
News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TRANSIT SERVICE IS ON ITS WAY TO RIEL BUSINESS PARK

City of St. Albert Transit (StAT) will expand its service to include a new route carrying passengers into Riel Business Park. Starting Monday, April 30th, Route A21 will provide weekday peak hour service to meet the demands of employees working within the business park, offering a convenient, low-cost alternative to personal vehicle use or taxi service.

Plans were underway to launch the new route once the South portion of the business park was constructed; however, information gathered from employers in the existing area encouraged the City to begin service earlier than anticipated.

“Based on the results of a recent survey conducted by the City and the Riel Business Park Association, it appears there is enough demand from employees at local businesses to begin servicing the area now,” explained Dez Liggett, Director of StAT. “Transit contributes to the total economic and social health of a community and, from a business-friendly perspective, we want to be sure that companies are able to attract and retain staff. Part of that is ensuring the public transportation service is in place to get these employees to work.”

The ridership survey, conducted in the summer of 2006, gathered feedback from 18 businesses, representing about 50 per cent of employees working in the park. The results suggested there would be a sufficient number of passengers to meet the service guideline criteria of 10 riders per hour. While the estimations are enough to get things rolling, the route will be subject to evaluation after one year to ensure ridership targets are being achieved.

“The collaborative approach between the City and the Riel Business Park Association was effective in reviewing the needs of businesses, gauging interest from employees and bringing transit service to the park,” said Ivan Mayer, President of the Riel Business Park Association. “With this in place, businesses will be able to promote the service and attract and retain staff members who either require, or choose to use, public transportation.”

The new route will originate at the Village Transit Station, pass through downtown St. Albert, then travel up and down the entire length of Riel Drive, using Renault Crescent as the turnaround point. The weekday peak hour service will run every 30-minutes between 6:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., as well as between 2:45 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. While this covers transportation for people working the day shifts in the business park, the City will meet evening transportation needs through the West Dial-a-Bus Service (699-4422).

With the spring schedule change taking place at the end of April, StAT is further expanding service to provide better opportunities for reverse commuters travelling from Edmonton to St. Albert.

“We understand that public transportation can be a challenge for people who work in St. Albert, but live in Edmonton,” says Liggett. “The buses leaving Edmonton in the morning aren’t on route early enough to meet a 7 a.m. start time at St. Albert businesses or healthcare facilities, and this upgraded service will help in resolving the issue.”

Effective April 30th, StAT will provide service from downtown Edmonton and from Westmount, with buses arriving at the Village Station in St. Albert by 6:35 a.m. This will offer adequate time to connect with the first bus into Riel Business Park and to other buses destined for various employment locations throughout St. Albert, including Campbell Business Park and various healthcare facilities.

Both the new Riel Business Park route and the early transit service from Edmonton to St. Albert will help StAT to increase ridership and work toward meeting greenhouse gas reduction goals in the City.

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