

As a disabled entrepreneur, as an environmentalist I am excited for the plans to improve our public transit system and would like to advocate for a focus on access to employment including locations with entry level job opportunities.

I rely on the public transit system due to a medical condition so am familiar with limitations to employment as well as limited access to different areas of Regina. My prior experience was as an employment facilitator focused on students, newcomers and people changing careers. I have also worked with disabilities groups.

I would like to propose:

- focusing on routes employers in newer suburbs their specific needs as it relates to employment including services for evenings and weekend shifts.
- Partnering with groups that help people access careers, giving introductory offers for trial bus passes to new workers. This would be a positive way to offer low income rates that without requiring that people disclose that they fall below the poverty level
- Increasing the profile: actively partner with community organizations who serve non dominant cultures and marginalized groups, and work with them to promote Regina transit at their community events. Partner with schools, GSA's campus orientation events, assault and domestic violence survivors, newcomer orgs, events they all hold for developing outreach and all of our city's career fairs.
- Speaking with working Unions to explore creating an agreement similar to the U of R to open up jobs in health care and the trades to people who previously couldn't apply there.
- Continuing to encourage the young to use the transit system to develop a culture of transit use. Extend the free transit to the age of 18, kids 12 and under will most often not be traveling alone, but if teens have this access before the age of 16, they could establish an awareness for the potential they have for independent lives as transit users.
- Engage the senior population to try the transit system. Offering free transit for everyone over 50 during low traffic hours of 10 am to 2 pm. This group is reluctant so this change would have slow uptake, but opening it right away could gradually pick up interest.

Today, the people currently working in hospitals, trades, and service industry jobs, are already drivers, so don't ask them if they want transit. Look to the people who have never had access to those opportunities before, and focus on the speed of launching this new transit map to allow unskilled labour, health care, trades, and service industry employers extend their reach to connect with new groups of untapped workers. I implore you to take bold actions in the speed of implementation, while working with employment facilitators and community support organizations. Focus on providing access to employment in areas like the airport, Aurora, the GTH, shopping centres in the suburbs and the industrial area of Regina as soon as possible, having a large uptake on transit users will empower the city to move forward on this plan as quickly as possible.

Carla Harris