

Thompson, Holly

Subject: TS2025-0504 8.2.5 Comments - Romualdo Zwolinski
Attachments: RZ_May21_TransitZeroEmissionBus_Signed.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2025 4:56 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Comments - Romualdo Zwolinski - Saskatoon Transit Full-Fleet Zero Emission Bus Implementation Plan - CUTRIC Report

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

Submitted on Monday, May 19, 2025 - 16:53

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, May 19, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: He/him/his

First Name: Romualdo

Last Name: Zwolinski

Phone Number : [306](tel:306) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] McPherson Ave

Ward: Ward 6

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known): May 21 Regular Business Meeting of City Council

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 8.2.5 Saskatoon Transit Full-Fleet Zero Emission Bus Implementation Plan - CUTRIC Report

Comments:

Please see attached letter.

Thank you

Attachments:

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

May 19, 2025

222 3rd Ave North
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

Re: 8.2.5 Saskatoon Transit Full-Fleet Zero Emission Bus Implementation Plan – CUTRIC Report

Dear Mayor Block and Councilors,

I am writing to you as a resident of ward 6 to urge Council to reject the recommendations in the recent CUTRIC report on the *Saskatoon Transit Full-Fleet Zero Emission Bus Implementation Plan*. While a financial point of view is acknowledged in the report, it is essential that broader environmental, health, and social considerations are equally weighted in the City's decision-making process.

The 12-month battery electric bus (BEB) pilot conducted in 2020 demonstrated that BEBs can perform effectively under Saskatoon's winter conditions. Since March 2025, two BEBs have been in operation with performance and distance metrics comparable to diesel buses. Although one maintenance-related issue was reported, the resolution of such problems suggests that integration of BEBs into the local transit system is both feasible and promising.

While the report focuses primarily on the financial aspects of BEB adoption, additional factors must warrant careful consideration:

- **Environmental Benefits:** Despite the current carbon intensity of Saskatchewan's power grid, BEBs produce zero tailpipe emissions. This contributes to improved air quality, particularly in areas with high transit activity, and positions the City to capitalize on future emissions reductions as the power grid becomes greener.
- **Health Impacts:** Diesel exhaust is a known carcinogen linked to respiratory illnesses. A shift to BEBs would enhance air quality and contribute to long-term health improvements, potentially reducing public healthcare costs and enhancing quality of life.
- **Noise Reduction:** Zero Emissions Buses (ZEBs), including BEBs and hydrogen fuel cell electric buses, operate more quietly than diesel buses. This results in reduced noise pollution for both residents and transit users, contributing to more livable neighborhoods and an improved rider experience.

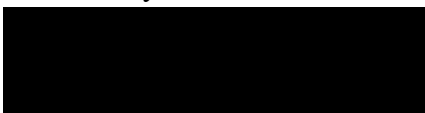
- **Indirect Cost Savings:** The broader economic impacts of climate change—ranging from insurance costs due to extreme weather events to increased food prices—underscore the value of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Investing in BEBs is a proactive strategy to mitigate such long-term costs.
- **Social Equity:** The appendix to the report highlights the potential for BEBs to benefit vulnerable communities disproportionately affected by air pollution and noise. Prioritizing these areas in fleet electrification plans can support greater health equity.
- **Long-Term Cost Efficiency:** Although initial capital costs for BEBs are higher than diesel buses, advancements in technology have been proven to reduce maintenance and lifecycle costs for BEBs over time in comparison.
- **Climate Leadership:** The transition to BEBs is identified as a priority in Saskatoon's Climate Action Plan. Moving forward with a clear and committed implementation strategy would position Saskatoon as a leader in sustainable urban transportation and reinforce their commitment to necessary climate action.

Given these factors, I urge Council to instead pursue expanding the current pilot program and developing phased transition to ZEBs. For example, a target of incorporating a defined percentage of BEBs—such as 50%—in each fleet renewal cycle would align sustainability goals with fiscal planning. Continued collaboration with federal and provincial governments will be crucial in securing necessary funding for infrastructure and technology. Establishing a dedicated working group to monitor advancements in vehicle and energy technology would also support more agile and informed decision-making.

While challenges remain, the long-term benefits of transitioning to zero-emission transit—across environmental, health, economic, and social dimensions—present a compelling case for action. Advancing this initiative is consistent with the City's climate objectives and vision for a sustainable, resilient future.

In short, I support a phased transition to zero emission buses. We can no longer afford to delay.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the official.

Romualdo Zwolinski