

Bus Riders of Saskatoon
May 29, 2023 – 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm - Zoom Video Conference
Meeting Minutes

Facilitator: Curt Recorder: Robert Regrets: Jenn, Bob
Present: Sherry, Odin, James, Peter, Shirley, Tim, Lila
Guests: Amanda Lindgren, City of Saskatoon, Public Engagement
 Mandy Fehr, City of Saskatoon, Public Engagement
 Ty Czerniak, City of Saskatoon, Planning

1. Welcome
2. Finalization of Agenda.
3. Review of minutes of April 25, 2023 meeting. Accepted.
4. Date & time for next meeting: Monday June 26 at 7:00 pm

Special Session with members of the City of Saskatoon Public Engagement Team to provide information, hear feedback and respond to questions related to the Downtown Event and Entertainment District.

Mandy opened with a Treaty Land Acknowledgement and then gave a power point presentation to explain the underlying principles behind the Downtown Event and Entertainment District (DEED). There were a number of questions of clarification which were fielded by all three of our guests from the City of Saskatoon. Mandy announced that she will be leaving her position with the City as of June 16th and her role in Transit engagement will be continued by Amanda.

Next Steps

- Notes and information from tonight will be shared with the project team.
- Information report will be shared with the Governance and Priorities Committee at the City of Saskatoon in July, including a summary of feedback from the engagement process.
- Next phase of engagement will happen in Summer / Fall 2023

Some of the many concerns/questions/observations put forward from our group were:

- 1) Is BRT expected to be redesigned to conform with the new DEED plan or is DEED expected to be designed around BRT? Reply: DEED needs to work within the confines of the BRT plans and should support BRT.
- 2) How does the DEED concept impact other city centre plans such as Imagine Idylwyld, the Farmers' Market and River Landing? Reply: Trying to plan DEED to be in synch with there other plans. Need to be sure there is connectivity.
- 3) Will there need to be changes to these other plans to facilitate DEED? Reply: Only about 30% of the planning will be completed for this initial phase. If City Council approves the project in November, the other 70% will come later. It will likely be many years before DEED is fully implemented. (an updated version of the decision making process is available on the webpage:
<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/community-services/planning-development/DEED/DEED%20Decision%20Making%20Process%20%281%29.pdf>)
- 4) What impact will DEED have on existing and new residential development? Reply: Housing is part of the vision and guiding principles for the project (<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/community-services/planning-development/DEED/DEED%20Vision%20Statement%20%281%29%20%281%29.pdf>) Needs to complement and enhance it.
- 5) Concern: Current transit service does not satisfy the needs of employees who work late, need to be at work early or need weekday scheduling on week-ends. This will be even more important with more entertainment venues and businesses such as bars and restaurants which employ them.
- 6) Concern: It is important that the City deal with poverty issues such as homelessness before DEED is implemented. Tourists and residents need to feel comfortable walking within the area.
- 7) Comment: DEED needs BRT, BRT doesn't need DEED to be successful.

- 8) Pedestrian realm needs to be accessible and pleasant. Attention should be paid to streetscaping and easy access – unlike the north end of the Broadway Bridge or the south end of the Traffic Bridge.
- 9) Cycling infrastructure needs to include bicycle parking where cyclists can feel confident their bicycles will not be stolen. Cycle lanes need to be fully connected to a cycling network in other parts of the City.
- 10) Transit service should be enhanced with the implementation of DEED rather than the other way around. Schedules and frequency may require enhancement at times when expectations are of heavy usage due to events.
- 11) Transit, pedestrian and cycling lenses should precede that of motor vehicle traffic travelling through rather than to the DEED.
- 12) We need to think about the disruption to TCU place that could occur during construction. What about the Symphony or activities that are based at TCU Place for their revenue?
- 13) What level of infrastructure planning will be done for events like Folk Fest? Would you have staff to make it work and direct people to walk those blocks?
Reply: Those are the ideas we want to hear now. What would you need to have a big event in these spaces and get a sense from folks who attend/host events. What could work and what are the Main points we should be considering?
- 14) How do other centres deal with the intersection of transit and a big event?
Reply: We need to flag the importance of learning from other cities. We have scanned other cities who have done similar projects and looked at what seems to be best practice.
- 15) We should consider what the people working there need. Having transit that works during the evening hours / overnight even if it's just once every hour having some kind of overnight transit would help people move to, from and within the district. You should be able to go places without needing to drive especially after midnight.
- 16) Public washrooms are really essential.
- 17) Need to address current service issues if there is going to be public support for BRT within the DEED. If the current system isn't working why would we think the future system will work better.

18) Need to look at experience of other cities (eg. Sacramento) where large event centres have been built downtown.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

5.1 Potential meeting with Social Services re: Barriers?

- Lila will continue to monitor this topic through her involvement in the Poverty Reduction Project.

5.2 CUTA Conference

- Lila and Robert volunteered at the registration tables. Both felt the experience was rewarding.

6. Correspondence

6.1 An Access Transit user reached out to Robert on social media with concerns. Agreed we should discuss this at the next meeting and perhaps revive the concept of a Town Hall on Access Issues.

7 . Access Transit – Bob/Sydney – no report this month

8. Facebook/Website Issues

8.1 Facebook topics since last meeting: Saskatoon Transit alerts and PSAs (7), service issues (5), Saskatoon Transit in the news (4), information requests (4), community announcements – non-transit (4), safety (2), DEED (1), On-Demand (1), ATU (1), other system transit news – Regina (1), miscellaneous (2), BRS (1), spam – removed (2)

8.2 Website Content

8.2.1 Contributions from group members?

8.2.1 Jenn – in progress

9. City of Saskatoon Meetings

9.1 Recent meetings: May 1st and May 29, 2023

- Topic Discussed – May 1st: Viewing of BRT Pilot Station with Rob Dudiak – minutes pending

- Topic Discussed – May 29th – Discussion of the City’s budget development processes and issues around Transit financing – minutes pending.
- Allison announced that she will be leaving her position as Marketing and Communications consultant as of June 16th.

9.2 Next meeting: Monday June 26, 2023

9.2.1 Agenda: Service changes beginning July 2nd, other suggestions welcome.

9.2.2 Attendees: All members of the Steering Committee are welcome to attend. Peter will send out the agenda and link closer to the date.

10. Standing Policy Committee on Transportation (SPCOT) – May 2nd, 2023

10.1 Agenda Item 7.1.1 Dedicated Transit Support Workers Program

- Motion 1 (carried unanimously) : *That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation recommend to City Council:*

1. *That next steps for provision of a transit support workers program be considered through Option 4 – One City Approach Community Support Program be approved;*
2. *That Saskatoon Transit participate in the review of the current Community Support Program Service Delivery Model alongside the Saskatoon Fire Department and Community Services; and,*
3. *That Administration report back to the SPC Transportation on options with funding considerations for dedicated transit support workers patrolling terminals and stops and rotating through targeted bus routes as part of the report on the review of the current Community Support Program Service Delivery Model in advance of the 2024-25 Multi-Year Business Plan and Budget deliberations.*

- Motion 2 (carried unanimously) That Amalgamated Transit Union Local 615 be consulted prior to the matter being reported back.

10.2 Next meeting of SPCOT Tuesday, June 6, 2023

There was some discussion of the potential of dedicated transit support workers.

11. City Council Meeting – April 26, 2023

11.1 Agenda Item 6.1 Council Questions

- Councillor Kirton re Bus Shelters
 - Kirton asked about the increasing number of incidents of shattered glass at the bus shelters and if there are any other materials that can be used.
 - General Manager Transportation and Construction Schmidt responded that they are aware of the recent incidents and are currently looking into and testing out new materials that could replace the glass.

11.2 Next Council Meeting – May 31, 2023

- Consideration of SPCOT item 7.1.1 from May 2nd

12. Keep Transit Moving Coalition (Robert)

12.1 Next Meeting: May 30, 2023 at 2:00 pm

13. Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Project (SPRP) – (Lila, Sherry)

- There will be a meeting to discuss transit on June 6th – Lila will attend.

14. Ongoing Actions

14.1 Councillor Meetings: Cynthia Block – Tuesday June 6th at 10:00 am.

- Preference to meet via Zoom.
- Agenda items should include – the path for budget items to get to Council for consideration, DEED (Block co-chairs the Council Advisory Committee on DEED.)

Attendees?: Odin, Peter, Curt, Sherry, Lila, Jim, Robert

14.2 Future representation to SPCOT/Council

14.2.1 Budget items: extended week-end and evening hours, child fares

14.2.2 Engagement items: Support workers on Transit, transit network redesign, BRT

- We learned today that SPCOT (and other committees of Council) will be reviewing business line by line financial information preparatory to the formal budget decisions in November. Agreed that we should do preparatory work at the next meeting.

15. Other Business

15.1 None

16. Adjournment

Group Norms

All people are explicitly welcome and respected in our meetings and we will strive to include and represent the interests and varying perspectives of riders. We appreciate that we are all volunteers and that we are all learning and doing the best we can in our roles. We bring different life experiences and values to the table but what we share is a desire to work for positive change in our transit system. We aim to achieve changes in the short-term while keeping a long-view in mind and agree to engage constructively and respectfully and not just within the group but also with decision-makers, the media and the general public.

In meetings, we agree to keep comments respectful and brief and respect the role of the meeting facilitator(s) who may need to cut us off from time to time to keep the conversation on track and on time. We will avoid tangents and side-bar conversations and speak one at a time. We will do our best to be accountable for what we take on and will try not to let each other down. If we have committed to a task and can't complete it in a timely manner, we agree that we will pass the task to someone else in the group. When we feel someone is not abiding by these norms, we will gently let them know. Repeated violations of the group norms by any member will be brought to the group to discuss.