

Capital Project #2095-03 - Access Transit Bus Replacement - Budget Adjustment Request

On July 9, 2019, the City of Saskatoon received notification from the Saskatchewan Municipal Infrastructure and Finance Department that Saskatoon Transit would be receiving the Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) and Provincial Transportation Assistance for People with Disabilities (TAPD) Grant. In order to take advantage of this funding, Saskatoon Transit is required to transfer capital funds from a reserve account to the Access Transit Bus Replacement project.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation, recommend to City Council:
That a budget adjustment in the amount of \$330,000 to Capital Project #2095-03 – Access Transit Bus Replacement Project, funded from the Access Transit Capital Reserve, be approved.

BACKGROUND

Saskatoon Transit's Access Transit section typically receives an annual TAPD grant from the Provincial Government, depending on the number of paratransit buses used by agencies within the province. The Grant has usually provided \$55,000 per bus purchased and is normally limited to a maximum number of buses, usually two. This year the limit is again two buses.

When the 2019 budget was developed, it was thought Saskatoon Transit would not be receiving this funding, due to the PTIF and TAPD buses ordered in 2018; therefore, funds were not transferred to the Access Transit Bus Replacement Project.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

For the last 15 years, Saskatoon Transit has received TAPD funding and utilized it as part of the fleet replacement strategy. Last year, Saskatoon Transit was able to apply both PTIF and TAPD funds to purchase a total of 11 new buses (9 and 2 from each respective fund). Saskatoon Transit was able to reduce the Access fleet's average age from 4.6 years to 3 years, and for the first time, met the desired target. In order to maintain this fleet average age, five buses need to be replaced annually. The TAPD funds will cover part of this cost, with the remainder being addressed in the Asset Management Plan for Saskatoon Transit.

Administration is exploring the idea of phasing out the current Access fleet lift-style bus, to a more accessible low-floor style bus, in order to provide an improved, consistent customer experience and a less conspicuous loading process. The low-floor style buses are valued at approximately \$165,000 each, \$51,000 more than the current lift-style bus; therefore, this additional funding is even more significant to maintaining the fleet average age.

NEXT STEPS

Following the approval of this report, \$330,000 will be transferred to Capital Project #2095-03 – Access Transit Bus Replacement and a competitive bid will be advertised for the supply of accessible low-floor Access Transit buses.

Report Approval

Written by:	Paul Bracken, Maintenance Manager, Saskatoon Transit
Reviewed by:	James McDonald, Director of Saskatoon Transit
Approved by:	Terry Schmidt, General Manager, Transportation & Construction Department

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