

City of Saskatoon – Saskatoon Transit and Bus Riders of Saskatoon Meeting
September 16, 2015

4:00pm - 5:00pm
301 24th Street West

City of Saskatoon: Jim McDonald (Director of Saskatoon Transit), Chelsea Lanning (Infrastructure Engineer-in-Training – Long Range Planning), Carla Blumers (Director of Communications), Colin Stinson (Marketing Consultant)

Bus Riders of Saskatoon: Cameron, Marianne, Sarina

AGENDA

1. Introductions

2. Request an update on the five-year strategy and communications plan for Saskatoon Transit

- Report was released Monday, September 14, 2015
- Next week, an initial Goodwill campaign will be launched
- Colin to help develop the communications campaign
- In terms of timelines for reaching this plan:
 - internal items are based on, and limited to budget approvals (e.g. new staff, maybe 2017)
 - Things such as the new garage, would start now
 - The move to the garage will be a difference for the staff and workforce but not a change for riders
 - Linus also working on this
 - Questions being asked internally: What does the Growth Plan mean? What happens when you get to the street level?
 - Transit just started this preparation
- Hoping to roll this plan out in March
 - Growth Plan goes to Council in March. It includes:
 - Core Bridges
 - Transit Plan
 - Corridor Growth
- Does Bus Riders of Saskatoon have a role in this plan?
 - Transit related engagement
 - Saskatoon Transit may ask for volunteers
 - Saskatoon Transit may run by concepts
 - Help define what the users actually want to have and what makes a difference for people
 - Saskatoon Transit trying to think from the customer first and work their way up

- From a communications perspective - Engagement plans could be run through BRS.
 - Running plans through the group to see if anything was missed or could be added.
- It is ideal for the City to get as much feedback as possible in their consultations and information sessions
- BRS can bring a fresh perspective
- The week before reading week, Saskatoon Transit is working with U of S to bring a guest speaker to discuss frequency versus coverage

3. Questions and Discussions

- i. What are the general processes in place for people who are cold or potentially to the point of hypothermia? What are the processes in place to prevent this?
 - Looking to bring a process found in Edmonton to Saskatoon. It is an Extreme Cold Protocol. This is only being looked at right now.
 - At below minus 40, certain processes could be put in place such things as having express busses stop at every stop rather than just the express routes
 - It is not an emergency shelter service. Is the shelter because people are waiting or because they do not have a place to go?
 - Saskatoon Transit is trying to get the information out there so people can plan for the buses (e.g. if they are running late, see E-Go)
 - Part of the solution is dressing appropriately
 - The cold weather is also part of the reason that bus malls are close to shopping malls
 - Bus Riders Question: What about heaters in some shelters? Is that still being considered?
 - This is discussed as part of the comfort options in the Growth Plan
 - Not necessarily funded in the short term
 - Could almost be useless in the current shelters (e.g. heat loss)
 - It would be interesting to see how this goes in Regina. It is believed they have two heated shelters.
 - Trade off between costs and comfort but also GHG emissions. The frequency of the service is also a consideration.
 - This is an ongoing issue.
- ii. There was a Facebook comment in regards to a security concern on the bus. There was one gentleman who was touching women inappropriately and it seemed that the police were aware but perhaps not all transit operators. In lieu of this situation, we are wondering how are security concerns communicated through to operators and those working in Saskatoon Transit?

- We cannot release data like this on a wall due to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation. Information on people banned from transit is tough to disseminate internally.
- The cameras on the bus are there for security of drivers and passengers
- The person in this instance was dealt with fast
- Out of consideration of the person assaulted, Saskatoon Transit also did not want to broadcast this information
- It is difficult for the driver to deal with banning someone from the bus from a security perspective
 - The bus drivers are operators, not bouncers
 - They cannot get personally involved because then they are not doing what they are supposed to
- Bus Riders Question: How quickly could the police respond if they were needed for an on-bus issue?
 - This is difficult to answer because buses can be anywhere.
 - No firm response possible. Saskatoon Transit hopes it would be quick but that is more of a police response time question.
- Bus Riders Question: What are the protocols for a driver in a situation?
 - Main focus of the employees is to drive the bus (so they should not be leaving their seat)
 - If there is an issue, they should call the supervisor
 - The supervisor will make a call on what to do (while considering the operator and passenger safety as a priority) and whether or not the police should be called.
 - Operators are not expected, or paid to be put in harms way.

iii. General things

- The City is trying to talk to the TransitApp people about maybe working in some sort of partnership. Maybe an open data sharing partnership. They are trying to find out the logistics of getting this data to TransitApp.
- The City's IT Department is on the case for this one.
- It is important to note that the City did not issue an app, but rather a web application which is mobile friendly.

4. Any Additional Items

Transit on Tap

- Colin to be setting this up
- BRS had great feedback and are interested in partnering
 - BRS would still get to do it in our advocacy role
 - Saskatoon Transit wants people to come and learn and hear what riders have to say
 - BRS do not have to support everything said at these events but are there to share information and as a learning opportunity
- The City will be piloting it to start to see what the response is
- What might be an accessible location for users?

- Anywhere close to downtown as you would typically only need to take one bus
 - Maybe Honeybun, Mulberry's, the Woods Alehouse
- Maybe between 5:30pm/6pm as you could get there on time because busses are still running more frequently (i.e. start before 7pm)

5. Adjournment

Next meeting: October 14, 2015