Brendan Kavanagh

More than 500 young Edmontonians filled the Mavis House Theatre last Friday for Pecha Kucha Night 5. A series of 10, exactly six-minute, 40-second-long presentations discussing community topics such as design and architecture, urban planning, and local participation.

Next Gen, the Edmonton group that stages the event, is focused on representing the voice of citizens aged 18–40 in the city, encouraging them to get involved, and help shape their community. The regeneration itself is comprised of city employees and representatives from the Edmonton community leaders who work together to meet their mandate. One of the ways in which they try to raise community awareness in young people is through Pecha Kucha Nights such as these.

Pecha Kucha translates from Japanese to “the sound of conversation” or “chit-chat.” The intention of the event, initiated by architects Asad Kleca and Mark Dyham, was to provide a forum in which young designers could quickly exchange ideas.

Very presentation consists of 20 slides, each of which is shown for 15 seconds. The break-neck pace is intended to keep speakers concise and to the point.

There were a significant variety of topics brought to the stage during the night, ranging from green development and sustainability to the humanization work of University of Alberta vice-president Kary Matheson, who was represented by his colleague, director of community involvement, Karen Nelson, who has been part of the city’s culture for events like Edmonton, and his efforts to model and demonstrate its architecture to the world via Google Earth.

Also on the program was former U of A president Michael Jance who discussed the community work being done through the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues. He ended the presentation with words of encouragement for his generation.

“We’re inheriting the keys to the community; it’s as much ours as anyone else,” he said.

Pandas basketball squad will defend the hardwood this weekend at the Hoopfest Invitational. Bring earphones.

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The Gateway

U-Pass price increase gets approval

Sean Stocks
Senior News Editor

Brimston city councilors in the Transportation and Public Works Committee have approved the next step forward in the U-Pass program, which will see a phased-in price increase of nearly 60 cents over the current fare of $5.

The price will increase by approximately $15 annually until the 2013-14 school year, when it will reach $27.50. The U-Pass is currently offered to students for free.

“Students’ Union Vice-President (Student 116) Nick Dehod was on hand to present the committee, accompanied by Gradudated Students” Association President Jen Nicole Landry. Although both in opposition to the increase in principle, they spoke strongly in favor of the collaboration with the transit authorities involved and University administration to ensure the best deal for students.

“As a student, it’s unfortunate to see the price go up, but we feel that this allows us to ensure that this program remains sustainable for students as well as municipalities,” Dehod said.

The survey of the proposed increase was also unknown, as now that prices have been established, any institution wishing to adopt the new program must see the decision through a student wide referendum.

“While I understand the financial pressures the city is under, I’m unsure of how students will react when this goes into implementation. Most of the reaction has been mixed,” he added.

Because of overwhelming success and adoption of the U-Pass by students, the program cost the city and its already-stabilized transit system $16 million in 2009. In order for the program to break even in the 2010-11 school year, students would have to pay $199 per term.

The new fees were determined based on current ETS fare policy, according to which students cannot be charged over 60 per cent of adult single fares—currently $2.50.

The steady price increase over the next four years will take into consideration a planned increase of bus fare by $1 in the year 2010-11.

The proposed fees will bring that cost to $2.71 per cent of adult fare by 2010-11.

Landry defended the program for being bold in the face of budget deficits.

“This program is bigger than just a transit pass. This is environmentally beneficial. It takes cars off the road, reduces greenhouse gases, all of these things that are pertinent to the same issue of our graduate students. This is the start of an expansion of [transit] services,” she said.

Her enthusiasm carried over to the potential for a summer extension to the U-Pass program, which currently runs from September to April.

“97 per cent of graduate students (for the U of A) are in favor of a spring and summer U-Pass,” she said, referring to a survey done by the GIS.

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Heavy-handed metal

Take a whirlwind headbanging tour of Europe’s underground metal scene with Gabby Riches. Bring earplugs.

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Light-footed mettle

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