



City of Prince Albert

RPT 2025-11

TITLE: 2025 Transit Operating Budget

DATE: November 19, 2024

TO: Budget Committee

PUBLIC: X

INCAMERA:

RECOMMENDATION:

That this report be received as information and filed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report aims to provide further transparency to the level of transit service provided within the proposed 2025 Transit Budget.

PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:

This report strives to meet the needs of transit users by providing an effective level of transit service in 2025.

Brief Background

Prince Albert Public Transit is in a period of growth. Since 2019, transit ridership has increased by **61%** (399,433 → 643,290). Over the same period, transit hours of service have increased by **23.8%** (19,736 → 24,436). Ridership has increased at a faster rate than hours of service. This leads to a more efficient transit service but has also led to capacity issues at times. Figure 1 below shows the PA Transit Ridership by year from 2018-2024.

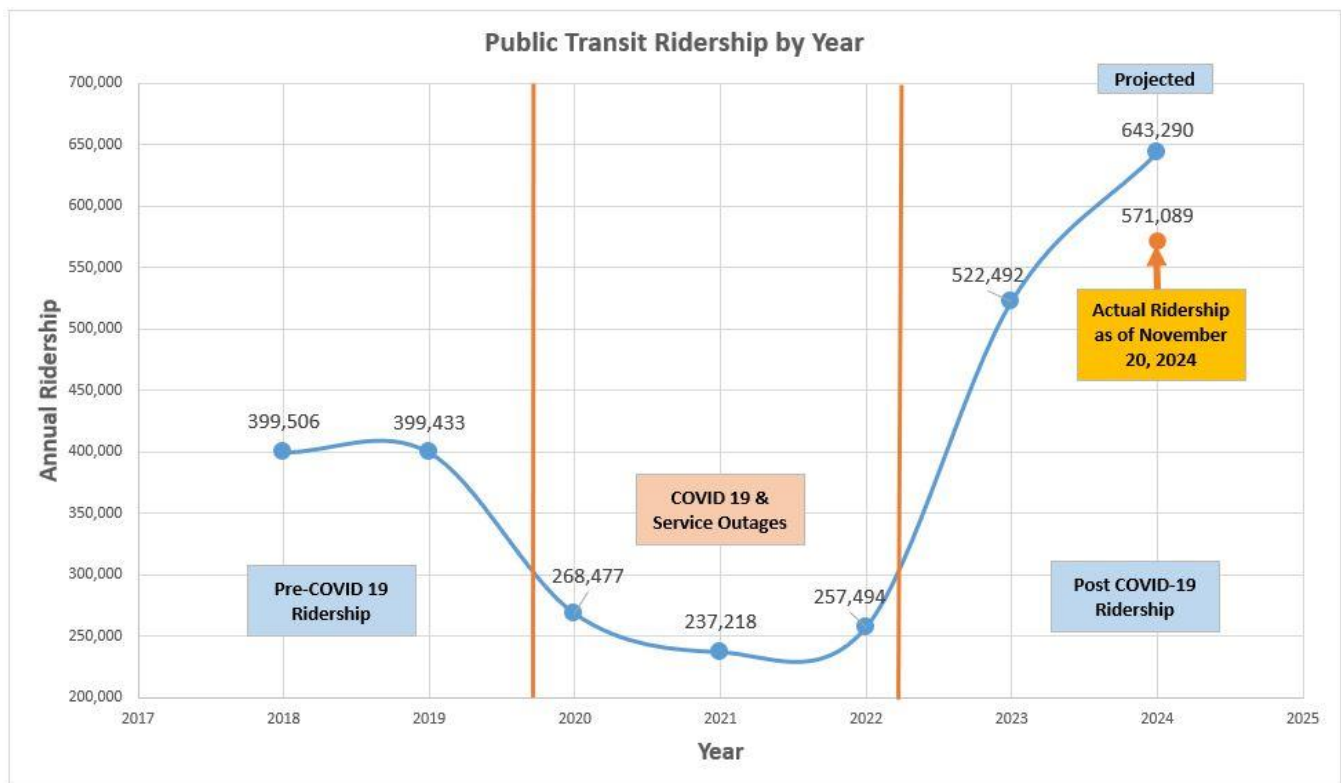


Figure 1: Public Transit Ridership by Year Graph

On January 25th, 2023, the city was approved for One-Time Public Transit Funding for a total of \$415,038 from the Provincial and Federal Governments. To match the demand of the transit system, on February 13th, 2023, City Council approved \$265,000 of this Funding to be allocated towards an extended weekday hours of service trial from March 13th, 2023 – March 31st, 2024. (For more information see Attachment 1 – RPT 23-358 – Transit Extended Hours – Budget 2024).

In September 2023, Saskatchewan Rivers Public School Division officially terminated its High School Bus service. The new high school riders utilizing public transit immediately caused capacity issues with dozens of riders being left behind. On September 13th, 2023, the City added a 2nd East Flat Bus which operated from 7:00am - 10:00am and from 2:30pm – 5:30pm to increase the capacity of the service and reduce turned away trips.

A Little Red Transit Route was trialed from May 4 – August 23, 2024. During this period, the route operated from 11:15am – 7:15pm on weekdays and from 9:45am – 5:15pm on Saturdays. Since August 24th, this route has been operating Saturdays from 9:45am – 5:15pm.

To support the growth of the service, Transit Fares were adjusted on September 1, 2024, for the first time since January 2019 (See Attachment 2 – RPT 24-115 – Transit Fare Review for more information).

In October 2024, the East Flat 2 bus was removed from service and replaced with the Core Express. This route was put into service to improve transit capacity primarily at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, Cornerstone, Carlton Comprehensive and along 6th Avenue East. The route also

worked to provide a same side bus stop at Superstore and new service to the Yard and Future Co-op Leisure Center.

Since October 15th, 2024, the city has been operating as shown in Attachment 3 – Transit Map. The Transit Service had total scheduled operating hours of **24,436** in 2024.

Operating Efficiency

The Cost to Revenue Ratio is used as a comparative measure to determine the cost efficiency of a Transit System. Each year, the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) gathers transit statistics from transit agencies Canada wide. The average Cost to Revenue ratio in municipalities with less than 150,000 population is 33% (2016-2019). Table 1 below shows the Prince Albert Transit Performance Indicators from 2021 to 2024.

It is worth noting that the city subsidy per passenger has been reduced from \$4.85 in 2021 to an estimated \$2.45 in 2024 (the lowest since 2017). Additionally, Ridership and Revenue have reached an all-time high for two consecutive years.

Table 1: Prince Albert Transit Performance Indicators (2021-2024)

Performance Indicators				
	2021	2022	2023	*2024*
Total Cost	\$1,568,906	\$ 1,580,737	\$ 2,218,197	\$2,449,004
Total Revenue	\$ 418,997	\$ 444,401	\$ 688,611	\$ 875,000
Cost/Revenue Ratio	27%	28%	31%	36%
Ridership	237,218	257,494	522,492	643,290
Total Cost Per Passenger	\$ 6.61	\$ 6.14	\$ 4.25	\$ 3.81
Subsidy Per Passenger	\$ 4.85	\$ 4.41	\$ 2.93	\$ 2.45
Average Revenue Per Passenger	\$ 1.77	\$ 1.73	\$ 1.32	\$ 1.36
Note - Values in 2024 are an estimate based off actuals as of Nov 22, 2024				

Proposed Approach

The proposed Scheduled Operating Hours for 2025 are **24,177** a decrease of 259 hours compared to 2024. The proposed operating hours lead to a Self-Employed Contractor Budget of \$2,218,000. This includes the following expenses.

1. Transit Service - \$1,869,600 (Calculated following the rates set in the 2016-26 Transit Service Contract between First Canda ULC and the City of Prince Albert)
2. Transit Fleet Lease - \$343,400 (9 Buses)
3. Cleaning Fees - \$5,000

It is noteworthy that the proposed 2025 budget does not include any transit service to Little Red River Park as provision of this service was completed on a trial basis. With route changes to

made to accommodate high ridership and to avoid turned away customers, there aren't sufficient buses to provide Little Red River Park bus service in 2025.

Table 2 below shows the level of service for Weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays that will be followed within the proposed operating budget throughout 2025.

Table 2: Proposed Transit Operating Level of Service 2025

Proposed Transit Operating Level of Service 2025		
	Hours	Service Level
Weekdays	6:45am - 6:15pm	Half-Hourly
	6:15pm - 10:15pm	Hourly
Saturdays	9:45am - 5:15pm	Half-Hourly
Sundays & Holidays	No Service	

Routes may be modified throughout the year based on operational needs. For example, the East Flat 2 bus was scheduled to operate 6 hours each weekday in 2024. These scheduled hours of service were directly replaced by the new Core Express route in October 2024 to better serve the community. The new route garners higher ridership and has resulted in fewer turned away rides. The change has positively impacted Transit riders and **did not** increase the scheduled annual operating hours.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

All budget details are included within the 2025 Budget documents.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015 is not required.

PRESENTATION:

No presentation is included with this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 – RPT 23-358 – Transit Extended Hours – Budget 2024
2. Attachment 2 – RPT 24-115 – Transit Fare Review
3. Attachment 3 – Transit Map

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