

Minutes for BRS-Transit meeting

Monday, 23 July 2018 @ 3:30-4:40PM

Location: Committee Room B at City Hall

Present: Cory Shrigley, Allison Gray from Transit; Peter Gallén, Robert Clipperton, Jim Wood from BRS.

FOLLOW-UPS

- 1) Update on BRT project in the aftermath of the Governance & Priorities Committee (GPC) meeting on June 20:
 - a. In response to BRS's inquiry what is next in the BRT-project, Transit provided the following responses:
 - i. Scope of work: During the week of July 23rd senior administration will meet council members and BID executives to validate the scope of work planned for the summer and fall.
 - ii. Engagement and further functional planning:
 1. Administration is preparing a response to the questions asked during June 20th GPC. HDR is writing technical memos such as consequences of eliminating runningways on ridership and its impacts on reliability; developing a functional plan of 1st Avenue route from 25th Street to Sid Buckwold Bridge; etc.
 2. The Project Team is drafting a plan for stakeholder engagement and functional drawings for 1st Avenue contra-flow BRT; creating Broadway Avenue mixed traffic functional drawings and further engagement with BIDs, businesses and the community about the mixed traffic option.
 3. A technical memo will also be issued for Victoria Avenue regarding why it is not a recommended option due to hill grade on operation of buses in winter, and implications of roundabout at Spadina. Project Team will conduct engagement with downtown stakeholders including employers, businesses and transit users.
 4. A broad street level engagement before the next GPC will not be possible, but an update will be provided.

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- iii. The Project Team will continue the dialog with the GPC and provide an update for the GPC-meeting in October with final decisions to be made by Council in December 2018 or January 2019.
- b. In response to BRS's expressed interest in participating in the proposed consultations, Transit promised to pass on our request to the Project Team.
- c. In response to BRS's suggestion that the myths about Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) circulating in the community need to be countered, it was agreed that BRS would document the misinformation and write draft responses, while Transit would fact check them before BRS posts them. BRS noted that it would also be useful for the City to publish their own corrections to the misinformation.

NEW ITEMS

2) Customer feedback and incident reporting:

- a. Without disclosing their sources, BRS mentioned that they had heard rumours to the effect that i) 'due to vigorous encouragement on BRS's FB-page to report instances of missed transfers or diminished service as well as incidents of poor operator practices', ii) 'Transit's Customer Service Centre had been inundated by complaints both about operators and about recent route changes to such an extent that Transit cannot cope', and that iii) 'upon reviewing security video in buses, most complaints about operators were found to be totally invalid', and finally that iv) 'Transit would like BRS to stop suggesting such feedback'. BRS mentioned that the issue was brought up because we wanted clarification directly from Transit about the individual statements in the rumour.
- b. Transit refuted all parts of the rumour and stated that they did not feel inundated by feedback/complaints. In fact, they were visibly upset by these accusations. They further assured us that Saskatoon Transit indeed encourages BRS and all transit users to report any and all questions or concerns either through the website or via phone:
 - i. Transit made it absolutely clear that they welcome feedback from the ridership on any problems with schedules, transfers and other issues resulting from route changes or otherwise; in fact, ridership feedback is absolutely the main info source for Transit to initiate remedies and improvements.

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- ii. Transit also made it absolutely clear that they welcome all incident reports in which riders describe situations where they feel poorly treated by operators. All such incidents are scrupulously investigated in a prescribed manner.

3) Update on July 1st route changes:

- b. Regarding the perception that service in Sutherland has diminished, Transit noted that the problem in the past with overfull buses leaving riders in Sutherland waiting for the next bus should now be eliminated.
- c. BRS informed Transit of transfer difficulties from #11 to #2/#9 and from #65 to #26.
- d. BRS also noted that now that #4 inbound no longer enters the University Terminal, transfers may need to take place elsewhere. It was noted that an enhanced University Terminal Map that also describes (potential) transfer options at bus stops along College Drive and Preston Avenue might be useful.
- e. While operators are now becoming comfortable with the new routes and schedules, tweaks to current schedules will continue to take place.

4) Route #808:

- a. BRS noted that it is difficult to transfer to/from route 808 anywhere else than at the Downtown Terminal, which in many cases makes for an unnecessarily long trip – in particular to the Field House and City Hospital.
- b. The short service span also makes the route less than optimal, especially if it cannot be relied on for the return trip from a medical appointment.
- c. BRS also noted that no sign for route 808 exists at the bus stop in front of City Hall. Transit promised to remedy the situation.
- d. Transit informed us that the pilot will be extended at least to the end of November.

5) Class Trips:

- a. BRS had noted a lack of etiquette knowledge among the leadership of a youth group on the bus and wondered if targeted training might be useful.
- b. Transit noted that it might be useful to provide handouts on bus etiquette to all class trips. In addition, Transit is working on a campaign on etiquette, which will feature posters that describe how to behave and also not behave on the bus.

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TRANSIT FARES & FARE COLLECTION SYSTEMS DISCUSSION

- 6) On-going documentation of Current Transit Fares:
 - a. As requested, BRS received colour prints of the recently introduced, new GoPasses: adult, student, child, senior, multi-use.
 - b. The old GoPasses remain valid, but they can be exchanged for a new pass upon payment of the regular \$5 card replacement fee.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 20 August 2018, 3:30 – 4:30 pm in Committee Room B at City Hall