

City of Saskatoon – Standing Committee on Transportation – January 12, 2015

Presentation by Bus Riders of Saskatoon – Re: Management Response to Letter from University of Saskatchewan School of Environment and Sustainability

Good morning,

City Councillors and members of city administration:

My name is Robert and I am here to speak on behalf of Bus Riders of Saskatoon. I must say, we are somewhat disappointed in the contents of the report. We are pleased that the Growing Forward Shaping Saskatoon planning initiative does focus on improving public transit as a key area for action in the future. We are concerned however that the response to so many of the recommendations related to public transit is only that they will be addressed by Growing Forward. We feel it is the responsibility of the Standing Committee on Transportation and on City Council as a whole to champion improved transit right now.

Two Recommendations put forward in the letter were not addressed:

1) Lead by example: We encourage all Councillors and those advising you on transit matters to ensure that you have personal experience using the transit system. We feel you need to experience the challenges faced by Bus Riders – getting route and schedule information, exploring fare options, catching the bus, riding on the vehicle itself, and completing transfers. Councillors make decisions for the whole city. You need to have first hand knowledge not only of the challenges faced by the citizens in your ward, but in other parts of the City as well. We know from your comments that some of you have this experience but we aren't sure that all of you have.

2) Conduct a market analysis to determine at what cost people will change their transportation choices: If we are going to increase ridership, the Saskatoon Transportation System needs to attract new riders. It should be realized that all of those who have to take the bus are already taking the bus. The system needs to attract those who currently choose not to take the bus. We suggest that you undertake this marketing study but enlarge it to capture not only cost, but to

explore and quantify other factors which enter in to people's transportation choices and how these barriers can be eliminated.

A third recommendation is that the City collaborate with and consider input from community organizations that are focused on improving transportation in the city: We appreciate the ongoing relationship Bus Riders of Saskatoon is building with Saskatoon Transit Management. We would like to see the establishment of a formal Transit Advisory Committee with a wider representation to reflect a growing need for public transportation in our growing city.