

City of Saskatoon – Saskatoon Transit and Bus Riders of Saskatoon Meeting  
November 20, 2015

4:00pm - 5:00pm  
301 24<sup>th</sup> Street West

City of Saskatoon: Jim McDonald (Director of Saskatoon Transit), Colin Stinson (Marketing Consultant), Harold Matthies (IT – Saskatoon Transit)  
Bus Riders of Saskatoon: Robert, Mairi and Sarina

## AGENDA

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### 1. Introductions

### 2. Summary of 8<sup>th</sup> Street Comments from BRS

- Overall positive support for an 8<sup>th</sup> Street demonstration for 5-10 minute service
- BRS presented to SPC and Transportation in support
  - An attempt to reinforce to members of Council and Committee that transit is important
- It is looking well to not need new funding to implement this
  - Response: When the rubber actually hits the road, there might be some additional costs
- We realize this proposal will satisfy the bulk of current users but it leaves the weekend, Sunday and Statutory Holiday users in their present state.
  - Response: Can only do so much within the envelope
  - Cannot do that without going back to Council to ask for funding
- Showing it works on 8<sup>th</sup> street will hopefully create a demand for other roads
  - Response: 8<sup>th</sup> street as a demonstration is great because it does not have trains
- It does not seem to increase frequency for the further-east residential areas (namely the "lake-" neighborhoods).
  - Response: Some of the routing will change in the eastern neighbourhoods (lake- neighbourhoods)
  - Response: Could cut up to 15 minutes off a trip from the out skirts of town
    - You will need to know which bus to get on from downtown, because the frequent bus turns into local service
    - The loops in the local neighbourhoods should be shorter
    - The labeling and communication will be key in this
- See Appendix A for additional information

### 3. Questions and Discussions

- i. What were some of the successes from the Smile Campaign? Could you send an update about that?

- Colin sent a summary – See Appendix B
- ii. Is there any follow up information on a data agreement between Saskatoon Transit and third party app developers (i.e. TransitApp)?
- Busses leave the terminal perpetually late.
    - This is just a general observation at this point. We notice they have not fixed this.
  - Bus Riders are use TransitApp or Google Maps more. As a general observation from BRS, people are not using Trip Planner.
    - Online Trip Planner still not intuitive. Coming from a seniors perspective, there are many people who will not use the site.
    - Bus Riders use TransitApp pretty reliably. Not a perfect solution though.
  - Follow up on how the data agreement is going with TransitApp.
    - All PSAs from Saskatoon Transit recommend using TransitApp
  - Hoping in the new year to be in the position to get data to public
    - Different agreements might need to be reached between for profit and non-profit organizations in terms of sharing data
    - Big appetite to get this data to developers
  - This will be key to have role out with the 8<sup>th</sup> street frequency network
  - Saskatoon Transit is not happy with the app specifically
    - Not happy with the vendor
- iii. Are there any new changes coming in the winter months? (i.e. technically, route planning)
- No big changes
  - Maybe an extra bus to be added, with little tweaks
  - Service changes do not happen outside of July
  - Adding extra service at peak hours could be a thing
  - In terms of the stop announcement system, technically speaking:
    - Some locations do not have enough time to pull the bell, hear the announcement, and safely stop
      - There is an audit happening now
      - Where the stop is too close, the announcement will be taken out
      - Saskatoon Transit could take the middle stop call out
      - Eventually there will be an audit to see if those stops are needed
        - Bigger benefits to that
        - Cut down on some of the route times
        - Lots of these stops have been grandfathered in
    - Hoping to incorporate transfer announcements
      - a. E.g. next stop Broadway/12<sup>th</sup> and this is your connection to #1 downtown

- b. Goal is to provide more information and comfort level
- iv. Could Saskatoon Transit provide clarification on their closed door versus open door policy for buses in the winter?
  - Saskatoon Transit will get back to us through email or at December meeting. Mike M. will follow up through Colin.

#### 4. General Comments from Bus Riders of Saskatoon

- i. Bus Riders of Saskatoon has been having discussions on addressing assault, in particular sexual assault on busses. A subcommittee has been formed and we will provide Saskatoon Transit an update on the committee as information/updates are available.
  - Preliminary discussion include the possibility of leading community discussions about sexual assault or a poster campaign
    - Future possibility of partnership
  - Response: Saskatoon Transit is not sure the scope of the problem because they only get what people report to Saskatoon Transit
    - Saskatoon Police Services do not give that information unless they provide it without personal details
    - They do not have 100% of the information of harassment, let alone sexual harassment
    - They are reaching out the Edmonton Transit, which started up a fairly large anti-harassment campaign on the buses
  - Mutual goal is that people feel safe riding on the bus
- ii. Are there any updates on snow clearing at bus stops
  - Saskatoon Transit has been working heavily with Public Works and Transportation in the last two months
  - They are making sure each departments know the timelines
    - .e. if they will be a while to clear the roadways, maybe Saskatoon Transit needs to do something in the meantime
- iii. Exhibition parade
  - It would be great to have a bus in the parade
  - ATU chartered a bus that was taken out of service for Santa Clause Parade
    - Question: What about the Fire Department?
      - They do not have any revenue vehicles. It is a different circumstance.
  - Potential to use the Centennial Bus

#### 5. Any Additional Items

##### Passenger Pledge and Charter

- Saskatoon Transit currently conducting engagement
- Passenger Pledge: survey style
  - Ask people to sign up for questionnaire on Customer service → engagement tab
    - They send out maybe two questionnaires a year

#### Broadway

- There will be construction on Broadway next summer
- The City is replacing all the water mains in the neighbourhood
- This will have an impact on transit
- Saskatoon Transit is looking at alternatives and rerouting
- The contract has not been awarded (January it will be awarded), as such some details are still to be determined
- BRS question: Are those detours on the Saskatoon Transit website?
  - A service alert shows up

Is ten days for transit happening? Saskatoon Transit would like some warning if so, as there is potential for partnership.

#### 6. Adjournment

Next meeting: December 16, 2015 4:00pm – 5:00pm

## **Appendix A - GOODWILL CAMPAIGN SUMMARY**

As you are aware, Saskatoon Transit made an effort to increase its focus on customer service and marketing this fall in order to engage with Transit riders, thank them for using our service, and let them know that customer service is our top priority.

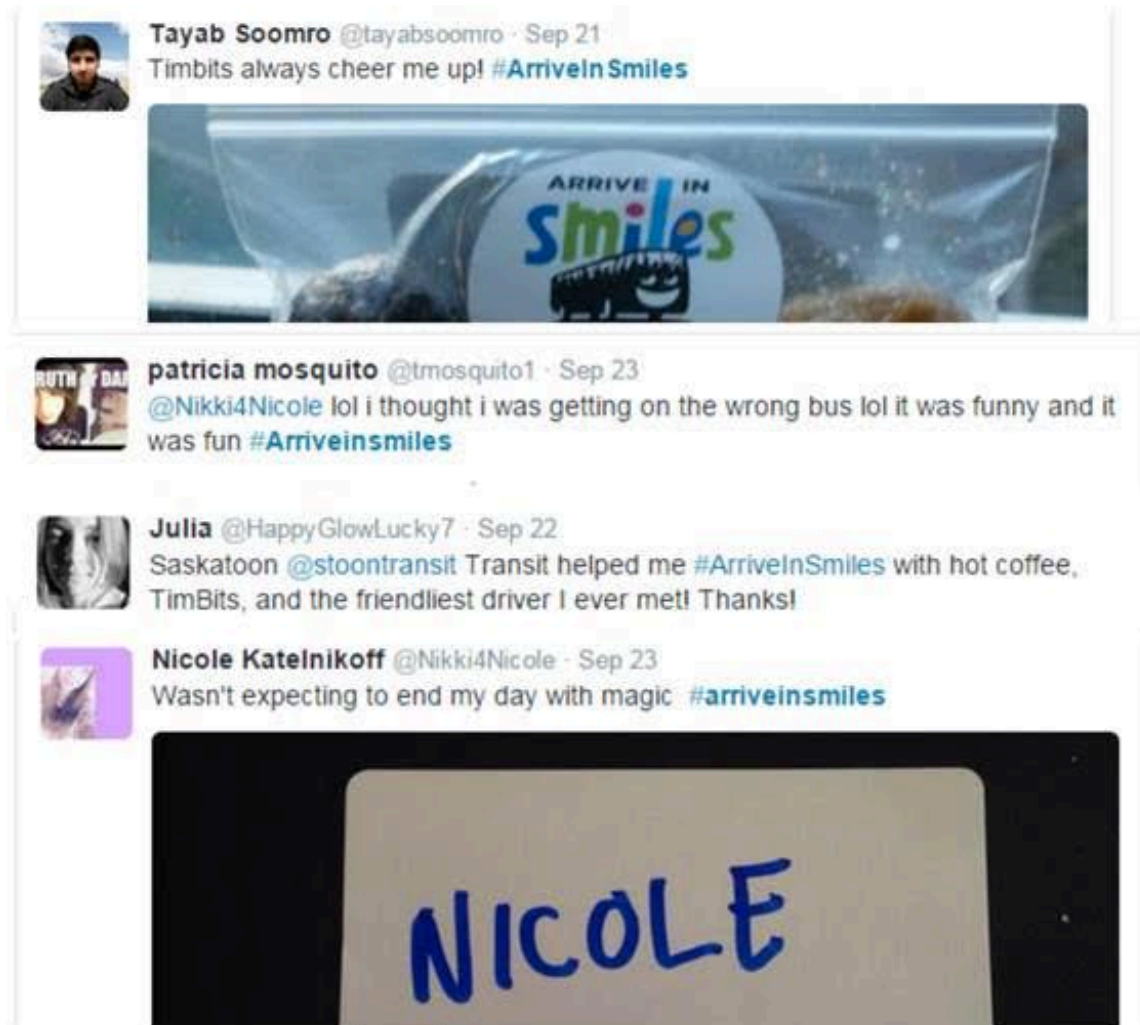
The week of Sept. 21-25 was the Goodwill portion of our campaign, as we helped riders to “Arrive in Smiles”. Each day, between Monday and Friday, a group of Transit ambassadors hosted a special stunt on the bus or at the bus stop: magicians, coffee & donuts, comedy troupe, lemonade & popcorn, and a musical ensemble.

As you can see from some of the attached photos, there were indeed plenty of big smiles.





More than just smiles though, Saskatoon residents reached out through social media to let us know they liked what they saw.



Over the course of the week the Goodwill Campaign gained attention through various social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It is interesting to note that almost all campaign related posts contained the #ArriveInSmiles hashtag, indicating we were effective in reaching our target market and generating awareness around the campaign and Saskatoon Transit.

In terms of media recognition, the campaign was featured in on-air reports twice by CTV and once by Global (not available online). As well we received mentions on radio ; CBC Saskatoon for example referenced underway events twice throughout the week.



TV
RADIO
NEWS
SPORTS
MUSIC
ARTS
LOCAL
MORE
WATCH
LISTEN
LOG IN
SEARCH CBC.ca...

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LIVE
Saskatoon More Streams
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## Saskatoon Transit hands out free Timbits and coffee this morning

City transit thanking riders

CBC News Posted: Sep 21, 2015 6:56 AM CT | Last Updated: Sep 21, 2015 6:56 AM CT

Saskatoon Transit employees will be trying to put a smile on riders' faces all week long. (Chanes Lagaden/CBC)

34 shares

Facebook
Twitter
Reddit
Google
Share
Email

Saskatoon Transit wants you to turn that frown upside down this week.

Starting today, the Smile Squad, a group of transit employees, will roll out a special event on a secret route every day this week.

This morning, the Smile Squad will hand out free coffee and Timbits at Place Riel from 7:45 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. CST.

The initiative is aimed to thank riders for taking the bus.

The Smile Squad will be on the routes until Friday.

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Saskatoon Morning's Pledge To Vote

Pledge to vote in the election and challenge your friends to do the same

Beyond the outward facing elements of the campaign, there was increased staff morale and engagement. The group of eight Transit employees who made up the “Smile Squad” spread their energetic enthusiasm to customers and co-workers alike. Within Transit, numerous employees have already asked when the next event is, and how they can become part of the Smile Squad. This enthusiasm demonstrates that transit staff see the benefit of a customer-focused approach. In the coming weeks and months we will harness this momentum, as we move towards engagement activities related to the Saskatoon Transit Passenger Pledge.



# All Route Changes

