

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - Sherry Tarasoff - Preliminary Year-End Results – December 31, 2024 - CK 750-1 x 1860-1 x 1702-1
Attachments: 2025 03 26 Regular Business re Preliminary Year-End Results (Transit).pdf

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

Sent: Monday, March 24, 2025 12:13 PM

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

Subject: Email - Communication - Sherry Tarasoff - Preliminary Year-End Results – December 31, 2024 - CK 750-1 x 1860-1 x 1702-1

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

Submitted on Monday, March 24, 2025 - 12:12

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

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: Monday, March 24, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Sherry

Last Name: Tarasoff

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Peterson Cres

Ward: Ward 4

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known): REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - March 26, 2025

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 8.4.3 Preliminary Year-End Results – December 31, 2024

Comments:

Please find my comments attached. Thank you.

Attachments:

- [2025 03 26 Regular Business re Preliminary Year-End Results \(Transit\).pdf](#) 189.8 KB

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

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL - March 26, 2025

8.4.3 Preliminary Year-End Results – December 31, 2024

Hello City Council members,

This is my second submission on this agenda item. The first was to the SPC-Finance committee earlier this month¹. I proposed that the reported Transit surplus should stay within Transit to improve operations and promote ridership with options such as new routes or increased frequency/hours. I would like to adjust my proposal.

At the SPC-Finance meeting, the CFO explained that this transit surplus is one-time funding and there is an impact of increasing service year-over-year and how trying to maintain this service without funding would run into shortfalls in the future. And how one-time surpluses could be more appropriately used for one-time capital projects such as bus purchases.

While that explanation makes sense, the trend does not. This is the third year in a row for transit revenue surplus, so it does not necessarily meet the definition of one-time funding.

The user fees for Transit in 2024 were budgeted at \$13.506M². If my calculations are correct, the 2024 actual will be around \$15.606M (based on current surplus of \$2.10M).

At the 2025 budget deliberations, Administration estimated that the Saskatoon Transit revenue would be higher than originally anticipated by \$250,000³. That brings the budgeted user fees for 2025 up to \$14.225M.

To summarize, 2024 actual Transit revenue was \$15.606M and 2025 budgeted Transit revenue is \$14.225M. Transit revenue is not likely to go down, therefore, there will be a fourth consecutive surplus in 2025.

In my opinion, Transit surplus should not be transferred into a general reserve or used to offset deficits in other areas. With the amount of time, effort and money spent on implementing the BRT and the Independent City Auditor's assertion that Transit is an essential service⁴, it is clear that Transit is a priority and should be invested in and treated as such.

Perhaps using the funding for service level changes is not prudent at this time, considering the current state of the fleet and ongoing capacity issues. What could be considered instead is more security for Transit. From fare evasion to bear spray incidents, there are concerns that need to be addressed to treat Transit as a priority. An online petition has been started to mandate security guards on buses⁵. The ATU Local 615 President recently stated "I would suggest transit police would be a good addition to what we already have"⁶. There is already an appetite for further protection for drivers and riders than what the current Fire Community Support officers are providing. City Council has the ability to direct some or all of this Transit surplus back into Transit. I respectfully ask that you please consider it.

Thank you,
Sherry Tarasoff

¹ Submission to SPC-Finance meeting (<https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=232331#page=3>)

² Approved Operating & Capital Budget for 2024/2025 (<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2024-2025%20Approved%20Detailed%20Operating%20%26%20Capital%20Budget%20-1.23.2024.pdf#page=186>). Note that after the 2024/2025 Preliminary Budget document was created, an additional \$1.0M was recommended to be added to the expected 2024 Transit revenue to match the increased revenue Transit was forecasting for year end 2023. Administration recommended that this revenue be allocated to the Transit reserves for the purchase of additional or replacement buses to avoid the risk of future Transit disruptions (<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/asset-financial-management/finance-supply/2024-2~1.PDF#page=173> and <https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=212337#page=2>).

³ 2025 Business Plan and Budget Proposed Adjustments (<https://pub-saskatoon.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=226596#page=239>)

⁴ Fleet Services Audit – Phase 1 (Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit) (<https://www.saskatoon.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-council/Mayors-office/Investigation%20Report%20-%20Investigation%20of%20Service%20Disruptions%20in%20Saskatoon%20Transit%20R.pdf#page=4>)

⁵ Petition (<https://www.change.org/p/mandate-security-guards-police-on-saskatoon-public-transit-buses>)

⁶ CTV News – February 27, 2025 (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/saskatoon/article/saskatoon-transit-police-respond-to-bear-spray-incidents-every-day/>)