
Subject: Email - Communication - Sherry Tarasoff - Transit and Impact of Cold Weather - File CK 7310-1
Attachments: saskatoon_transit_and_the_impact_of_cold_weather.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: January 04, 2022 11:35 AM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

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--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Tuesday, January 4, 2022 - 11:35

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Tuesday, January 04, 2022

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Sherry

Last Name Tarasoff

Phone Number

Email [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED] Peterson Cres

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code S7L [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable)

Subject Saskatoon Transit and the impact of cold weather

Meeting (if known) SPC on Transportation - January 10, 2022

Comments Please accept the attached letter for the next Transportation meeting.

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

TO: Standing Policy Committee on Transportation
RE: Saskatoon Transit and the impact of cold weather

Attention: Madam Chair, Your Worship and City Councillors

It seems like Saskatoon Transit needs support.

The week of December 27th was a cold one. Most of western Canada was under extreme cold warnings with plunging wind chills. In Saskatoon, we woke up Monday morning to -30 (-41 with the windchill). The rest of the week only got colder.

At this temperature, it is not safe to be outdoors for any length of time, unless you have planned and expect to be outside for awhile.

Early Monday morning, Transit issued service alerts for several routes, indicating that mechanical issues or bus shortages would result in missed routes. The message to customers was:

Messages for Customers:

Customer are reminded to check the Saskatoon Transit schedules or the "Transit" app to confirm the time of service before venturing outdoors, and to dress for the weather in case of delays.

The public is reminded to allow extra time to get to their destination, especially during the morning and afternoon commutes.

This message may have made it through to those that use the app or receive alerts from the City. However, if you regularly catch a bus at a certain time, there may have been a chance that you didn't have this information when you left the house for your bus, resulting in a very cold wait for a bus that never showed up. This is a potentially dangerous situation. Not everyone has a cell phone with Wi-Fi to check on the status of their bus.

Each progressive day seemed to have more service alerts than the day before. The News Release on Thursday, December 30th stated that "the extended cold temperatures are causing shortages of buses and delays."

Buses, like most other vehicles, will be affected by the cold. It is inevitable. It seems, though, that Saskatoon Transit has disproportionately more issues than other major western cities. Edmonton, Calgary and Winnipeg transit alerts did not address any cold weather issues. Regina's transit had one delayed bus each day and it was not indicated what the reason was.

Why is Saskatoon so different?

The 2020 Annual Transit Report indicated that there were 140 active buses in the fleet. It also indicated that during peak hours, there were 88 buses on the road (down from 102 in pre-covid). During this extreme cold snap, it seemed that by mid-day, all regular routes had buses and were running on schedule. Why do the first routes of the day seem to be consistently affected by the cold?

This is only January. We have a few more months of winter yet. What can be done right now to improve Transit service for those that use it? Ridership depends on reliability, particularly during adverse weather conditions.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sherry Tarasoff (a concerned, occasional Transit rider)