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Bus detour notices cost \$100K, says Saskatoon Transit

Agency confirms it plans to stop practice
but says it will keep posting them for now

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Saskatoon Transit has postponed plans to stop posting detour notices at bus stops until April, but still plans to end the practice, saying it costs \$100,000 a year.

The transit department posted warnings in August that it planned to end the practice of posting notices at bus stops in October in favour of a move to digital notices, citing the success of the smartphone app.

A Saskatoon Transit report that will be considered by city council's transportation committee on Monday says posting, updating and monitoring paper notices costs the equivalent of one and

The transit rider advocacy group Bus Riders of Saskatoon has expressed concern about the move to end posted notices, since low-income bus users may have limited or no internet access.

The group plans to speak at Monday's meeting.

The Saskatoon Transit app has more than 6,000 daily users and about 1,000 people access the website each day, the report says. Saskatoon Transit's daily ridership in 2018 was estimated at nearly 40,000 people.

Paper notices can be affected by weather, vandalism and theft, the report says, but it does not provide further detail.

Saskatoon Transit's plan to end posted detour notices at bus stops means such notices would be sent digitally via the transit app, Google Transit, the Saskatoon Transit website and the agency's Twitter account.

The move to digital would save on paper and the plastic zip ties used to attach the notices, the report says.

Printed notices would still be posted at the city's six transit terminals: Place Riel, downtown, Market Mall, Centre Mall, Confederation Mall and the Mall at Lawson Heights.

When a bus stop is closed and service is moved to another street, notices would still be posted at bus stops, the report says.

Shirley Koob has written a letter to city council, predicting the move will decrease ridership.

"Imagine yourself standing at a bus stop in 40 below weather, not knowing if a bus is coming or not and with no way to find out," Koob's letter says.

"Now, think about that same situation as a senior, or someone with mobility issues."

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a half employees over a year, or \$100,000.

The Canadian Urban Transit Association conducted a survey for Saskatoon Transit of 31 transit agencies on the issue of posting notices, but only three had ended the practice, the report says. Twenty-four agencies employ some level of digital notice and an unspecified number plan to expand digital notices.

"From this quick industry scan, it appears that Saskatoon Transit is at the leading edge of adopting a digital first approach and technology integration," the report concludes.

Re: Family, Pioneers of Saskatoon
Ella (Mapand) Tripod. Louis Mapand.