



CITY OF ST. ALBERT ADMINISTRATIVE BACKGROUNDER

TITLE: ST. ALBERT HANDIBUS

On September 23, 2017 Councillor Russell provided notice in accordance with Section 23 of Procedure Bylaw 22/2016 that he intended to bring forward the proposed motion below.

In order for Council to debate the motion, the motion must be formally moved.

That Council approve the Edmonton General Hospital as a required stop for St. Albert patients effective in 30 days.

BACKGROUND:

Handibus service is “a specialized door-to-door, shared-ride transportation service intended for residents of St. Albert who are unable to utilize conventional fixed-route transit due to a physical or cognitive disability” (City Manager Directive A-IS-08).

St. Albert Transit’s Handibus operation is similar to StAT’s conventional Transit service and cannot provide direct and unlimited access to any destination in Edmonton. Handibus service is not designed to take residents anywhere, anytime.

St. Albert Transit’s Handibus Service follows a hybrid scheduled route system. Handibus service adheres to a specific timed schedule and semi-fixed routes to key destinations in Edmonton, in order to accommodate the most trips possible while still providing direct door-to-door service. This system allows for more passengers to be accommodated while ensuring an appropriate amount of travel time (up to 90 mins) is provided by the service. The current Handibus system serves all of St. Albert and 16 key destinations (the majority of which are medical facilities/hospitals) in Edmonton.

The key locations in Edmonton are situated along or very close to existing conventional transit routes, to provide residents of St. Albert access to equitable locations that conventional transit serves. The Transit Long Term Department Plan approved by Council states that Handibus service should deliver “...a parallel system that provides a similar level of service, with similar choice of local and regional destinations (as the conventional Transit service), for residents who are unable to utilize conventional transit.”

The current destinations within Edmonton are regularly reviewed and assessed by St. Albert Transit Administration and discussed with the Handibus Advisory Committee, based on changing demand. As resources (both number of buses, and

operating hours) are limited, any proposed new destinations will have to be funded through both operational and capital dollars. The other option is that an existing destination has to be replaced, which would affect and potentially disrupt current clients that utilize service to that location). StAT realizes that these 16 destinations do not meet the needs of all our patrons, however, these destinations do fall within StAT's distance standard to the existing routes which our conventional transit currently serves in Edmonton.

The current 16 key locations in Edmonton are as follows:

Destination	Address
Alberta Retina Consultants	10924 - 107 Avenue
Capital Care Norwood	10410 - 111 Avenue
Chrysalis	13325 St. Albert Trail
Cross Cancer Institute	11560 University Avenue
Edmonton City Centre	10025 - 102A Avenue
First Edmonton Place	10665 Jasper Avenue
Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital	10230 - 111 Avenue
Hys Medical Clinic	11010 - 101 Street
Kaye Edmonton Clinic	11400 University Avenue
Kingsway Mall	109 Street & Kingsway Avenue
Kingsway/RAH Transit Centre	106 Street & 111 Avenue
Royal Alexandra Hospital	10240 Kingsway Avenue
University of Alberta - Corbett Hall	8205 - 114 Street
University of Alberta Hospital	8440 - 112 Street
University of Alberta - Steadward Centre	2-633 Van Vliet Complex
University Transit Centre	114 Street & 89 Avenue

As part of the regular review of Handibus destinations, proposed locations are evaluated based on number of clients and potential clients that have requested the new location. Even if St Albert Transit did have extra buses and operational funding, the Edmonton General Continuing Care Center would not be a priority location, based on more requests for other higher demand locations.

For example, Capital Care Dickensfield has at least 6 residents from St. Albert who attend a CHOICE – Senior's Day Program that has medical practitioners available for treating medical needs, and are currently being provided transportation by a private company. Other locations with more requests include; Central Lion's Seniors Recreation Centre, Grey Nuns Hospital, Misericordia Hospital and Meadowlark Health and Shopping Centre – each of these locations have at least 5 clients requiring transportation to these facilities. These locations are all on the list of future destinations for St. Albert Transit Administration to consider providing service. To date, Transit Administration has only been informed of 3 clients who require service to the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre.

In summary, Handibus Service is provided to residents that cannot use conventional Transit. Handibus is not designed to be an on-demand service, otherwise this would result in a public, shared-ride service turning into a private transportation service. Unless increases in capital and operational funding are provided for a new type of service, or existing (higher use) destinations are removed, this request cannot be accommodated.

Report Date: November 6, 2017
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