

Minutes for BRS-TRANSIT hybrid meeting at City Hall & online via Zoom
Monday, 11 December 2023 @ 1:30-2:30pm

ATTENDANCE:

- Saskatoon Transit (Transit):
 - Cory Shrigley, Customer Support & Engagement Manager
 - Amanda Lindgren, Engagement Consultant
 - Braden Cline, Johnson-Shoyama Intern
- BRT Project Team
 - Rob Dudiak, BRT Project Manager
- Bus Riders of Saskatoon (BRS):
 - Robert Clipperton, Spokesperson and Steering Committee Member
 - Peter Gallén, Transit Co-ordinator and Steering Committee Member
 - James Wood, Steering Committee Member
 - Lila Wagner, Steering Committee Member
 - Odin Swidzinski, Steering Committee Member (attending by Zoom)
 - Curt McCoshen, Steering Committee Member (attending by Zoom)

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

- For this hybrid meeting: Cory led the discussion and Peter prepared the minutes.
- Braden will become the point person for Transit to receive BRS monthly meeting minutes and to make the first edits to the draft.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Senior Staff updates at Saskatoon Transit:
 - a. Michael (Mike) Moellenbeck, former Transit Operations Manager, has been appointed Transit Director for Saskatoon Transit.
 - b. Brady Wallenberg, former Access Transit Manager, has been appointed Operations Manager for Saskatoon Transit.
 - c. Deanna Campbell has been appointed Acting Manager for Access Transit and the job posting for a permanent¹ manager has been published.
 - d. Since no Public Service Announcements (PSAs) were issued for these appointments, BRS requested the (internal) announcements plus biographies of the individuals.
 - e. The new position for a Planning² Manager at Saskatoon Transit was recently posted:
 - i. The position is expected to be filled in January 2024.
 - ii. The Planning Manager will oversee the Planning-section at Saskatoon Transit and will be in charge of implementing the New Transit Network to be designed around the BRT Backbone.

¹ Job posting at: <https://careers.saskatoon.ca/job/Saskatoon-Access-Transit-Manager-SK/576441817/>

² Job posting at: <https://careers.saskatoon.ca/job/Saskatoon-Planning-Manager-%28Transit%29-SK/576161317/>

- iii. Public engagements regarding the New Transit Network will begin in 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

BRT Project Manager Rob Dudiak was featured guest at this meeting to discuss funding and anticipated construction in the 2024 construction season.

- 2) The original BRT-related ICIP-funding³ request by City Council on 26 September 2022:
 - a. See Appendix 1 below, which describes the following six BRT-related sub-projects within this funding application for a total project cost of \$190 million:
 - i. BRT Red Line: \$62,000,000.
 - ii. BRT Green Line: \$32,000,000.
 - iii. BRT Blue Line: \$57,000,000.
 - iv. BRT Intelligent Transportation System & Transit Signal Priority: \$7,000,000
 - v. BRT Supporting Network Improvements: \$32,000,000.
 - b. This funding application to the joint federal-provincial-municipal *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program* (ICIP) was approved by City Council on 26 September 2022 and subsequently submitted to the Federal and Provincial Governments for approval.
 - c. As an aside, a similar but much earlier funding request was approved by Council in 2019, but none of those projects were approved by the Provincial Government until now.
- 3) The BRT-related, now approved⁴ ICIP-funding that was announced on 16 November 2023:
 - a. See Appendix 2 below for a description of the distribution of the (first ever) approval of BRT-related ICIP-funding (\$51.462 million). Compare the approved funds in this announcement to the requested funds discussed earlier. Approved funds to date:
 - i. BRT Green Line: \$21,462,000.
 - ii. BRT Intelligent Transportation System & Transit Signal Priority: \$5,000,000.
 - iii. BRT Supporting Transportation Network Improvements: \$25,000,000.
- 4) The next ICIP-funding application for the BRT Project on 14 December 2023:
 - a. In 3 days from today, the City will submit its next application to the Federal Government for the remaining ICIP-funding, namely for the Red Line and the Blue Line in the BRT System. The approval is expected early in the new year.
 - b. It is also understood that approval has already been obtained from the Provincial Government for their share of the overall BRT Project.
- 5) Regarding the Costs for the BRT Project:
 - a. Rob noted that original cost estimates were done by the Project's designer, HDR Corp., in 2018-dollars.
 - b. Since that time, two cost updates have been conducted.

³ See Table 2 in the Admin Report submitted to City Council, 26 September 2022: <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=e10edeb3-4e55-4b2d-ac93-9d8c49fed978&Agenda=PostMinutes&lang=English&Item=54&Tab=attachments>

⁴ Extracted from table in CBC-article, 16 November 2023: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/saskatoon-rapid-transit-leisure-centre-funding-1.7031137>

- c. Moreover, the City has quite reliable information on actual costs for underground cabling and typical asphalt and concrete construction required for much of the Project.
 - i. Although the allotment for these portions of the Project is tight, it is expected to be sufficient.
 - ii. Furthermore, the construction of the Pilot Station at the Civic Operations Centre (COC) provided a good ball-park cost estimate for the 90+ Stations.
 - d. The uncertainty may be somewhat greater for other types of project costs, however.
- 6) Construction of the BRT Project:
- a. Construction for the entire BRT Project will be spread out over the next three years, with the anticipated go-live date scheduled for 2027.
 - b. Although all funding has not yet been received (as discussed above), the BRT Project Team expects all funding for the entire BRT Project to be approved and available before the summer of 2024, when construction will begin.
 - c. Anticipated construction in 2024 (Year-1):
 - i. Rob noted that the Transportation Department has placed onerous restrictions on all aspects of the BRT Project throughout the city, so careful timing and staging will have to take place at each location.
 - ii. The Red, Green & Blue Lines:
 - 1. Construction on portions of all three BRT-lines will begin this summer, while all required work on any one line is not expected to be completed in this first year of construction.
 - iii. Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) & Transit Signal Priority (TSP):
 - 1. The Traffic Lights on each BRT-corridor will be equipped with Transit Signal Priority (TSP).
 - 2. Moreover, other Traffic Lights in the City will also be integrated into the overall Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) as part of this Project.
 - 3. Directional drilling for the conduits required by the fibre-optic data cables to these ITS & TSP traffic lights will begin in 2024.
 - iv. Dedicated Runningways:
 - 1. Although the already approved Green Line includes the Que-Jump Lane at 25th Street and 1st Avenue plus the two separated Runningways, none of these features will be constructed in 2024:
 - a. For example, the 2024 construction season on College Drive will be dedicated to replacing the sewer & water lines.
 - v. BRT Stations:
 - 1. About thirty (30) Stations (one-third of the total) are expected to be built in 2024. The locations of this first batch of Stations will be selected such that they cause minimal disruption to current transit services.
 - 2. Directional drilling for the conduits required by the fibre-optic data cables and electric supply cables to each Station will begin in 2024.
 - 3. Due to difficult and costly assembly, the design used for the current Shelter at the COC Pilot Station will be modified for the new Stations.

- a. Other Station components will also change as a result of the feed-back received from the Pilot Station at COC.
- 4. BTW, where a completed Station might be useful for current transit service, the BRT Team hopes that it would be put in service instead of sitting idle until the rest of the BRT Project goes live.
- vi. Supporting Transportation Network Improvements:
 - 1. Although funding for this aspect of the Project was approved in the recent announcement, the New Transit Network has not yet been finalized. Consequently, construction of sidewalks and other accessibility improvements between the BRT Stations and any adjacent regular bus stops cannot yet begin.
- d. BRT Information Campaigns:
 - i. Two separate information campaigns are planned:
 - 1. The BRT brand, general information campaign and construction campaign for the system are being developed by the city's external consultant, [Entro](#), as part of the *BRT Branding & Marketing Project*:
 - a. A brand concept has been selected and will be brought to City Council in the spring of 2024.
 - b. This project is managed by Saskatoon Transit.
 - c. BRS recommended promoting the benefits of the BRT System to both the public and motorists in addition to various sub-project communication.
 - 2. Announcements related to construction activities will go out throughout the Project as required:
 - a. Information is managed by the BRT Project Team.
 - b. Besides the necessary alerts regarding detours and other traffic inconveniences, BRS suggested that regular updates on on-going and completed sub-projects would provide a positive image of progress throughout the project. Perhaps a dedicated website with continuously updated maps, photographs and videos, and short explanatory articles as the work progresses or a new sub-project begins would be enjoyed by the public.
- e. ICIP-funding for the Bus Fleet:
 - i. As shown in Appendix 2 below, \$60M in ICIP-funding for fleet renewal (new buses) was approved in the joint-funding announcement on 16 November 2023 described earlier.

- ii. As shown in Appendix 3 below from the most recent *Saskatoon Transit Long-Term Fleet Renewal and Funding Strategy Update*⁵, Transit intends to issue purchase orders in 2024 for five articulated 60-foot diesel buses and ten conventional 40-foot diesel buses using these recently announced ICIP-funds. This will leave 15 articulated diesel buses and a number of electric or other zero-emission buses (ZEBs) to be purchased in later years with the remaining ICIP-funds. Since this constitutes a change to the original application for ICIP-funding, Transit must receive federal approval before going ahead with the order.
 - iii. After the *Canadian Urban Transit Research and Innovation Consortium* (CUTRIC) concludes its feasibility study in January 2024 on Saskatoon Transit's Zero-Emission Transition Plan, orders for ZEBs will also be placed in 2024.
 - iv. Do note that actual bus deliveries might take up to 20 months after placing an order. Note, therefore, that there is a separate section in Appendix 3 below that shows how any ordered buses will become available for service.
- 7) Recent problems with Transit's Open Data Feed to third-party apps:
- a. The wrong Open Data Feed that went out to Transit-app, Google and other third-party apps on the November 11 Statutory Holiday (a Saturday), was the result of human error.
 - b. On the other hand, the cause of the faulty Open Data Feed that went out on December 2 (by coincidence also a Saturday) was entirely different:
 - i. It turned out that when Transit added the Jingle Bell Express schedule to the data feed, the Open Data feed for that Saturday was affected.
 - ii. Transit was able to provide the correct data feed on the following day (Sunday).
 - iii. Transit was able to troubleshoot over a ten (10) day period to find the root cause of the error in the data feed and to make appropriate corrections in subsequent Open Data Feeds with regard to the addition of Jingle Bell Express to the regular daily schedules.
 - iv. Transit is now doing more advance testing of the Open Data feed to confirm that the data is correct.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 15 January 2024 @ 1:30pm, on-location at Civic Square East (the old post office building beside City Hall) & online via Zoom.

⁵ Submitted by Administration to SPC-Transportation, 5 December 2023 (and subsequently approved by Council on 20 December 2024): <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=d84e95dd-5f7a-404e-8274-91eed59c25a6&Agenda=PostMinutes&lang=English&Item=23&Tab=attachments>

Appendix-1: Table extracted from the Admin Report⁶ to the Council Meeting on 26 September 2022

Project Name	Description	Total Eligible Costs (in millions)¹
Bus Rapid Transit System - Red Line	Improvements to roadway, curb, intersection, drainage and public realm improvements on the East-West Corridor along 8 th Street East, Preston Ave, College Drive, 1 st Avenue North and 22 nd Street.	\$62.0
Bus Rapid Transit System – Green Line	Improvements to roadway, curb, intersection, drainage and public realm improvements on the East-West Corridor along Attridge Drive, Preston Ave, College Dr, 1 st Avenue North and 22 nd Street.	\$32.0
Bus Rapid Transit System – Blue Line	Improvements to roadway, curb, intersection, drainage and public realm improvements on the North-South Corridor along Preston Ave, 8 th Street East, Broadway Ave, 19 th Street East, 1 st Ave North, 25 th Street, Idylwyld Drive, 33 rd Street, Warman Road and Primrose Drive.	\$57.0
Bus Rapid Transit System – Supporting Network Improvements	Roadway, pathway, curb, intersection, drainage, and public realm improvements to improve ancillary transit routes connecting to the Red, Green and Blue BRT lines. - Includes stop and shelter improvements along routes.	\$32.0
Bus Rapid Transit System – Intelligent Transportation System and Transit Signal Authority	Fiber optic network for a new intelligent transportation system and transit signal priority along ancillary transit routes connecting to the Red, Green and Blue BRT lines.	\$7.0
Bus Rapid Transit System – Fleet	Acquisition of new low floor battery electric and diesel buses, to replace/renew the existing fleet.	\$60.0
East Side Leisure Center	Construction of a new district leisure center to support the Holmwood Sector. - Facility amenities to potentially include a 25m pool, leisure pool, gymnasium, fitness spaces, weight room, multipurpose rooms/child minding spaces and supporting accessible locker/change/washroom facilities.	\$40.5

⁶ Table 2 in the Admin Report to City Council, 26 September 2022: <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=172323>

Appendix-2: Table published in CBC-article⁷ regarding the joint federal-provincial-city ICIP Funding Announcement on 16 November 2023

See where all the money is going:

How government money will be dispursed for Saskatoon rapid transit, leisure centre projects

The three levels of government are spending nearly \$152M combined on five projects in Saskatoon

Project name	Project details	Total funding	Federal	Provincial	Municipal
Bus Rapid Transit-Fleet	Saskatoon will buy about 25 new accessible zero-emission technology buses and 30 diesel buses to renew the existing fleet	\$60,000,000	\$24,000,000	\$0	\$36,000,000
East Side Leisure Centre	Constructing a new district leisure centre in the Holmwood sector	\$40,510,687	\$16,204,275	\$13,501,576	\$10,804,836
Bus Rapid Transit System-Supporting Transportation Network Improvements	Improve local roadways, pathways, curbs, intersections, drainage areas, and public realm areas to ancillary transit routes connecting to the Red, Green and Blue BRT lines; project will also include stop and shelter development along these routes	\$25,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$8,332,500	\$6,667,500

⁷ CBC-article, 16 November 2023: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/saskatoon-rapid-transit-leisure-centre-funding-1.7031137>

Bus Rapid Transit System-Green Line	Green Line BRT corridor runs about 15 kilometres east to west through Attridge Drive, Preston Avenue, College Drive, First Avenue North and 22nd Street; project includes building about 16 stations with tactile strips, shelters with heating and lights, security cameras, next-bus information displays, and benches	\$21,462,000	\$8,584,800	\$10,486,285	\$2,390,915
Bus Rapid Transit System-Intelligent Transportation System & Transit Signal Authority	Install fibre optic network for a new intelligent transportation system and transit signal priority along ancillary transit routes connecting to the Red, Green and Blue BRT lines	\$5,000,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,666,500	\$1,333,500

Appendix-3: Saskatoon Transit 10 Year Fleet Renewal Strategy Update⁸ (December 2023)

Append

Project: Saskatoon Transit 10 Year Fleet Renewal Strategy Update
 Subject: Transit Fleet Renewal Strategy 2023 Update with Funding from ICIP, ZETF, and Canada's Support for Transit and Housing Program

New Buses Purchased by Year												
Type	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Conventional Diesel (40 ft)	0	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conventional ZEB (40 ft)	2	0	15	15	3	3	3	3	3	2	0	0
Articulated Diesel (60 ft)	0	3	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	8	30	19	6	5	5	5	5	2	0	0

Funding Amounts for New Buses Purchased by Year (Paid on Delivery)												
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
ICIP				\$ 15,500,000.00	\$ 5,200,000.00	\$ 8,312,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 2,940,000.00	
ZETF				\$ 23,500,000.00	\$ 23,500,000.00							
STHP			\$ 8,400,000.00									
TOTAL	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8,400,000.00	\$ 39,000,000.00	\$ 28,700,000.00	\$ 8,312,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 7,012,000.00	\$ 2,940,000.00	\$ -

New Buses in Service by Year												
Type	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Conventional Diesel (40 ft)	0	0	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conventional ZEB (40 ft)	0	0	2	15	15	3	3	3	3	3	2	0
Articulated Diesel (60 ft)	0	0	3	5	4	3	2	2	2	2	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	10	30	19	6	5	5	5	5	2	0
Total Fleet	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134	134
% ZEBs	0%	0%	1%	13%	24%	26%	28%	31%	33%	35%	37%	37%
Average Age (Years)	10.0	11.0	10.4	7.4	5.9	6.2	6.6	7.1	7.5	7.9	8.7	9.7
Max Age (Years)	20.0	21.0	18.0	17.0	16.0	15.0	14.0	14.0	15.0	15.0	16.0	17.0
Total Buses >15 Yrs Age	21.0	33.0	42.0	12.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	25.0

Note: 17 buses would be over 15 years or old in year 2033 and would need to be addressed by additional funding (\$25.5M in Conventional ZEBs).

Continuation at the far right of the above table (showing the totals):

NUMBER OF BUSES PURCHASED (2022-2033)		TOTAL
Conventional Diesel (40 ft)		15
Conventional ZEB (40 ft)		49
Articulated Diesel (60 ft)		23
TOTAL		87
FUNDING SOURCES		TOTAL
ICIP (Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program)		\$ 60,000,000.00
ZETF (Zero Emission Transit Fund)		\$ 47,000,000.00
STHP (Support for Transit & Housing Program)		\$ 8,400,000.00
TOTAL		\$ 115,400,000.00

⁸ Append 1 in City Administration's submission to SPC-Transportation, 5 December 2023: <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=198273>