Transit resumes front-door boarding and front-of-bus fare collection

As the City’s municipal relaunch strategy continues in alignment with the provincial relaunch and public health guidelines, Red Deer Transit will resume passenger boarding through the front doors of buses. Front-of-bus fare collection will also resume, through pre-loaded MyRide cards and cash fares.

1. Why is front door boarding resuming?
   As The City continues through stage 2 of the provincial relaunch strategy, Red Deer Transit is resuming passenger boarding through the front doors of buses starting July 2, 2020 to improve customer service and make it easier for passengers to pay their fare when they enter the bus. Numerous safety measures will remain in place to ensure the health and safety of Transit passengers and staff and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

2. Why was rear door boarding implemented?
   As part of The City’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic in April, conventional transit buses changed to rear door-only boarding to ensure physical distancing among passengers and improve safety for drivers by restricting passengers from walking or standing at the front of the bus. Initially, the change applied to able-bodied passengers only, and then expanded to include those who use wheelchairs or have mobility challenges. These passengers were permitted to temporarily book their essential trips on accessible Action Buses while the front doors and hydraulic lifts were not accessible.

3. What about passengers who require the hydraulic lift?
   Passengers who require the use of the hydraulic lift at the front of the bus to board and exit, are now able to resume using conventional transit service. The hydraulic lifts on all conventional buses will be back in service beginning July 2. These passengers will no longer be eligible to book their trips on Action Bus without being a registered user.

4. Are fares being charged again?
   While fares for transit service remained in effect during the rear-boarding phase, we asked passengers to use the honour system and refill their MyRide cards electronically. Beginning July 2, fare boxes and card scanners will once again be accessible and passengers will be required to pay their fare upon boarding the bus. For information on fares and where to purchase or refill your MyRide card, visit www.reddeer.ca/transit.

5. What safety measures is Red Deer Transit taking amidst COVID-19?
   Several safeguards have been put in place, both inside buses and at terminals/shelters, to prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include:
   - Additional cleaning/disinfectoring of buses and terminals
   - Every second seat blocked off to ensure physical distancing
   - Drivers wearing face masks/shields as required
   - Two-passenger maximum on Action Bus trips

   Additionally, there are several precautions passengers can take to keep themselves and their fellow riders safe:
   - Wash or use hand sanitizer to clean hands often
• Wear a face mask when using public transit (Alberta Health recommendation)
• Avoid touching your face, mouth and eyes before thoroughly washing hands
• Do not get on the bus or attend any transit terminal or shelter if you’re feeling ill or experiencing any possible COVID-19 symptoms.

6. **When will extended transit hours resume?**
   Unfortunately, we don’t know exactly when we will revert to our regular operating hours. We are monitoring ridership on a daily basis and look forward to adjusting service levels where required, and as soon as it is safe to do so. Red Deer Transit continues to adhere to provincial health orders to ensure the safety of riders and staff.

7. **What are the hours of Customer Service at Sorenson Station?**
   Transit Customer Service will remain open 8 a.m. until 4:30, and will close from 12 until 1 p.m. Social distancing protocols are in place, please be prepared for possible wait times. As an alternative, existing transit passes can be reloaded at Bishop’s Rexall pharmacy and Petro Canada South.

8. **What is priority booking for Action Bus patrons?**
   Transit has also added a priority booking system that will assist Action Bus patrons in booking essential trips before non-essential type trips are booked in. The three-day booking window for non-essential trips will allow for more flexibility in booking short notice trips.

   Starting July 6, clients will have the ability to book their medical, work, and educational trips up to seven days ahead; all other trips will be able to be booked up to three days ahead.

9. **How will you ensure physical distancing when students return to school?**
   Red Deer Transit continues to follow all provincial health orders and guidelines. We are waiting for further direction from the Province to understand what guidelines will remain in place come September. The Province has outlined three possible scenarios for a return to school in the fall, and each will have different impacts on municipal transit services. We will continue to work with AHS and our local school boards to ensure we can continue to provide transit service for students while maintaining and adhering to all provincial health orders and guidelines. We will provide updates when new information is available.