

Breaking Down the

BARRIERS

Alberta Transportation

October 2004

Optimized Disabled Transportation Services



The City of Grande Prairie is developing a plan to enable existing partner agencies to work together in the provision of a coordinated transportation service for persons with disabilities in Grande Prairie while maintaining and improving the overall efficiency of existing services. This included a detailed review of:

- Existing services operated by the partner agencies;
- Existing and future travel needs in the community;
- Fuel and maintenance operations; and,
- Development of a plan and strategy to address current and future needs while improving the efficiency of the service delivery.

Recommendations include: the creation of a transportation co-operative; contracted taxi services; increased utilization of Grande Prairie Transit; and, a review of current eligibility criteria in the Disabled Transportation Society service.

The following submission was provided by J. R. (John) Minue, President, Disabled Transportation Society and participant in the newly formed Grande Prairie Community Transportation Co-Operative. The article represents his opinions only.

The City of Grande Prairie commissioned Paradigm Transportation Solutions, an Ontario-based consulting firm, in concert with the Disabled Transportation Society (DTS), the Grande Spirit Foundation (GSF), and Peace Country Health (PCH), to study accessible transportation services and make recommendations with an eye towards reducing emissions, improving efficiency and planning for growth. Funding for this study was provided by the Government of Canada, through the Green Municipal Enabling Fund.



DTS is the only public supplier of transportation for persons with disabilities in the City of Grande Prairie, providing 185 hours of service weekly, with a fleet of 4 wheelchair accessible buses and 1 van. DTS is a nonprofit society managed by a volunteer board, largely funded by the City of Grande Prairie and the Province. DTS provides daily scheduled service to both GSF and PCH clients. GSF is a major supplier of senior care and housing in the region. GSF operates 2 accessible buses, solely for excursions for their clients. PCH operates 1 older unit for their long-term care facility residents.

The primary recommendation of the study was to unite the above mentioned suppliers of accessible transportation as a family of services, with a goal to share responsibility and resources.

Speaking on behalf of DTS, I know we benefited from the project through exposure to some new ideas to a better view of available services and to a clearer vision of both opportunities and roadblocks. The study initiated significant discussion regarding emissions control and operational efficiency. We had fallen into the old trap of fighting fires, using only the methodology from the past. Although we have been successful in managing client satisfaction, balanced with fiscal responsibility in the past, we are facing a rapidly growing client load and managing this growth efficiently, is our biggest challenge.

The study predicted a 35% increase in client load over 5 years. Our experience during the six month study period showed an increase in client load of 25%. Further, the study identified that persons with developmental disabilities were not universally being recognized. Only those who fell within mobility, vision or age guidelines were considered for service. Another issue, fully realized by myself and fellow wheelchair users, was the absence of any accessible taxis in Grande Prairie. The study, also addressed the underutilization of Grande Prairie Transit (GPT) by persons with disabilities. The need for a closer working relationship with the City was highlighted.

The initial success of this study was to get the DTS and City Council talking. Addressing the expected increase in demand generated by Grande Prairie's growth, a surge in senior and accessible accommodation, and the inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities, will require a strong bond of trust and cooperation between the two groups. We are preparing to meet with suppliers of care and housing for persons with developmental disabilities, in the fourth quarter of 2004, with an aim of accepting their clients needing our service by the end of the year. We are already in discussion with private suppliers of public transportation regarding 24 hour accessible service and the potential to

outsource during slow and peak periods. We are planning to participate in training sessions to encourage existing and potential DTS clients to utilize GPT whenever possible. GPT is operating wheelchair accessible buses on some higher density routes. A program called “Fuel Sense”, currently being offered to Edmonton Transit operators with appropriate training, is projected to reduce fuel usage emissions by 19%. Working with our dispatchers, drivers and clients to increase load density should also improve efficiency and reduce emissions.

A large budget increase next year is inevitable if we are to meet our service goals. Our request has been submitted and we are awaiting Council’s approval. DTS remains committed to supplying convenient, affordable, safe transportation for all persons unable to use other forms of public transportation safely and with dignity. Our aim is to help make Grande Prairie a friendly destination for persons with disabilities.

Further information about the referenced study, please contact:

Disabled Transportation Society
J. R. (John) Minue, President
Box 1303
Grande Prairie, Alberta, T8V 4Z1
Phone: (780) 539-6720
Email: jrminue@hotmail.com

Grande Prairie Transit
Karen Bustin
PO Bag 4000
Grande Prairie, Alberta, T8V 6V3
Phone: (780) 538-0359
Email: kbustin@city.grande-prairie.ab.ca
Web Site: www.city.grande-prairie.ab.ca

PROFILE

Member of the Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation

Q: How did you get interested in transportation issues?

A: I have been in an electric wheelchair for 23 years since I became a quadriplegic as a result of a single vehicle car crash — we hit a cow on the highway and I wasn't wearing my seatbelt. Being unable to drive meant that I had to rely on family and friends, or on public transportation. I felt sitting back and complaining about the system wasn't doing me or anyone else any good, so why not get involved?

Q: What is your role on the Barrier Free Committee and why did you become involved?

A: I am currently Chair of the Transportation Advisory Board for the City of Red Deer. The Barrier Free Committee representative from Red Deer was leaving his position and asked if I would take his place, stating that I was well-suited to the job. I am also able to bring a national perspective as I am a member of the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT), a national committee advising the Federal Minister of Transportation on issues of accessibility.

Q: What are the major concerns or issues you have related to accessible transportation?

A: One of my major concerns is availability of wheelchair accessible transportation for people using mobility aids. Transportation is a key component in an individual's ability to be educated, be employable, to socialize, to take part in recreational activities, and to interact and contribute



**Marlin Styner, Chair
Transportation Advisory
Board for the City of Red
Deer**

to their community. Think of how vulnerable, incapacitated and frustrated someone feels when their vehicle is in the shop, or otherwise not available to them for a period of time. Now imagine living your entire life that way — many people with disabilities don't have to imagine — they're living it!

As a member of the Advisory Committee I look forward to working on accessible transportation issues of interest to central Albertans with disabilities.

Did you know . . .

“JustMobility” Lift

At the Edmonton International Airport, commuter aircraft can safely accommodate the special needs of the mobility impaired passenger by using the “JustMobility” lift. The hydraulic lift provides easy to use access for persons in a wheelchair to enter a ground-loaded aircraft. When booking your travel arrangements, please advise the Travel Agent or the airline that you will require the “JustMobility” lift.



For further information, please contact:

Edmonton International Airport Information Line

Phone: (780) 890-8382

Toll Free: (800) 268-7134

Email: info@edmontonairports.com

Web Site: www.edmontonairports.com



Parking Placards for Persons with Disabilities

Enforcement Information

Municipal bylaw and police officers enforce local bylaws on parking placards for persons with disabilities. Issues around parking placard use in designated parking stalls and enforcement of local bylaws should be reported to the local municipal authority. If you have questions regarding bylaw enforcement in the City of Edmonton or the City of Calgary please contact them at:

City of Edmonton
Planning and Development Department
Ph: (780) 496-3100 Fax: (780) 496-6054
Email: parkingenforcement@edmonton.ca

City of Calgary
Animal and Bylaw Services
Phone: (403) 268-CITY (2489) Fax: (403) 268-4927
E-mail: ccweb@calgary.ca

Alternatively, abuse of the parking placard by an individual can be reported to the Assistant Director, Registry Services, Alberta Government Services. These would include abuse by the placard holder, expired placard, wrongful placement of placard, etc. For further information please refer to Alberta Transportation's web site

<http://www.trans.gov.ab.ca/Content/doctype55/production/Placard05.pdf>.

If you have questions regarding the administration of the policy, please contact:

Directors of Customer Service
Alberta Government Services Call Centre
Phone: (780) 427-7013
Toll Free: 310-0000, in Alberta, then ask for the above number

Alberta's New Tourism Signage Policy... Showing the Way!



Alberta has a new tourism highway sign policy. Not only will it promote tourism, it will ensure consistent signing and give motorists the information they need to make their highway journey enjoyable and safe. A growing Alberta tourism industry prompted the change.

The new policy called SignUpAlberta, is based on two programs - the Tourism Oriented Directional Signs, or TODS, and Logo Signs. Both TODS and Logo Signs programs are currently used in many European countries, the United States, and several Canadian provinces.

Starting in May 2004, TODS and Logo Signs will gradually replace existing brown signs on the highway over the next three years. Communities and private businesses will be able to provide unique signage opportunities to display attractions and essential services to traveling motorists.



Inquiries about the application process and becoming part of this exciting sign program can be answered by contacting Guide Sign Industries Ltd. at their toll free number 1-866-560-SIGN (7446).

For further information, please contact:

Alberta Transportation
Robert Duckworth, Traffic Operations Engineer
2nd floor, Twin Atria Building
4999 – 50 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 2X3
Phone: (780) 415-1047
Email: Robert.Duckworth@gov.ab.ca
Web Site: www.SignUpAlberta.com

CSA Standard D409

Transporting persons with physical disabilities can be a difficult task and presents unique challenges. Proper equipment and procedures must be used to ensure safety for those on board. For this reason, and at the request of the Canadian Conference of Motor Transport Administrators, the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) developed the **CSA D409 Standard for Motor Vehicles** used in the transportation of persons with physical disabilities. This standard is to be applied to motor vehicles operated for or on behalf of any person, club, agency, or organization that provides a transportation service for persons with physical disabilities, for compensation or otherwise.

The CSA D409 Standard applies to motor vehicles other than passenger cars, designed and manufactured or converted, and equipped for the purpose of transporting persons with physical disabilities. Among other things, it specifies the design and manufacture of the vehicle, lifts, and ramps. Examples include grab bars/handles and their location inside the vehicle, load capacity for lifts, or surfaces and gradients for ramps. CSA D409 also specifies the mobility aid location and securement, and required safety equipment. Some examples of this are space requirements for mobility aids, restraint/securement devices, as well as requirements to carry fire extinguishers and first aid kits.

Commercial buses operated in Alberta are required by **Alberta's Bus Safety Regulation** to meet the requirements of the CSA D409 standard. Part 4 of this regulation and its schedules (5 and 6) outline the equipment requirements and maintenance of this equipment. To purchase a copy of CSA D409 please visit: <http://www.csa.ca/Default.asp?language=english>.

For further information, please contact:

Alberta Transportation
Dennis Bell, Director Vehicle Safety
1st floor, Twin Atria
4999 – 50th Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 2X3
Phone: (780) 427-7629
Email: dennis.bell@gov.ab.ca
Web Site: http://www.qp.gov.ab.ca/documents/Regs1982_235.cfm?frm_isbn=0773295496



Town of Vegreville/County of Minburn's Innovative Transportation Program

In the community of Vegreville and the surrounding County of Minburn, a unique solution has been found to address accessible transportation problems facing its residents.

A group of local people came together to discuss the ever growing problem of affordable, accessible transportation. Out of that discussion, the Vegreville Transportation Services Society (VTSS) was created. It was important to VTSS members that they make sure current providers were not able to meet the community's needs before they looked at acquiring a handivan. The Town of Vegreville and the County of Minburn each provided \$500 in start-up funds to allow VTSS to investigate the need for such a program. Beginning with community surveys and needs assessments, the members developed a plan for a pilot project involving fare subsidies for use on the Vegreville Care Centre Handibus and local taxis.

VTSS members made presentations to the Town of Vegreville and the County of Minburn and user groups. Response from all local groups was positive. The public was encouraged to submit letters to the various levels of government who could provide financial support. Many letters came into municipal offices from area residents, stressing how important the transportation issue is to everyone.

Beginning in 2003, the Town of Vegreville Council allocated the specialized transportation portion of the Unconditional Municipal Grant Program to fund subsidies for travel within the town limits. After consulting with rural residents and county councilors, the County of Minburn joined in, funding transportation for rural residents to and from their local community of choice.

Subsidies are available to seniors, people with disabilities and low income families. The application process is simple - VTSS screens the applications and if successful the applicant is given a booklet of ten vouchers. Vouchers for taxi service have varying values depending on length of trip, but average about 50 per cent of the taxi fare. Subsidies are also available for the Vegreville Care Centre Handibus in the amount of \$10 for every \$25 charge. Clients can receive a voucher booklet every 30 days if needed.

Statistics gathered in the first quarter of operation indicate that the majority of trips are for medical reasons. Users are enthusiastic and are grateful for the program. Everyone has been very careful in their use of vouchers to ensure funding lasts the year.

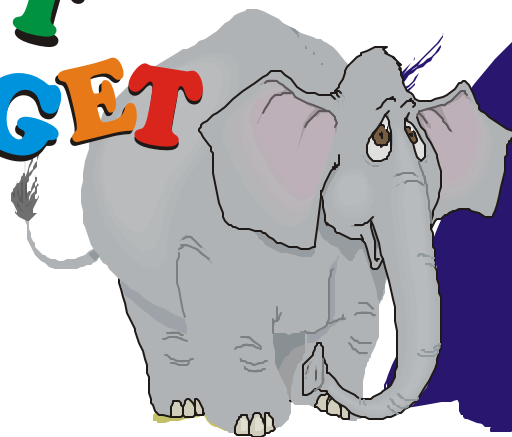
Availability of the Vegreville Care Centre Handibus is extremely limited and will not meet the needs of the VTSS service area. Based on the number of applicants and number of trips they make, VTSS will move on to the next steps of the program which are fundraising for a handivan for the community, and to finance subsidized medical trips to Edmonton.

VTSS attributes the success of its program to the support of the Town of Vegreville, the County of Minburn, local service groups and the hard work of its dedicated membership. VTSS has learned a lot in the process of developing this program and is willing to mentor other communities or groups with similar needs.

For further information, please contact Laurie or Val at:

Town of Vegreville
Family and Community Support Services
PO Box 640
Vegreville, AB, T9C 1R7
Phone: (780) 632-3966
Fax: (780) 632-3088
E-Mail: vbogen@vegreville.com
Web Site: www.vegreville.com

**DON'T
FORGET**



To access
key information on
Barrier-Free initiatives,
please visit Alberta
Transportation's web site
at www.trans.gov.ab.ca

The City of Red Deer Transit/Special Transportation Study

The **City of Red Deer Transit/Special Transportation Study** was initiated in 2003 primarily to investigate future directions for the City's transit and special transportation services. The goal was to identify the most effective and efficient way of delivering public transportation, including accessible transportation services, to an increasing population and a framework for expanding public transportation services over the next 10 to 25 years.

The study, released in June 2004, involved a comprehensive review and assessment of needs, the identification of strategies for meeting those needs over the next 25 years, and the development of short-term plans for the services, infrastructure, resources and budgets of the transit system. The study included extensive public outreach and stakeholder consultation.

A key recommendation is to bring under the umbrella of the City of Red Deer all accessible transportation services presently being offered, including Red Deer Transit (RDT) and the Citizens Action Bus (CAB) operated by the Citizens Action Group. Short-term strategies include:

- + Integration with conventional transit
 - universal accessibility in terms of fleet acquisitions and infrastructure
- + Partnership with agencies
 - collaborative approach to mobility management, and opportunity for RDT to assume responsibility for facilitation of agency or program specific transportation
- + Eligibility and Certification
 - eligibility based on functional disability for use of conventional transit system; existing clients would be grand-fathered
 - adopt a universal application form
- + Specialized Transit Governance, Operations and Service Delivery
 - RDT assumes responsibility for administration of specialized transportation
 - Incorporate the use of CAB fleet in a dual-purpose mode providing public transit to general public, elderly and disability community
- + Ancillary Demand Management
 - encourage CAB registrants to use transit services by modifying free fare policy and provide for driver training

Technology Plan

- the City shall procure specialized transit scheduling, dispatch and data management software

A more comprehensive look at the recommended approaches, strategies, and implementation plans detailed in the **City of Red Deer Transit/Special Transportation Study** can be found by accessing the document on the following web site: <http://www.city.red-deer.ab.ca/Keeping+You+Informed/Projects+and+Initiatives/Transit+and+Special+Transportation+Study.htm>

For further information, please contact:

City of Red Deer, Transit

Phone: (403) 342-8225

Email: transit@reddeer.ca

Web Site: www.city.red-deer.ab.ca

Release of the Code of Practice Removing Communication Barriers for Travelers with Disabilities

The Canadian Transportation Agency (Agency) is a quasi-judicial administrative tribunal of the federal government. The Agency has a responsibility for ensuring that persons with disabilities obtain access to the federal transportation network by eliminating undue obstacles. Developing and administering accessibility standards is one of the many ways in which the Agency is working towards its goal of accessible transportation in Canada.

On June 3, 2004, the Agency introduced the **Code of Practice Removing Communication Barriers for Travellers with Disabilities**. The Communications Code is designed to make it easier for persons with disabilities to travel. The Code establishes communication practices that help to eliminate barriers in the federal transportation network, and applies to carriers and terminal operators under federal jurisdiction.

To assist transportation service providers in implementing the provisions of this Code, the Agency has also prepared the **Guide to Removing Communication Barriers for Travelers with Disabilities**. This Guide provides the context and rationale for the provisions of the Code, technical and community resource contacts, as well as examples of best practices. The Guide was developed as a practical information resource and is not intended to restrict or specify any

operational decisions to be taken by transportation service providers in the implementation of this Code.

For further information, a copy of the **Code of Practice Removing Communication Barriers for Travelers with Disabilities** and the **Guide to Removing Communication Barriers for Travelers with Disabilities**, please contact:

Pat Weir, Accessible Transportation Directorate
Canadian Transportation Agency
15 Eddy Street
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0N9
Phone: (819) 997-6828
TTY: (819) 953-9705 / (800) 669-5575
Toll Free: (888) 222-2592
Fax: (819) 953-6019
E-mail: pat.weir@cta-otc.gc.ca
Web Site: www.cta.gc.ca/access/codes/index_e.html

News from Calgary – Access Calgary



In true Canadian fashion - celebrating independence, freedom and the right of accessibility - the City of Calgary offers its citizens with disabilities the opportunity to partake fully in the lifestyle that Calgary provides. Calgarians with disabilities have access to an integrated specialized transit service.

In 2001, after consultation with vested stakeholders, The City of Calgary launched a pilot project called 'Access Calgary'. The mandate of this project was to create an integrated brokerage style model of specialized transportation services. Under the umbrella of Access Calgary, customer eligibility, bookings, scheduling, dispatch and customer service was centralized. In August 2003 Handi-Bus transferred 27 staff to Access Calgary, a department of Calgary Transit. Handi-Bus, together with taxi companies, fulfills the role of service provider(s) to Access Calgary. The City is pleased to have Associated Cabs continue providing accessible taxi service, as we look to future expansion of this service to meet the needs of customers. Overall, with the establishment of Access Calgary, this shift in

operations has eliminated some duplication while maximizing resources to provide a coordinated shared ride, door-to-door service.

In response to feedback from various open forums held in the community over the past year, Handi-Bus is currently investigating the possibility of offering air-ride suspension on our fleet vehicles. In addition, we are exploring the installation of mobile data terminals on our fleet vehicles, taking the lead from our friends at Edmonton DATS!

This past summer, 24 students attended a summer travel training camp with Access Calgary. Each group participated in four, half-day sessions to teach them how to use regular Calgary Transit buses and C-Trains. Sessions were held at City Hall School in the Municipal Building. Students learned how to plan a trip, purchase tickets, components of the vehicles, call Customer Service and use Teleride (an automated telephone information system that provides departure times of buses from a stop or general information) and the rules of the road. Students had the opportunity to meet a bus driver, talk about Protective Services and take several practice trips on both bus and C-train. The camp was co-sponsored by Access Calgary, Calgary Board of Education and Calgary Catholic School District. All parties involved understand the benefit of providing travel training to children at an early age. Using regular transit services opens up an array of travel options. Access Calgary looks forward to doing it again next year.

Access Calgary and Handi-Bus, together with other service providers look forward to continuing to deliver these vital services to Calgarians – making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities and their families. In December 2003 Handi-Bus launched the new format of our newsletter '**Chapters**' to rave reviews. It is a vital communication tool linking Handi-Bus to our customers and the community.

For further information on Access Calgary and Handi-bus service in Calgary please contact:

Calgary Handi-Bus
Lorraine McElwain
Manager Community Relations
Phone: (403) 276-8028 ext. 223
Email: lmcelwain@calgaryhandibus.com

Did you know . . .



Vancouver Airport Wins New Hansen Prize

Vancouver International Airport is recognized as one of the most accessible facilities in the world and was one of the first recipients of the Hansen Prize. Rick Hansen, President and CEO of the Man in Motion Foundation, recently announced the first recipients of the Rick Hansen Accessibility Awards. The prize, which honours facilities and communities that improve the quality of life for people with mobility limitations, is designed to spur the efforts of architects, community planners, politicians and corporations. It is expected the program will grow over the years and be presented annually at Rick Hansen Wheels in Motion events across Canada. For further information on the Man in Motion Foundation or the Accessibility Awards, please follow this link at <http://www.rickhansen.com/index.htm>.

The Vancouver International Airport Authority is committed to providing fully accessible facilities to persons with disabilities and in 1980 initiated the Airport Barrier Free Program. The International Terminal was built with this program in mind and has many accessibility features for persons with disabilities. The Domestic Terminal is also being renovated to contain many of the new barrier free enhancements. Information on barrier free services can be accessed at <http://www.yvr.ca/guide/around/access.asp>.

For further information, please contact:

Vancouver International Airport
P.O. Box 23750 Airport Postal Outlet
Richmond, B.C. V7B 1Y7

General inquiries line: (604) 207-7077
TTY: (604) 207-7070
Web Site: www.yvr.ca

US 2002 National Transportation Availability and Use Survey

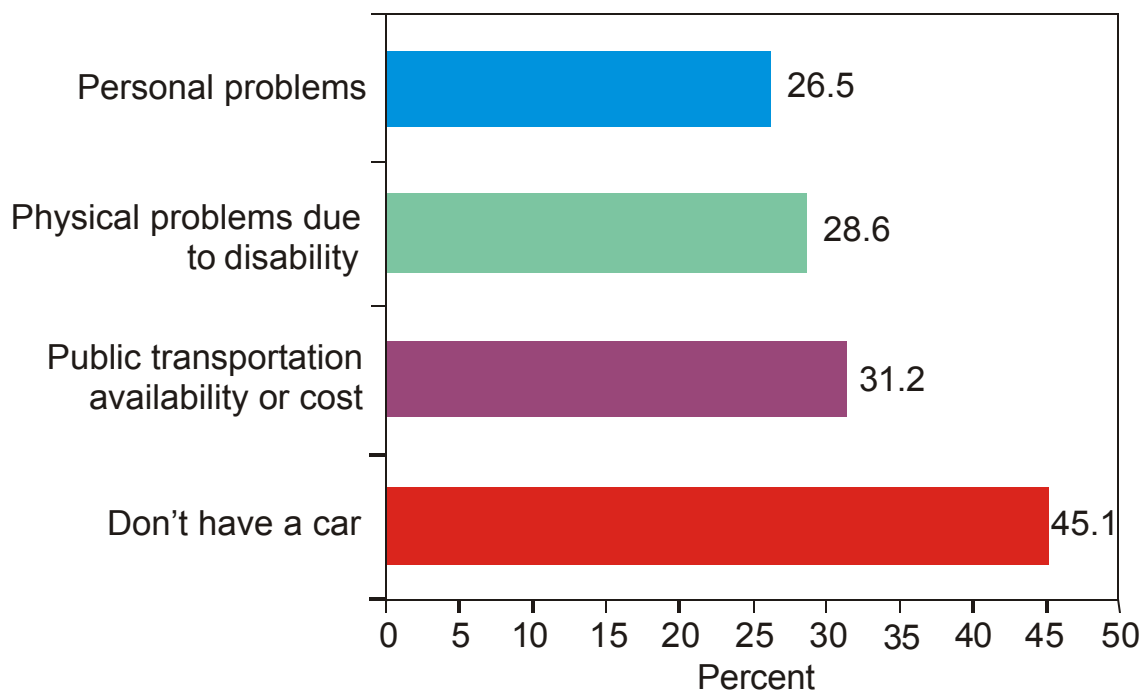
The 2002 National Transportation Availability and Use Survey, released in 2003, offers new information about the transportation needs and habits of the 53 million Americans with disabilities, and compares and contrasts them with individuals who do not have disabilities.

Report Highlights:

How people get around affects every aspect of their lives. A new Bureau of Transportation Statistics survey found that:

- ✚ Nationally, almost 15 million people in the US have difficulty getting the transportation they need. Of these, about 6 million, or 40%, are people with disabilities;
- ✚ More than 3.5 million people in the US never leave their homes. Of these, 1.9 million, or 54%, are people with disabilities; and
- ✚ About 560,000 persons with disabilities indicate they never leave home because of transportation difficulties.

Reasons Expressed by Persons with Disabilities for Never Leaving Home*



*Percent of total people who said they never leave home due to problems getting transportation they need (N = 560,823). An individual may have stated more than one reason.

Visit the Bureau of Transportation Statistics website for the Report “Freedom to Travel” at: [http://www.bts.gov/publications/freedom to travel/](http://www.bts.gov/publications/freedom%20to%20travel/) and the Brief and Survey results at: http://www.bts.gov/omnibus_surveys/targeted_survey/2002_national_transportation_availability_and_use_survey/

For further information, please contact:

Sharon Durant, Survey Statistician
U.S. Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Statistics
Office of Advanced Studies
400 7th Street SW, Suite 3430
Washington, DC 20590
Phone: (202) 366-0649
Fax: (202) 493-0568
Email: Sharon.Durant@bts.gov

Lions Foundation of Canada, Dog Guides



For many Canadians living with disabilities, dog guides are a central part of their lives. Dog guide companions offer increased mobility and most importantly, the freedom to be more independent.



Lions Foundation of Canada is the only Dog Guide School of its kind in North America. Contrary to popular belief, dog guides work with handlers for a variety of different reasons. For example, at Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, dogs are trained for one of three programs: Canine Vision Canada offers dog guides to people who are blind or visually impaired, Special Skills Dogs of Canada trains dogs for people living with physical or medical disabilities and Hearing Ear Dogs of Canada provides dogs to people who are hard of hearing. All programs are offered at no charge to the client, but future care and maintenance become the responsibility of the dog guide recipient.



Training programs are both generic, to meet the general needs of clients, but are also specific to the needs of the individual client to whom the dog guide is assigned. In the final stage of training the

client and the dog train and live together at the Oakville training facility for up to 26 days to ensure bonding and a team approach to work and on-going care.



While some people might be surprised to learn that dog guides come in many different breeds such as Labrador Retrievers, Standard or Miniature Poodles and Border Terriers, it is important to remember that all dog guides are working dogs while in harness or uniform and they are not to be petted or distracted by the public.

Although there is no national governing body to regulate the use of harnesses, organizations like Lions Foundation of Canada insist that all dog guides wear their harness while in public to identify themselves as working dogs. The types of harnesses, colours and styles are decided upon by different organizations.



In addition to the harness, Lions Foundation of Canada also supplies graduates with identification, which they must have with them at all times. Clients will often show their identification in places such as the bus, or a restaurant to help people understand that they have been partnered with their dog guide and the public should consider them a team.

For further information, please contact:

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides
Joanna Sharp, Coordinator, Marketing and Communications
152 Wilson Street, PO Box 907
Oakville, ON L6J 5E8
Phone: 905-842-2891 ext 238
Toll free: 800-768-3030 ext 238
Fax: 905-842-3373
Email: jsharp@dogguides.com
Web Site: www.dogguides.com

Did you know . . .

United Kingdom Community Transport Association

In the United Kingdom (UK), there are over 100,000 minibuses serving over 10 million passengers annually, being operated by voluntary and community groups, schools, colleges and Local Authorities, or to provide door-to-door transport for people unable to use other public transport. This door-to-door transport is not limited to minibuses as there are many programs throughout the UK where volunteers will use their own cars to provide transport for individuals.

Overcoming social exclusion is at the heart of what community transport has always been about. The UK's Community Transport Association (CTA) is committed to helping its members achieve this objective in their areas both in terms of the direct support it can offer such as training and developmental support, but also by lobbying government and other important agencies. Most recently, for example, the CTA has been working very closely with the government's Social Exclusion Unit over their transport study, stressing the importance of supporting local, community-based initiatives in transport provision.

The UK CTA web site contains resources on Rural Bus Design, Training Rural Transport Operators and access to other free publications as well.

For further information, please contact:

UK Community Transport Association

Web Site: <http://www.communitytransport.com/>

Click on the "advice" link, then "advice leaflets".



Transit Pass Pilot Project for AISH Recipients

The Edmonton Transit System (ETS), in cooperation with Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE), is providing subsidized ETS adult monthly passes to over 2,400 Edmonton area Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH) recipients who enrolled in the one-year pilot project in May of this year.

Today, participants in the pilot project can buy an ETS monthly pass for \$29, a reduction from the regular fee of \$58. The pilot project runs from July 2004 through to June 2005, and is designed to encourage persons with disabilities to try using the regular transit system and its many accessible features. The project also provides participants with the opportunity to take part in activities that would normally be inaccessible to them.

AHRE looks for innovative ways to work with our community partners to assist those most in need. For this pilot project, “AHRE is the link between the City of Edmonton and AISH recipients,” says Eileen Poole, Site Manager. “As a result, we maintain the confidentiality by collecting the money and distributing the transit passes to Albertans who receive AISH benefits.”

Evaluations will be conducted throughout the pilot project to determine its effectiveness, and to evaluate the feasibility of offering such a program as part of ETS regular services and programs.

The project was funded by a one-time grant by Edmonton City Council.

For more information, please contact:

DATS, c/o ETS

Phone: (780) 496-4570







Email: dats@edmonton.ca

Web Site: www.takeETS.com

Did you know . . .

United States Easter Seals Project ACTION

Easter Seals Project ACTION is in the process of producing a brochure entitled **Transit Operator Pocket Guide**. It will cover issues under the following headings:

-  General Guidelines for Serving Customers with Disabilities
-  Serving Customers who use Mobility Devices
-  Serving Customers who use Service Animals
-  Pre-trip Accessibility Inspection
-  Priority Seating
-  Calling Out Stops

Of concern to the disability community is that the brochure is advising transit drivers they may ask if the animal being brought on-board the bus is a service animal and what tasks the animal has been trained to perform. Drivers cannot require special ID cards for the service animal or ask about the customer's disability. The US Justice Department upheld its decision that questions could be asked about training as it distinguishes between service animals and pets.

Resource material, including personnel training can be found on the Easter Seals Project ACTION web site. This includes materials which offer information for transit agencies who aim to improve disability awareness training for their employees to better serve individuals with disabilities.

For further information, please contact:

Easter Seals National Headquarters
230 West Monroe Street, Suite 1800
Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: (312) 726-6200

TTY: (312) 726-4258

Toll Free: (800) 221-6827

Fax: (312) 726-1494

Web Site: [http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?
pagename=ntl_mobility_project_ACTION](http://www.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=ntl_mobility_project_ACTION)

Accessible Taxis in Ottawa

In the City of Ottawa, people with disabilities now have more transportation options to get around the city. Aside from conventional transit and ParaTranspo (http://www.octranspo.com/acc_menu.htm), people with disabilities in Ottawa can now contact specific taxi companies to reserve a wheelchair accessible taxicab. In 2003, 13 side-loading accessible taxicabs and six London Black Cabs were introduced in the City. Another six accessible vehicles will be made available in 2004.

Accessible taxi cabs can operate throughout the city, regardless of existing taxi service zones. As well, local taxi companies are required to give people with disabilities priority for this service. Drivers for these accessible taxi cabs have completed a training program to sensitize them to the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and to deal with their safe transportation.

For further information, please contact:

General Manager's Office
Corporate Services Department
Ottawa City Hall
110 Laurier Ave. West
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 1J1
Phone: (613) 580-2400
TTY: (613) 580-2401
Fax: (613) 560-6082
E-mail: barrierfree@ottawa.ca

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Editorial Board

Sara Wong,
Senior Policy Advisor,
Passenger Transportation,
Policy and Planning,
Tel. (780) 427-9781,
Fax (780) 422-1070, or
E-mail sara.wong@gov.ab.ca

Trent Bancarz,
Editor,
Communications,
Tel. (780) 427-0623
Fax (780) 466-3166, or
E-mail trent.bancarz@gov.ab.ca

Gerry James,
Graphics and Layout,
Communications,
Tel. (780) 422-0331
Fax (780) 466-3166, or
E-mail gerry.james@gov.ab.ca

