



Date/Time: Feb 9, 22 / 11am-1pm

Location: Zoom

Chairs: Christopher Gordon, Jim Brown

In Attendance:

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (AAN)
Jim Brown (Comm. Adv.)
Dan Pederson (Comm. Adv.)
Ash Mithani (CTA)
Christopher Gordon (CNIB)
Jodi Hughes (Livery Transport)

Paul Schmold (DATS)
Nikki Stevens (Between Friends)
Colleen McGann (Comm. Adv.)
Ermira Kusari (AAN)
Diane Kreuger (ILRCC)
Cory Porter (Livery Transport)
Brittany McFarlane (DDRC)

Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement
Welcome and Introductions

Review/Approval of previous meeting's minutes

Topics of Discussion:

WAV update

- Over 13,400 provided in 2021 through WAV Calgary platforms, up from 2020 as restrictions were lifted. In 2022, there has been a steady increase so far.
- The program started as a pilot in December 2018 for 2 years and last December they provided a briefing note to the Council that it would turn into a full program. This solidified the on-demand centralized dispatch that WAV operates.
- In conjunction with the WAV Dispatch system, the accessible taxi incentive program was put in place in 2019 as a means of providing drivers with incentives to offset the larger operating costs that they incur for the wheelchair van. There have been just under 1 million incentives provided to the industry. Council was advised in the briefing note that drivers may qualify to receive an incentive per trip: 4 am – 6pm may receive \$10; 6pm – 4 am may receive \$20. It is contingent upon the customer services and the trip being completed in a positive way. The success of the program is valued by the input of all the users.
- WAV ran a public awareness campaign to promote it, with the hope that it will raise awareness about the program. They have reached out

to the drivers as well regarding maintaining vehicle cleanliness, safety equipment and ideas to have blankets for service animals. The enforcement team is always on the road and identifying any mechanical issues with the vehicles and instructing the drivers to fix and report it to WAV.

- There are currently around 53 vehicles if all complement was on the road.

Discussion:

- **What are the plans for increasing the fleet/number of drivers as restrictions are lifted and organizations are opening for in-person programming?**

There were drivers that left the industry due to Covid-19 for a while but hoping they will return as demand increases. The door is always open for the drivers to come back. For those that have permanently surrendered the plate, the business unit is monitoring the service demand and supply to make sure that there is not a trend of more trips than there are vehicles.

- The average time for trip fulfillment is 22 minutes, some might be fulfilled faster, some might be delayed.

What do the numbers of trips booked over the phone and over the app look like?

- There are more trips booked over the phone however app utilization is increasing. One of the benefits of the app, in addition to seeing that the vehicles are on route, customers are able to rate the drivers.

Service animal denial – is there anything that can be done with WAV or Livery to raise awareness about it and reporting it?

The first line of contact should be 311 to report any related issues. All taxis are mandated to have a camera. If there is footage of an incident and within 7 days of receiving the complaint, a request for the recording can be made by Livery Transport. The monthly tip is a piece that is distributed to drivers with various monthly topics and serves as a reminder of what is expected of drivers, following the rules and the bylaws that are in place.

CTA Updates – December 2021

- Trips provided: 55,031 trips.
- On-time performance: 92.39% (snow and icy conditions on several days).
- Cost per trip: An increase from the previous month.
- On Board times: (see pie chart attached).
- Call times: Average delay was 0:58 with 95.22% of the calls being answered under 3 minutes. Calls received: 36,380.

- Web bookings: decreased
- 37 commendations and 24 concerns.
- Driver training: 50 (refreshers and training)

Discussion:

Will the lifting of restrictions have an impact on the current CTA services?

There has been some talk on lifting the restrictions on the sedans (currently 2 per vehicle) but it also depends on whether the lifting of restrictions might make customers uncomfortable and they may decide not to travel.

Introduction of DATS

- The name DATS has undergone a rebranding and is not known as Dedicated Accessible Transit System
- Run a similar model to CTA: some of the service is done by the City of Edmonton operators (45% pre-Covid), the rest of the service is contracted out to a provider that provides accessible minivans. Have now expanded and have contracts with 3 major taxi companies in Edmonton. Utilizing tablets as on-board technologies to better integrate with the contractors which allows taxi drivers to provide services for DATS just by logging into the app on their tablet.
- Similar challenges due to Covid-19. Service is back up to 45% of pre-Covid. A number of measures were put into place to ensure everyone's safety including PPE, screening, restricted capacity in vehicles.
- Driver hiring and retainment through the contractors continues to pose a challenge. A new provider has been engaged and that has shown positive results.
- The overall philosophy for eligibility is that DATS is a service for people that cannot use conventional public transit due to the varying abilities. For people who can use conventional transit but might not feel comfortable doing so, there are training opportunities available to help with the transition and it increases transportation means and opportunities.
- Looking into further collaboration opportunities with agencies that provide door to door services and assist customers beyond pick up and drop off, including helping those companies advocate for funding.

Discussion:

What has DATS experience been with drivers and service animals?

DATS focus is on educating the users and all DATS and contractor drivers are trained to properly work with customers that have service animals. It has not been a major issue and there have been awareness campaigns on it. The training package was overhauled in the last two years around customer service, empathy. The package was shared with all for hire companies, approved by City Council and was developed in partnership with the Rick Hanse Foundation and other stakeholders following research.

What information is the table interested in from CTA and DATS

- In an effort to ensure that various accessible transportation services, we will look at what information is more important to be shared. The items that would likely be of interest: trips provided, on-time performance, rate, call wait times.
- **DATS report:**
 - Performance has been over 95% with a slight dip due to weather related issues.
 - Around 1 million trips provided in a year.
 - Trip accommodation rate (moving to capturing different types of trips and focusing on the mandated pre-booked trips) is at 100%.
 - Track a number of other parameters: ridership by hour/day/weekend, on-time performance, average ride times (which dropped during Covid-19 due to lower ridership).
 - Cancellation policy is in place to ensure that people are not cancelling last minute.
 - DATS also tracks and manages booking, dispatch, scheduling for the communities of St. Albert and Leduc. While they provide the drivers, DATs helps with technology and administrative staff and a per-rate trip is charged.
 - There is a transfer agreement between Calgary and Edmonton and for customers that are eligible for CTA services, DATS will give them temporary access for the duration of their visit. Customer are advised to contact DATS ahead of their trip. The cost would be the same.

On-demand transit

- There are a number of communities that are adopting on-demand transit (is a new way to provide transit service to communities that currently don't have traditional bus service. The service allows customers to book travel as needed, to be picked up and dropped off at any of the existing stops in the community and other major locations) such as Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Okotoks, Edmonton, Calgary.
- In Edmonton on-demand transit was implement in April 2021 which was in alignment with a major bus redesign project following public engagements. Due to the sprawled nature of the City of Edmonton, the overhauled meant that some routed were changed or cut therefore on-demand transit was out in place to fill in the need. The service is contracted out to a company; all vehicles are accessible. There has been modest use that is increasing. It is currently a 2-year project.

National Accessibility Awareness Week project (May 29-June 4, 2022)

- Making bus stops more accessible across Alberta.
- Accessibility Legislation in Alberta



Recruitment for the table

- If you are interested in being part of the recruitment subcommittee, please fill out this quick form by February 28:
<https://forms.gle/U8AGAGVSBS9uWDn48>

Link to the AAN Transportation table folder on the Shared Google Drive:

- <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IJPDPH9IXeWoinn2KIIgKc9iP1isatse?usp=sharing>

Action items:

- If you are interested in being part of the recruitment subcommittee, please fill out this quick form by February 28:
<https://forms.gle/U8AGAGVSBS9uWDn48>

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

Next meeting:

Date: March 9, 2022

Time: 11am – 1pm

Location: Zoom