

Bus Riders of Saskatoon
Meeting with City of Saskatoon Utility Services Department

April 15, 2015

4:00pm - 5:00pm

301 - 24th Street West, Saskatoon

Bus Riders of Saskatoon Representatives: Sarina, Mandy, Dianne

City of Saskatoon Representatives: Trevor Bell (Interim Assistant Director Saskatoon Transit), Alysha Hille (Marketing Manager, Saskatoon Transit), Calvin McPhail (Operations Superintendent, Saskatoon Transit) and Jason Wiebe (Operations Superintend, Saskatoon Transit)

AGENDA

1. Introductions

2. Questions and Discussions

Question: Could you please provide an update in regards to the closure of the University Bridge and its effect on transit? In addition, how does this affect routes that bypass the downtown terminal, such as Route 13?

- Alysha/Chelsea to provide promotional material “Your bridge to a hassle free commute” on the bridge closure for Bus Riders of Saskatoon to share
- Weekdays will have regular service, not shuttles (i.e. buses will continue as usual)
- Weekends will have a shuttle service (to help with when bridge has to be fully closed)
 - Even though bridge will not be closed all weekends - the shuttle will run every weekend for consistency sake
 - In order to use just one lane, there will be timed traffic signals at both ends
 - The shuttle will only serve north side of 25th street (to get on and off) – not south side
 - Route 3 and 17 will still serve 25th Street still during full closures
 - Small adjustments to some schedules (mainly on weekends)
 - **i.e. make sure to check your schedules on weekends for adjustments**
 - Google and Trip Planner and probably TransitApp will have updated route adjustments (actually about 20 apps have Saskatoon’s Transit info and they will be given all get this data but it is up to them to add it to their systems)

- All West Side routes terminate at Downtown terminal; East Side routes terminate at University terminal
- Shuttle every 15 minutes for the whole day and evening (for the duration of the whole service)
- Anything that does not use University Bridge will continue as normal (i.e. Route 13)
- Anything that uses University Bridge during the week will continue as normal
- Bridge detour map will be in effect when concrete needs to be poured
- One side will be open for pedestrian/cyclists access for the entire project (they will alternate which side)
- Early next week Transit will have this information on their website saskatoontransit.ca/bridge (someone from Communications will contact us when it is live). This link will be confirmed then.

Question: Knowing that route changes take place July 1, what is the process to prepare and plan for these changes? Would it be possible for Bus Riders of Saskatoon to participate or comment on proposed changes prior to their July 1 implementation? As part of this, would it be possible for a representative of the group to ride along with a Saskatoon Transit employee when driving to determine these new routes? Is there any opportunity for active participation of this kind?

- No expected route changes this year
- Route 17 and Route 28 will be fully implemented, as they are only partial routes now because certain roads were not built yet
 - Roads were not finished in new neighbourhoods but now they will be completed
 - Stonebridge (17)
 - Evergreen (28) – local service to connect with the Darts on Berini Drive and 115th Street.
 - i.e. will not go to the University Terminal any more but connect to the Dart service
- Schedule adjustments are different than route changes (i.e. consistently late buses needing adjustment)
 - Usually buses known for being consistently late (e.g. Route 2 and Route 7) are usually only late a few times over the day but not over the whole route
 - Saskatoon Transit only adds time to routes if there is a critical issue (because time has to be added at 15 minutes intervals)
 - E.g. #2 negatively affected last year because of construction. This is not a perpetual interruption though
 - 15 minutes adjustments would go through July 1 council meetings but shuffle time points along route would be done internally and not on July 1 (usually make the changes when university starts or finishes – usually try not to make changes during winter)
 - How is the public made aware of these changes?

- Engagement process (town halls) to present all the changes. Management team also presented the changes. Q&A period. Online and in person surveys (people sent to terminals). Proposals were changed to reflect feedback heard. Communications Plan to be completed upon Council Approval. In the future Bus Riders would be consulted as a stakeholder.

What are the factors for Saskatoon Transit in determining how feedback is used? Bus Riders of Saskatoon is interested to know what happens to the information provided at our meetings? Is there a process that these suggestions and discussions get advanced within the City, or do they remain internally with Saskatoon Transit? What is the outcome of providing feedback during these meetings?

- No formal process
- Saskatoon Transit makes sure the decisions makers are at the table
- All managers take the feedback with them and see where it fits in their work plan
 - E.g. strollers discussion got taken back to appropriate supervisor
 - Helps them know when to provide more training to staff based on some troubles that people have
 - Hearing first hand during these meetings is beneficial for management/Saskatoon Transit

What are the steps being taken to beautify transit terminals, such as the downtown bus mall? (e.g. adding ash trays).

- Transit slow moving ship – change does not happen quickly
- Planters will be installed this year (these temporary planters – similar to the rest of downtown - to be installed in early May)
- Art installation will go in this summer. Worked with Steve Thompson, Riversdale local artist. Vinyl wraps to go on shelters (the ones you see on buses). Weather has to be above zero to install. It will be all season. Tender needs to be coordinated for installation before it can be installed.
 - City Hall bus shelter on 3rd Avenue will be the first site for installation. It will be up for a month before the other ones go up. To see how it weathers and works against vandalism.
- Very exciting projects to beautify Downtown’s Terminal.

In response to Councillor Loewen’s request for a report on what it would cost to have a perfect running transit system, are factors such as snow clearing and additional waste receptacles and shelters considered in this cost?

- Currently working on fleet strategy report – hoping to go to the SPC on Transportation in June
 - Preparing state of affairs now of fleet, compared to national average and what it would cost to get Saskatoon Transit to national average
 - **To follow up next time with Trevor**

3. Additional Items

Chelsea Lanning (Transit Planning Engineer – Saskatoon Transit part time/Long Range Planning part time) will be the new contact between Bus Riders of Saskatoon and Saskatoon Transit. **Alysha will put Sarina and Chelsea in touch.**

4. Discussion from Saskatoon Transit

Saskatoon Transit won a Global Award – Gold Quill – Excellence Award for the route changes from last year for their communications and engagement work. Congrats!

Ten new busses coming soon

- They are being inspected in Montreal next week
- Then upon shipping they will be retrofitted with ITS gear and Saskatchewan certification
- They will retire ten old buses
 - Question: Does Saskatoon Transit have any information on the Greenhouse Gas emissions of these new buses relative to the older ones?
 - Matt Regier (Environment and Corporate Initiatives) would know about the GHG emissions of older buses versus new buses

Next meeting Wednesday, May 13, 2015

5. Adjournment