



DATS News



Disabled Adult Transit Service
September 2014

ETS Accessibility

DATS Open House

Our open house is on:
Wednesday, September 10th.
Drop by anytime between
10:00a.m. and 2:00p.m.

This is an opportunity to meet DATS staff, take a tour, check out information booths and explore ETS and DATS vehicles. Light refreshments and entertainment will be provided, so bring your friends and family along.

Address: Percy Wickman Garage,
5610-86 Street. Parking is limited
so use transit if you can.

Everyone is welcome!

Newsletter Note

Did you know? This newsletter can be emailed straight to your inbox. It's the fastest, and the greenest way to stay in touch! To be added to our email list, contact:

dats@edmonton.ca. For other newsletter requests, call us at 780-496-4567 (option 4).

Come to the DATS Open House - on the bus!

We're looking forward to seeing you at our Open House, and we'd encourage you to take ETS to come and visit us. It's easy getting here on the bus. Several routes provide service to a bus stop within a block of the DATS Garage. One of the best routes is Route 8, which provides service to DATS from downtown and from Mill Woods, and operates every 15 minutes.



To find out how to get to the Open House from wherever in Edmonton you're coming from, you can call 311 to speak to a live operator, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for help in planning your trip. If you have access to the internet, you can use our wonderful online Trip Planner at www.TakeETS.com, to work out the best route options.

For both 311 and Trip Planner, you need:

- your starting address
- our address (5610 - 86 Street), or the BusLink identification number of the nearest bus stops:

1. northbound, from Millgate Transit Centre/Mill Woods: #2338
2. southbound, from Kingsway/Downtown/Bonnie Doon: #2385

Fare, other route schedules, and additional transit information can also be accessed through 311 and our website – www.takeETS.com or try our new real-time information website at www.ETSLive.edmonton.ca.

Make sure you are dressed for the weather, that you have your trip plan worked out in advance and your fare ready. We look forward to seeing you in September!

Message from the Director

It's been a lovely summer with few mosquitoes but lots of aphids! The DATS vegetable garden is growing abundantly and for those who are able to attend the Open House at the Percy Wickman garage on September 10th, we'll ensure that it's part of the facility tour.

In this message, I'd like to highlight some of DATS staff efforts on continuous improvement (CI). In a former role at the University of Alberta Hospital, I was fortunate to receive training in total quality management, another name for CI. According to Wikipedia, continuous process improvement is "an ongoing effort to improve products, services, or processes". These efforts can seek "incremental" improvement over time or "breakthrough" improvement all at once.



At DATS, we are committed to delivering quality service to customers in the quantity that riders are requesting (as much as possible) while maximizing the value to tax payers who cover 90 per cent of the operating cost. To do this, we've adopted a continuous improvement approach to our work. We are keen to get ideas from staff and clients on how we can improve our service. Every month, we hold a staff input forum with different representatives from the various areas of DATS. At these sessions, we provide an update on current initiatives as well as asking two questions: 1) What's working well? and 2) What needs to be improved? Through this, we've gained many, many insights into areas for improvement.

Some of the improvement opportunities have helped DATS reduce unproductive time. For example, DATS delivers trips to many programs every day. At some of these locations there can be 40 to 50 clients boarding numerous vehicles for their trip home at the end of the day. Riders need to go on the appropriate bus since we schedule the drop-offs to the areas of the city in which the clients live. For example, one vehicle may take 10 clients who live in the southeast while another vehicle transports eight that live in the westend. We'd heard from drivers that it was challenging to find the right clients to go on their bus. We had service coordinators helping and the Bus Operations Supervisor, Garth Hurl, had even pitched in to help sort out which people needed to get on which vehicles. So, we put our heads together with some of the program agencies to see what we could do to improve the boarding process.

Through analysis and brainstorming, we came up with a technology solution. We have great computer tools at DATS that have revolutionized the way we deliver service to citizens. In this case, we were able to develop a process whereby we email the list of clients and the vehicle to which they are assigned to the program in advance of the DATS vehicles arriving for pick-up. This gives the staff at the programs the information they need to assist clients to be organized into groups around the vehicles to which they need to board. There has been an unbelievable improvement in the delivery of service to clients and the programs. These pick-ups are now organized and take less time so that we can get on the road and get riders home sooner, and its reduced conflict and errors in people boarding the wrong vehicles. It's a great example of how continuous improvement can play a role in solving problems and making more effective use of resources.

There are many, many more examples of how DATS works to continually improve its service to citizens. We'll work to share more of these in future newsletters.

Hope to see you on September 10th at the Open House! **Lorna Stewart, Director of DATS**

I-Book (on-line trip booking)

<https://datsibook.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/>

We are working on options to make online trip booking (I-Book) even more user friendly:

- We changed the time intervals for bookings from 15 to 10 minutes (*more flexibility*).
- Customers can now cancel online - right up to their trip time (*more convenience*).
- Customers can now book trips during regular business hours (*more convenience = 21 hours per day/7 days per week access*).
- We are removing restrictions for trip booking on statutory holidays (*more flexibility and convenience*).
- We are also creating instructional videos for I-Book which will be uploaded onto the DATS website (*more assistance and service*).

If you would like to sign up for I-Book, or want to know if it is right for you, please e-mail dats@edmonton.ca or call DATS Community Relations at 780-496-4567 (option 4).

Application Process Update

New: In-Person Interview Location

As of the end of June, DATS in-person interviews are now being completed by *Capital City Occupational Therapy*. With a central location and a group of experienced Occupational Therapists, DATS awarded a contract to *Capital City*. Maps and directions to *Capital City* are provided with new application forms and recertification documents (also available on request). If you have questions or would like to receive a copy of the map and directions, please contact DATS Registration at 780-496-4567 (option 3).

Mobility Equipment

Now is the time to make sure things are in good order for the winter months ahead.

- Install permanent ramps for everyone's safety.
- Ramps: NON slip surface for walking and handrails.
- Ensure the ramp is in good repair; that is free of trip hazards such as cracks or broken pieces.
- Is your walkway wide enough? Make sure your sidewalk is wide enough to accommodate you and/or your mobility aid comfortably and safely. In case of an emergency you should be able to safely exit your home and get away from the building with little effort.
- Make arrangements now for snow and ice clearance!
- Get your equipment checked - tire pressure, loose screws, bolts, brakes and handles.

DATS Notes

Want a New Card?

You can request a new card (the purple ones with photo) any time. In fact, if you are using regular transit, it's probably a good idea to travel with the updated card! Contact us at 780-496-4567 (option 3) or email us at dats@edmonton.ca

Correspondence

If you need correspondence copied to a 3rd party (guardian, agency, program, public guardian, etc), please provide the address and appropriate documentation (permission to release info, guardianship docs, etc.) to DATS registration.

Personal Possessions

Customers are responsible for personal possessions while traveling on DATS - this includes baskets and passes. Please make sure your things are all labeled with your name and contact information. DATS is not responsible for lost items.

Mobility Aids

Before you buy a new mobility aid, be sure that it is suitable and safe for use on transit. If you need advice, please contact us for a copy of our Mobility Aids brochure or to speak with someone. Call DATS at 780-496-4567 (option 4).

DATS Notes

City of St. Albert

The City of St. Albert offers a service called Handibus (Mon to Fridays), designed to assist in meeting the mobility needs of residents, particularly those who cannot use the conventional transit services due to a physical or cognitive disability. The Handibus fleet is accessible, with low-floor buses, and operates on local transit routes, as well as those commuter routes to and from Edmonton.

DATS is entering into a new partnership with the St. Albert Transit Handibus. DATS is being contracted to provide trip administration services, such as booking, dispatch, and scheduling. The booking of trips through DATS starts September 28th, and service delivery begins October 1st.

This partnership serves both organizations – DATS is able to use our technologies to the benefit of more individuals in the greater Edmonton area, and the City of Albert is able to save funds by not purchasing their own equipment for these administrative services. Through DATS, St. Albert customers will also have access to our Call Center (extended hours), online booking, IVR (phone call notifications) and improved scheduling of trips.

We look forward to the implementation of this new partnership, and will provide updates in future newsletters.

Holiday Booking Schedule

Labour Day:

September 1, 2014

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Labour Day, Monday, September 1, 2014. The DATS vehicles will be running as usual.



Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, September 1, 2014. If you still require your subscription booking on Monday, September 1, 2014, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Thanksgiving Day: October 13, 2014

DATS will operate on a holiday schedule (the Customer Care Centre will be closed) on Thanksgiving Day, Monday, October 13, 2014. The DATS vehicles will be running as usual.

Note: subscription bookings will be cancelled on Monday, October 13, 2014. If you still require your subscription booking on Monday, October 13, 2014, call 780-496-4567 (option 2) to book it.

Customer Training

What types of training are available?

Transit 101: These monthly two hour Introduction-to-Transit classes are ideal for customers who are learning to use transit for the first time. Classes are held at Percy Wickman Garage (5610 86 Street), located in south Edmonton. These classes run from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon and include both classroom instruction and hands-on practice session with a bus. Because Transit 101 is held in a classroom setting, it is most helpful for participants who benefit from group-style learning and who are interested in learning how to use transit independently. Upcoming classes include: October 1, November 5 and December 10, 2014. Please note that preregistration is required.

Mobility Choices Customer Training also provides individual training, as well as customized group training sessions, and agency training opportunities such as "train the trainer."

To request training for yourself or someone that you know, please contact us via:

- Online at <http://www.takeets.com/mobilitychoices>
- Email at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca or
- Call the Customer Training hotline at 780-496-3000.

September 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AUG 31 Can book for: Sept 1, 2 (till noon) Sept 3, 4	1 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips cancelled	2 Regular booking schedule resumes	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	Door to Door Service: DATS requires all operators to escort customers between the vehicle and the first set of accessible doors. If your operator does not provide door to door service, call us at 496-4567 (option 4) and let us know!			

October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 Can book for: Oct 11 (till noon), Oct 12 (till noon), Oct 13, 14	11 Can book for: Oct 12 (till noon), Oct 13, 14, 15
12 Can book for: Oct 13 (till noon), Oct 14 (till noon), Oct 15, 16	13 HOLIDAY No Trip Booking Subscription trips cancelled	14 Regular booking schedule resumes	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

DATS Team Member



Diane Rossi, DATS Customer Care Agent

How long have you been at DATS?
I have been at DATS for four years as a Customer Care agent.

Why do you like working at DATS?
I enjoy the satisfaction that I get from helping people. The DATS Customer Care Centre has a great atmosphere to work in.

What do you do in your spare time?
I like spending time with my husband, my two daughters, and of course, my Golden Retriever – Archie! I also find running a relaxing and peaceful experience which helps to keep my mind alert and thoughts sharp! I have run several road races like the '10 km Melissa's Road Race' in Banff. Recently, I trained with one of my daughters to run the 'Spartan Race' in Edmonton. The 'Spartan Race' is a 5 km obstacle course with 15 obstacles to complete. My new goal is to run a 'Half Marathon'.

What are your hobbies?
I enjoy scrap-booking. It is a great way to preserve wonderful memories. I love creating themes that reflect my photographs.

Seniors on the Go



Seniors on the Go Travel Training

Since 2007, thousands of seniors have accessed Seniors on the Go, a travel training program that gives seniors first-hand experience riding the bus and LRT. So far this summer, DATS has hosted 13 sessions, reaching out to 150 seniors across the city.

The program underwent a revamp this year, in the attempt to return to the root objective of Seniors on the Go – encouraging seniors to add public transportation as one of their many transportation options. Each outing is tailored to the participating group, so participants are going to local, everyday destinations. Popular outings have been to malls and shopping centres, libraries, and cultural centres. The chartered bus follows a local bus route, and the guides point out other significant destinations, such as pharmacies, grocery stores, and banks en route.

Each session begins with a presentation about the use, safety, and accessibility of ETS buses. Then, participants board the bus at the nearest bus stop, practice using some of the features mentioned in the presentation, and settle in for the ride. After the excursion to the everyday destination, everyone heads back to the nearest bus stop along the route closest to their residence.

Reviews are positive - they have "learned so much", "... now know how to ride the bus", and "thought the information was very useful". Even those participants who were familiar with ETS services were surprised; as one participant said, "I've been riding the bus for decades and even I learned something new!"

Feedback suggests that seniors are learning, and will hopefully access all the freedom, flexibility, and choices that ETS has to offer.



DATS Advisory Group

DATS Version 2.0: Our next Information Session is Tuesday, October 7 (2:00-4:00p.m.). This session includes a demonstration of how operators tie down scooters. To register, call 780-496-4567 (option 3). Can't make the 7th? DAG has another session on Tuesday, November 4th.

Smart Bus Report

Smart Bus continues to move forward with its goals of providing enhanced information and communication technologies in order to provide better information for customers, enable better management of on-road bus service, and collect data that assists transit planners when designing service. In the way of background, Smart Bus refers to adding telecommunication equipment onto transit buses as well as back office systems so that ETS Transit Control knows where buses are and allowing riders to get real-time information about when their bus is expected past their stop. It also includes automated stop announcements that gives more information about upcoming stops. It also has external announcements to tell those waiting at a stop, the route number and destination. This is really announcing the destination sign on the bus.

We are very pleased that Phase 1 of the Smart Bus project is successfully nearing completion. Here are some highlights:

- Launched the Transit Master Computer-aided Dispatch (CAD) tool in the Control Centre and Inspector vehicles, to deliver real-time incident management tools.
- Routes 111, 128, 7, 57 are successfully operating as Smart Bus enabled buses.
- Real time information available via the ETS Live website and mobile website. You can visit the web site at www.ETSLive.edmonton.ca.
- Testing and deployment of additional customer tools, including mobile apps for Android and iPhones is underway.

We are also excited to be moving into Phase 2, which aims to equip the remainder of the Transit fleet (878 buses) with Smart Bus functionality:

- 250 additional buses will be Smart Bus enabled in 2014;
- Routes 33, 72, 78, 79 have been enabled with more routes to be activated in September including 3, 10, 11, 112.
- A trip planner tool is included in Phase 2 as is the consolidation of existing information tools. We're also looking at linking to the Google Transit Real-Time tools.

Another positive aspect of Smart Bus implementation is we have determined that the Smart Bus solution provides the on board bus technology that can be used for delivering the Smart Fare project, allowing for a more efficient and cost-effective deployment of the two initiatives.

DATS Customer Care
780-496-4567

E-mail / Website
DATS@edmonton.ca
www.takeETS.com/DATS

ETS Notes

ETS Bus Buddies Wants You!

We are recruiting volunteers to help others learn how to use Edmonton Transit buses and trains in a fun, safe, and comfortable way through a new program called Bus Buddies!

Our volunteers - called Navigators - participate in a half-day training session to learn about all of the tips and tricks for using public transit. Then they take small groups of two to six new customers out for a fun and informative outing, to teach people how to get to destinations in their community using Edmonton Transit! Our volunteers receive detailed information how to teach their groups, and are provided with the customer tools, route brochures, and other materials needed to ensure their groups have the information and experience they need to use ETS safely, comfortably, and confidently.

Navigator training is offered monthly, and once the training/sign-on is complete, Navigators are provided with a bus pass and support from ETS to arrange their group trips. Volunteers must commit to 1-4 trips per month.

Interested in becoming a Bus Buddy Navigator? Or would like more information? Please call 780-496-3000, or email us at ETSCustomerTraining@edmonton.ca

DATS News, September 2014

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Please direct comments/submissions to:

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E-mail Newsletters

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the DATS Newsletter by e-mail? Just
send an e-mail to:
dats@edmonton.ca - please put
"DATS Newsletter" in the subject line.
Or call us at 780-496-4567.

Contact DATS

DATS Customer Care Centre 780-496-4567

- ▶ To cancel a trip or to check on a
late ride: **Press 1**
- ▶ To book or change a trip: **Press 2**
- ▶ To register for DATS: **Press 3**
- ▶ To submit a commendation,
concern or any other inquiry:
Press 4

TTY Line 780-496-5506

Nextalk 780-944-5555

Lost & Found 780-496-1622

E-mail / Website DATS@edmonton.ca takeETS.com/DATS

DATS Customer Care Centre Full Service Hours:

*(trip booking, registration,
commendations & concerns)*

Monday to Friday:

7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday:

7:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

DATS Customer Care Centre Outside of Regular Hours:

(trip cancels, checking late ride)

Monday to Thursday:

5:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Friday:

5:00 a.m. to midnight

Saturday:

6:00 a.m. to midnight

Sunday and holidays:

6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

**ETS**

Return undeliverable Canadian address to:

City of Edmonton Transportation Services
Suite 500, Scotia Place
10060 - Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3R8

post office indicia here