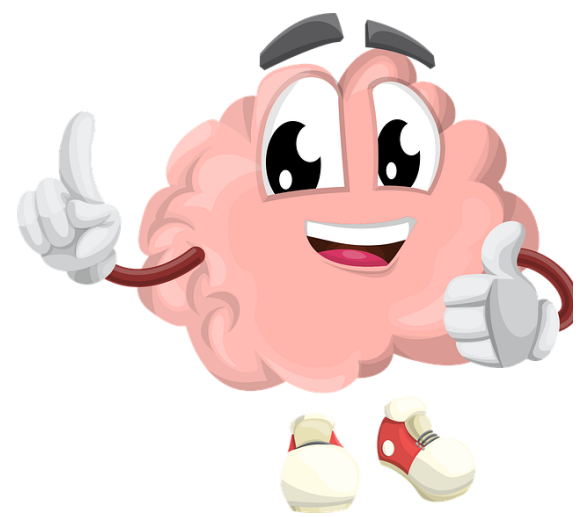
Your coverage includes:

- ✓ No charge for the first 30 minutes.
- ✓ After the 30 minutes, you may choose to retain a lawyer from Myers Weinberg LLP at a preferred rate.

Services offered include:

Aboriginal law, Arbitration, Business, Criminal, Employment, Family, Mortgages, Foreclosures, and much more.

If you need to, contact Myers Weinberg LLP by calling 204-942-7773 or emailing: info@myersfirm.com.



Back in the 1950s?



A History of the Amalgamated Transit Union, 1992, p. 73

The 1950s were tough years for the Amalgamated. During this time, wages could not keep up with post-war inflation. Although many ATU local unions reported “significant contract wage adjustments” it was still not enough to keep up with the rising cost of living and resulted in a loss of purchasing power.

Sound familiar?

We can relate to this today with the post-pandemic inflation and wages that don’t keep up. The Canadian Labour Congress is calling it an “inflation crisis.” And it is. Gas prices, interest rates, food prices, and rents are at an all-time high. But, “wages are still lagging far behind inflation.”

The CLC calls on unions and governments to act in order to combat the inflation crisis.

Bea Bruske, President of the Canadian Labour Congress states, “The best way for Canadians to achieve fair wages, benefits and a pension is making it easier to join a union. Signing a union card is a worker’s pathway to dignity and well-being.”

Well said, Bruske. It is up to unions to act to protect all workers.

Amalgamated Transit Union Staff (1992). The History of the ATU. Amalgamated Transit Union
Canadian Labour Congress (2022, June 16). *Canadian Unions: Urgent Action Needed*. Retrieved from: <https://canadianlabour.ca/canadas-unions-urgent-action-needed-to-help-families-through-the-inflation-crisis/>

Upcoming Meetings

Want to get more involved? Have ideas for how our union can advance our interests and make the lives of all workers better?

Join a meeting!

- July 7th: ATU Executive Board Meeting
- July 20th: General Monthly Meeting
- July 27th: General Meeting (Informational via Zoom)

Contact office@atu1505.ca for more info.

