

Lasby, Mary

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Robert Clipperton - Transportation Business Line Information - CK 430-72 x 1700-1
Attachments: 23 07 20 Letter to G&P re Budget Deliberations.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Thursday, July 20, 2023 8:10 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Communication - Robert Clipperton - Transportation Business Line Information - CK 430-72 x 1700-1

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

Submitted on Thursday, July 20, 2023 - 20:08

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Thursday, July 20, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: He/him/his

First Name: Robert

Last Name: Clipperton

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name:

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] 9th Street East

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: S7N [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Bus Riders of Saskatoon

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Governance and Priorities Committee - July 25, 2023

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 4.3.1 Transportation Business Line

Comments:

Please see attached document.

Attachments:

- [23 07 20 Letter to G&P re Budget Deliberations.docx](#) 15.98 KB

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

To: Mayor and Council

From: Bus Riders of Saskatoon

Re: Transportation Business Line Information Appendix 1

Bus Riders of Saskatoon appreciates the difficulty of the task ahead of Council in arriving at a balanced budget. We have confidence that Councillors will make decisions based on close consideration of the information presented to them.

We don't believe there are significant cost savings to be found in the operations budget for Saskatoon Transit. We would like to point out that **Transit is an essential service.** In general **Transit has been underfunded over the years.** This underfunding has at times resulted in major service disruptions. In the fall of 2014, the fleet had deteriorated to a point that Transit was unable to provide service as scheduled as there were not sufficient units in mechanical condition to put out on the road. At the budgeted replacement rate, each bus would have had to remain in service for 87 years. This underfunding was addressed with a large infusion of funds with the pre-budget adoption of the Fleet Renewal Strategy in 2015. Again in the winter of 2021-22 there were significant service disruptions due to underfunding of transit maintenance. Finally, with adoption of recommendation from the City Auditor, additional FTEs were provided to bring maintenance up to required levels. **Underfunding and the consequent service disruptions undermine public confidence in the service and adversely affects ridership and revenue.**

We applaud the cautions offered by administration regarding two potential options: 1) **Service hour reductions and route reductions.** Late night and Sunday service is already more reflective of business operations of the 1980s when retail operations were only open on Thursday evenings and were closed on Sundays. A number of employees have great difficulty getting to and from their jobs with the service as it is now. An exploration could perhaps result in ways of improving use of existing service hours. 2) **Fare increases.** Transit modelling as presented shows every increase in fares leads to a drop in ridership. History (note drops in ridership after the lockout in 2015 and during the pandemic) has shown us how long it

takes to regain user levels once people have been forced or choose to find other means to get to where they need to go.

A suggestion for exploration: Administration's report notes that Saskatoon is an outlier when it comes to charging fares for school aged children. In 2022 Regina eliminated fares for those in Grade 8 or under. Annual cost was projected to be only \$2000. Administration has offered to research options. Could Council direct Administration to develop this one for early consideration? Perhaps as in Regina it will come out as revenue neutral. **Free fares for children could be the one bright spot** in what is not going to be a good news budget.

Robert Clipperton, Steering Committee
Bus Riders of Saskatoon