

**Minutes for BRS-TRANSIT online meeting
Monday, 17 October 2022 @ 1:30-2:45pm**

LOCATION: Online meeting using Zoom

ATTENDANCE:

- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project:
 - Rob Dudiak, BRT Project Manager
- Saskatoon Transit (Transit):
 - Cory Shrigley, Customer Service & Engagement Manager
 - Allison Gray, Marketing Consultant
- Bus Riders of Saskatoon (BRS):
 - Peter Gallén, Transit Co-ordinator and Steering Committee Member
 - Curt McCoshen, Steering Committee Member
 - James (Jim) Wood, Steering Committee Member
 - Donna Morin, Member
 - Robert Clipperton, Spokesperson and Steering Committee Member (joined later)

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- For this meeting: Rob lead the discussion and Peter will prepare the minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) N/A

NEW BUSINESS

- 2) Update on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project:
 - a. At this meeting, the City's BRT Project Manager Rob Dudiak was present to provide the customary quarterly update.
 - b. State of financing of the BRT:
 - i. Rob noted that the City had *not* until very recently been allowed to even apply for funding for the BRT-project from the *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan* (ICIP) because the Provincial Government had not opened up the *Transit Stream* for applications:
 1. Rob emphasized that neither the BRT Project nor the funding for it have yet been approved by the Provincial and Federal Governments.
 2. He was hopeful, however, that approvals might come from both governments in time for the 2023 construction season.
 - ii. BRS informed the meeting that they had talked in June to the Saskatoon Caucus of the Saskatchewan Party:
 1. The Caucus said that they were under the impression that the Provincial Government was *not* at fault for the delay in approvals; instead they thought that the City had simply *not* been applying for funds.

2. At that meeting, BRS thus asked the Caucus to kindly sort out the deadlock, because time was of the essence *not* to lose yet another construction season (as happened in 2022).
- c. Current Projects:
- i. Pilot Station at the 'new bus barns' at the Civic Operations Centre (COC):
 1. When returning to work from his recent leave of absence, Rob was dismayed to find that no installations for the Shelter and Pylon had yet taken place at the COC Pilot Station.
 2. It turns out that PCL Construction – the turn-key vendor for design, procurement and installation of the Pilot Station – had unexpected difficulties getting all the details for each component finalized:
 - a. However, most shelter components were now procured.
 3. Rob continues to press that the vendor has the Shelter and Pylon fully installed in December, so that each shelter component can be fully evaluated and tested through the winter.
 4. BRS and the general public will then be invited to visit the Pilot Station to provide feed-back on the Station, Shelter and its components.
 - ii. Transit Priority Pilot at Traffic Lights:
 1. The new computer software that will facilitate Transit Priority using the existing hardware at the Traffic Lights has been sourced and now will start to be implemented through the pilot. This includes integrating with the City's existing Traffic Light Control System.
 2. The City is ready to sign the procurement contract with the vendor for the pilot.
 - iii. Engagement:
 1. Engagement with the Broadway Stakeholder Group has been ongoing.
 2. Engagements on Fare Review and the New Transit Network are being prepared.
- d. Proposed projects for next summer:
- i. If approval and financing is obtained before March 2023, Rob expects a few projects to be started that year:
 1. Final design of all Station Structures and Equipment.
 2. Installation of Conduits for fibre-optic Data Cables to the Traffic Lights and Stations along the BRT-routes.
- e. Staging of related construction projects:
- i. Sidewalk and separated Bike Track along College Corridor:
 1. BRS wondered if the projected separated bike track and sidewalk extension along the College Corridor would be built at the same time as the Dedicated Bus Lanes for the BRT Project?
 2. Rob noted that this scenario would be more cost effective and less disruptive and would indeed be preferable:

- a. Rob also noted that the practicalities are somewhat convoluted since the land is owned by the University, while several City Departments need to be involved in the implementation, and the financing needs to be in place for each sub-project.
 - b. Rob was pleased, however, that the common will is already there between all involved parties, but in the end it will come down to available timing: all minute details need to be ironed out in time for a coordinated effort to be possible.
 - ii. Bus Stops on transit routes crossing the BRT:
 - 1. BRS wondered if the bus stops used for transfers with the BRT are part of the BRT Project, and who is responsible for implementing them?
 - a. Rob noted that these stops are included under a separate headline in the ICIP-funding request for the overall BRT Project.
 - b. Corey noted that the design of these Bus Stops and their Shelters falls on Saskatoon Transit:
 - i. For example, these Bus Stops will also have raised platforms.
 - 1. Rob noted that his team would be providing assistance in the construction of these Bus Stops.
 - ii. On a direct question from BRS, Corey noted that shelter heaters would *not* be part of the initial implementation at these Bus Stops.
 - 1. BRS noted that when Riders transfer from the high-frequency BRT to these lower-frequency local routes, a heated Shelter would probably be more beneficial for the latter 20-minute wait compared to the less than 10-minute waits for the bus at the BRT Stations.
- 3) Update on current service difficulties:
 - a. Routes 4/43, 6, 61 and 86 are currently experiencing high ridership that result in overcrowding and scheduling issues.
 - i. For example, buses on route 4/43 are delayed on each round trip due to longer boarding and alighting times which results in difficulties meeting the schedule.
 - ii. Adjustments to schedules will take place at the next Sign-in for Operators in October.
- 4) Update on Bus Passes:
 - a. Improved procedures for Riders that are approved by Social Services for a 'Discounted Transit Pass' are in the works.
 - b. Improved procedures for Riders that qualify for a City-issued 'Low Income Transit Pass' are also in the works.

5) Topics for upcoming meetings:

- a. Operations Manager Mike Moellenbeck is expected to present Transit's *Dashboard* and associated research projects at a future meeting.
- b. BRS expressed an interest in attending a presentation on Transit Data before the current Johnson-Shoyama Project ends next spring.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, 15 November 2022 @ 1:30am via Zoom (Note: day-of-week and time)