



2010 Annual Report



2010 Saskatoon Transit Services Annual Report

Saskatoon Transit provides a high quality of service for all citizens in our community, and is undertaking initiatives focused on building its ridership. Saskatoon, like most North American cities, has been built to accommodate private vehicles as the primary means for moving around. Cities everywhere are realizing that car-oriented patterns of development are no longer sustainable in the long term, and that more and more people are seeking other ways to ‘move around’.

Transit services includes both a fixed-route component, that operates 24 bus routes along approximately 276 kilometres of streets, and Access Transit, which is an accessible-door-to-accessible-door service for citizens who cannot use the fixed-route service with safety and dignity.

Saskatoon Transit has a fleet size of 152 buses including 62 high-floor conventional 40 foot diesel buses, 75 low-floor conventional 40 foot diesel buses, 8 low-floor conventional 40 foot diesel/electric hybrid buses, and 3 low-floor articulating 62 foot diesel buses.



(62' low-floor articulating bus)

Access Transit is discussed in a separate annual report; this report will focus on the fixed-route regular transit service.

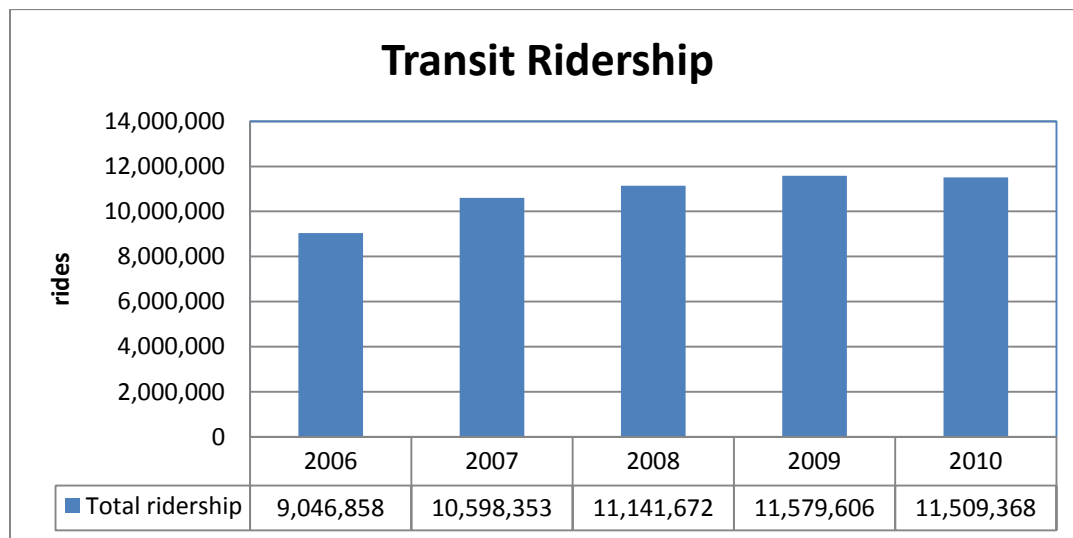
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OUR CUSTOMER



Ridership – Since 2006, ridership has grown by approximately 27% for Saskatoon Transit. This growth followed a strategic service change in 2006 including the implementation of a DART (Direct Access Rapid Transit) system.

Between 2009 and 2010, ridership dipped slightly by .001%. Saskatoon Transit is again at a point of re-defining its services in a manner which attracts new customers away from single vehicle use to using transit as their primary mode of transportation.



Transit ridership is distributed between the following categories: seniors, cash/ticket, month/day pass, discount pass, and post-secondary pass (i.e. UPass and Semester Pass). In 2010, Transit changed from a manual fare collection system to an electronic fare collection system. Ridership has historically been estimated based on sales of product.

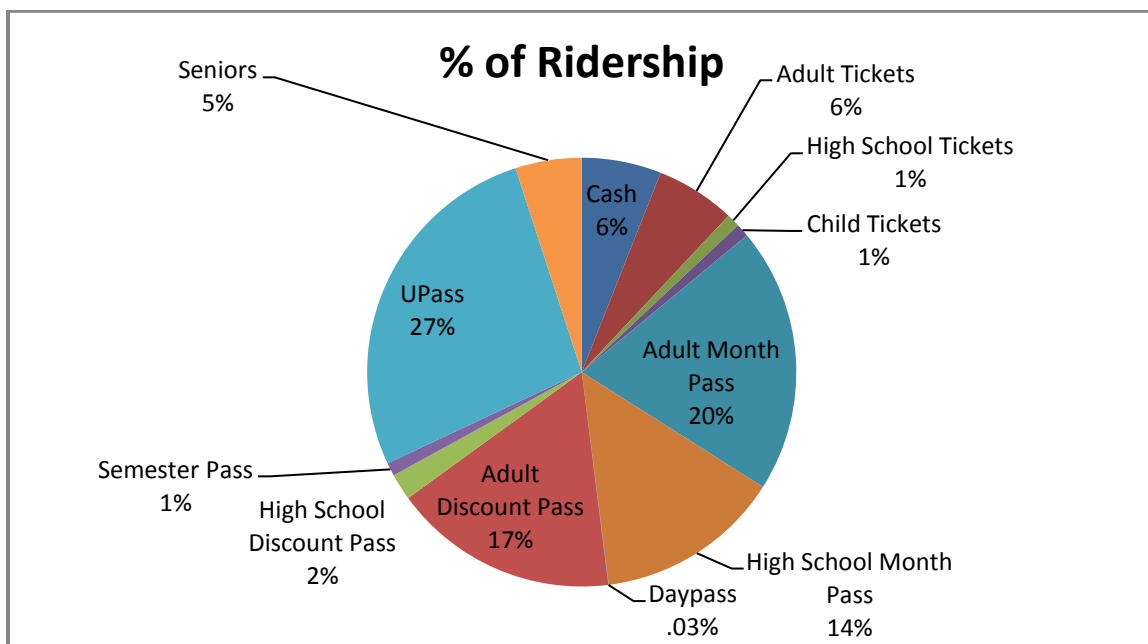
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In 2011, Transit has begun the process of migrating from estimating ridership based on assumptions, to a system that uses electronic data to more accurately reflect ridership patterns and usage. The electronic fare system that was implemented in February 2010 will provide this information. Saskatoon and Regina plan to move passenger counting from estimated (based on ticket sales) to actual (based on fare box data) at the same time, likely in 2011, in order to ensure relative equity is retained regarding provincial funding.



(Electronic Farebox)

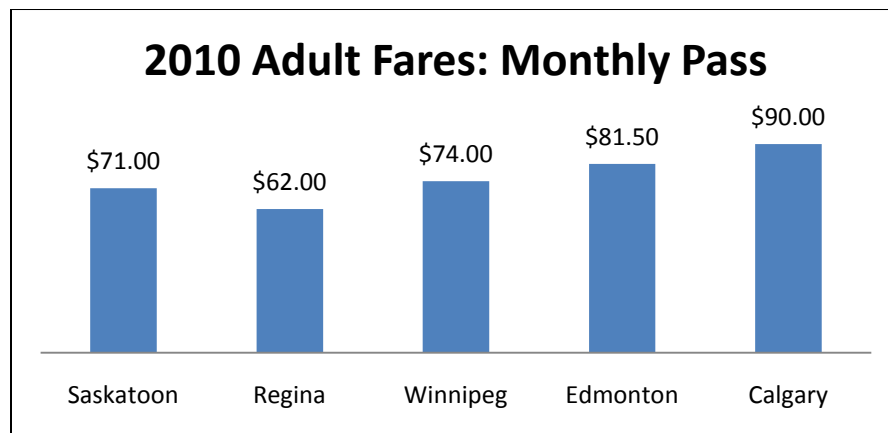
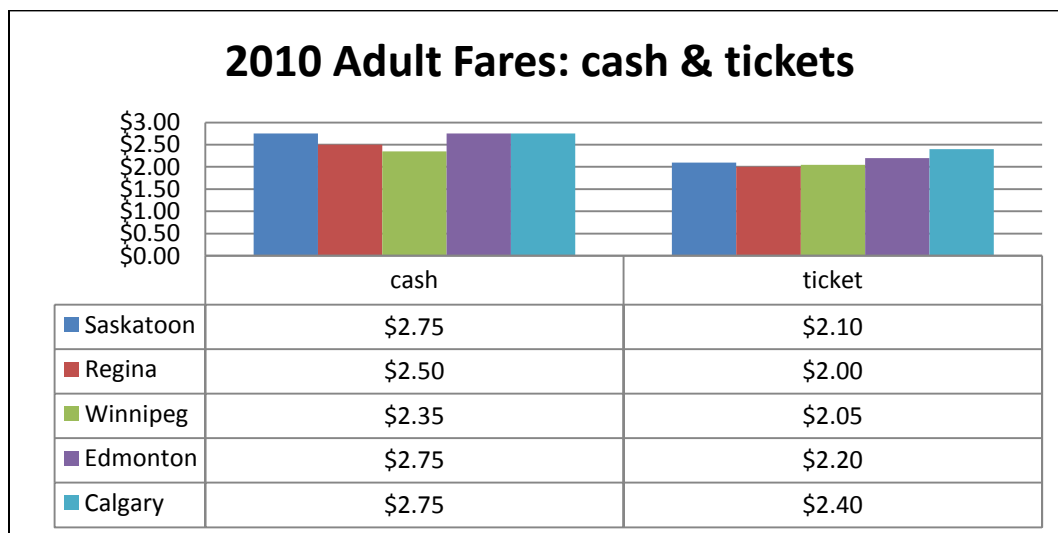
Currently, the top three categories of users of transit services includes; UPass – 27%, Adult monthly pass – 20%, and Adult discount Pass – 17%.

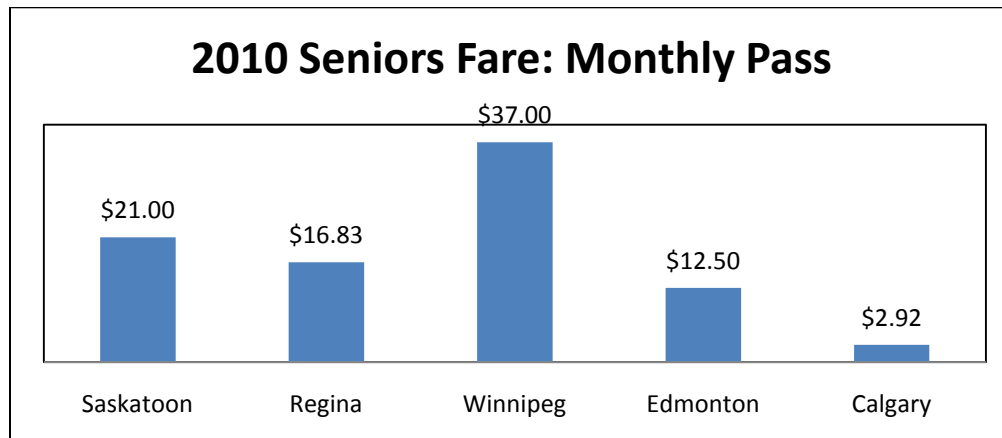


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Competitive Fares - Saskatoon offers discounted fares for low income residents, seniors, and elementary, high school and post-secondary students. Fares may be paid by cash, bulk purchase of rides, or one of our passes that allow unlimited monthly rides (i.e. Adult Pass and High School Student Pass). Senior citizens may purchase unlimited rides for periods of one-month, three-months, six-months and one year. Post secondary students may purchase a semester pass that allows unlimited rides.

Adult fares are compared to other prairie cities in the following charts. Regina and Calgary do not have senior monthly fares; the amounts shown are average monthly annual fares.

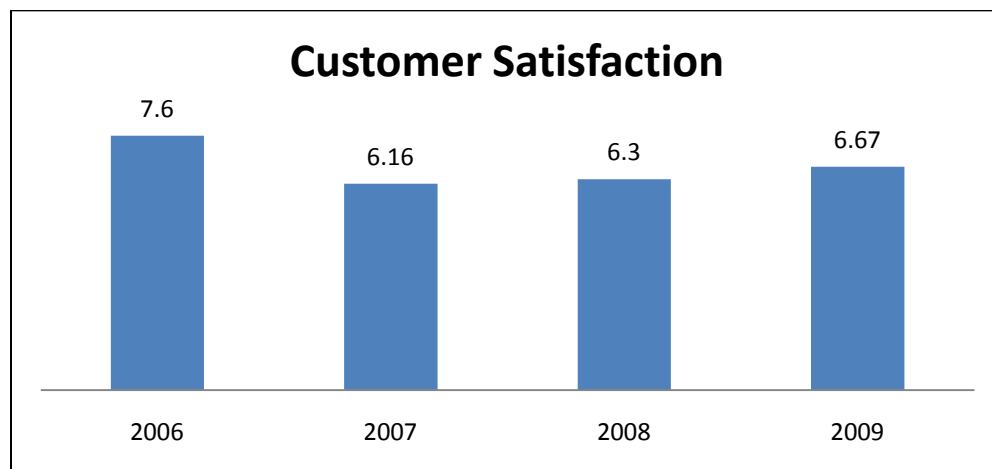




Customer Satisfaction and Complaints -

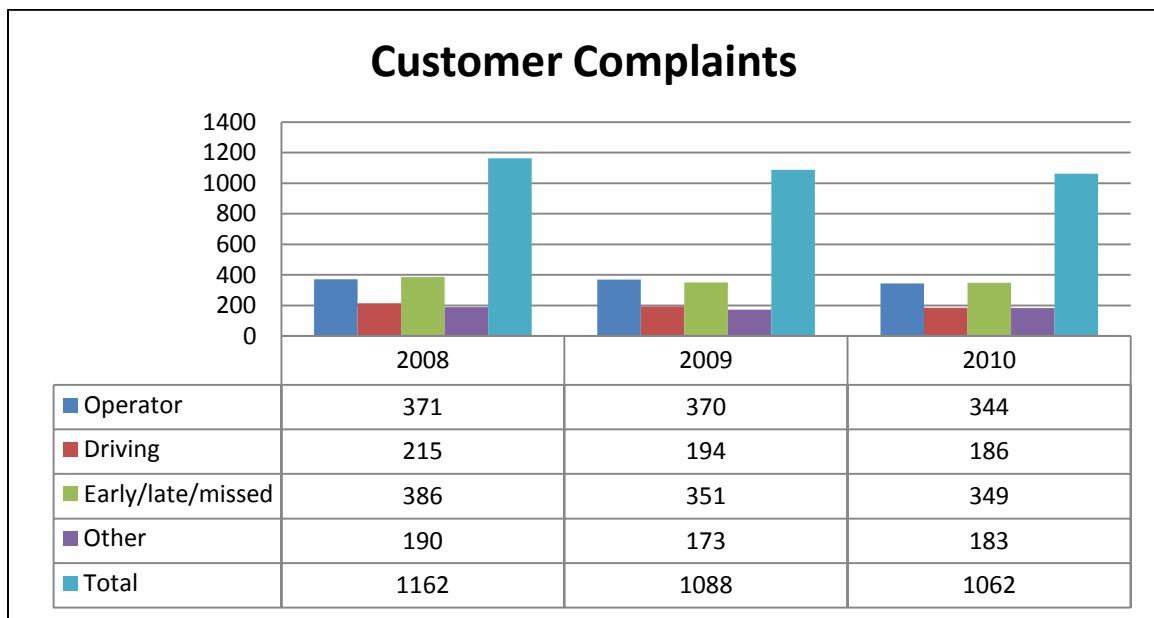
Our customer goal is to provide consistent, timely, friendly, and professional services to our customers, where customers feel they have received value and are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

The City of Saskatoon 2009 Public Opinion Survey showed that public transportation is important to the residents of Saskatoon. A score of 10 means “excellent” and 5 means “average”. The following chart tracks customer satisfaction for public transportation, buses and routes.



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Transit’s internal customer complaint/commendation recording system provides data and information that forms the basis for staying in touch with the needs of customers and identifies service issues that need to be addressed. The number of complaints fell in 2010, despite the introduction of a new fare collection system and some buses running late. There were 1,062 complaints in 2010, which were 26 fewer than 2009 and 100 fewer than 2008. Complaints were primarily about the buses arriving early, late, or driving by without stopping; the operator; and operator driving. Transit believes the underlying issues are insufficient run times, increased traffic congestion, and higher ridership loads during peak operating periods. We are working to improve our system to better meet the needs of our riders.



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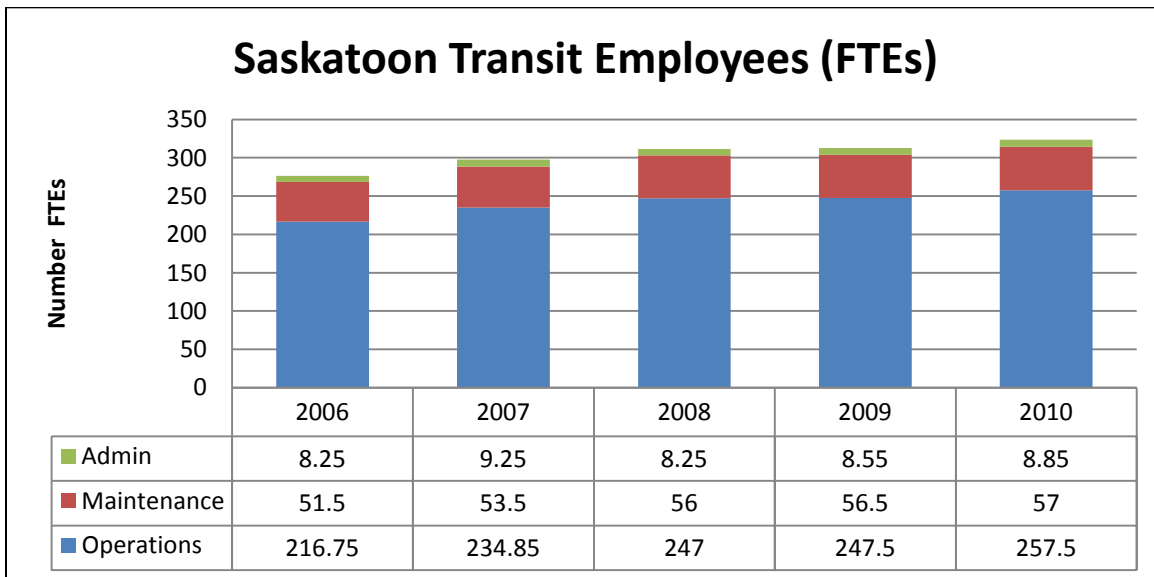
OUR PEOPLE

Saskatoon Transit employs approximately 323 staff. Transit operations include operators, supervision, customer service, planning, and scheduling.



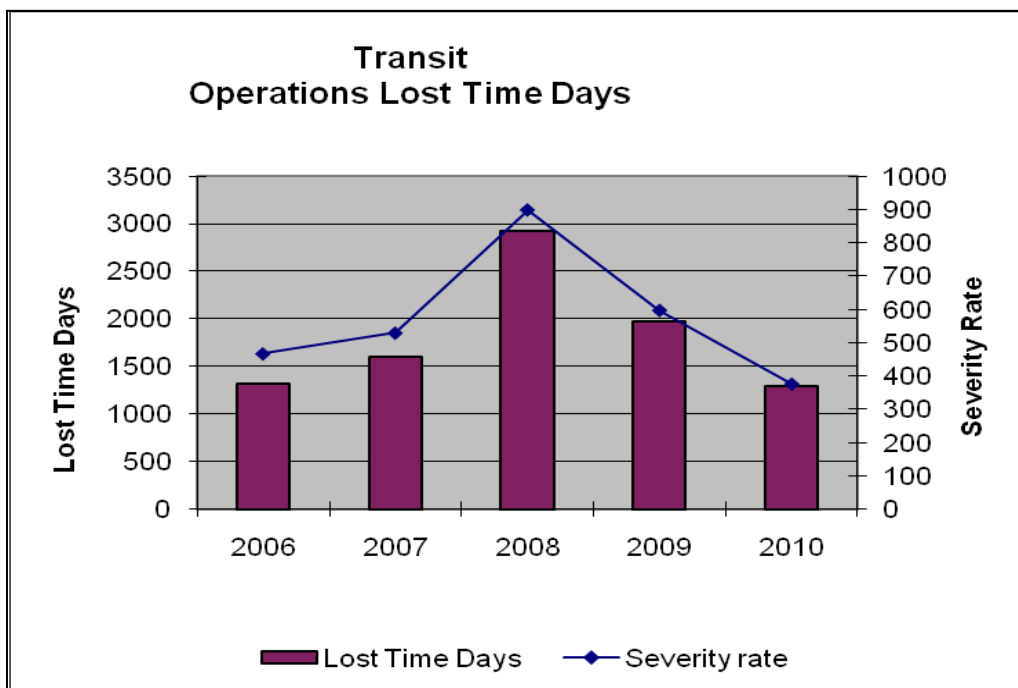
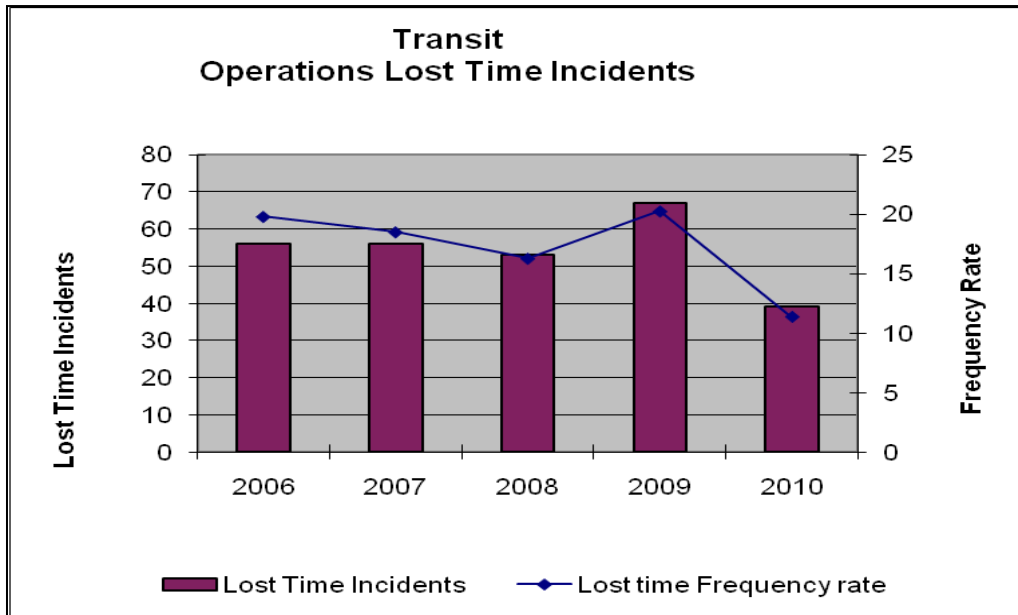
Transit maintenance includes minor and major repairs, body work, overhauls, cleaning of the bus fleet, repair and cleaning of bus shelters, and the operating of the Stores function. Administration includes managerial, accounting, payroll, and clerical. City Hall services include some administration and computer services.

Saskatoon Transit Employees (FTEs)



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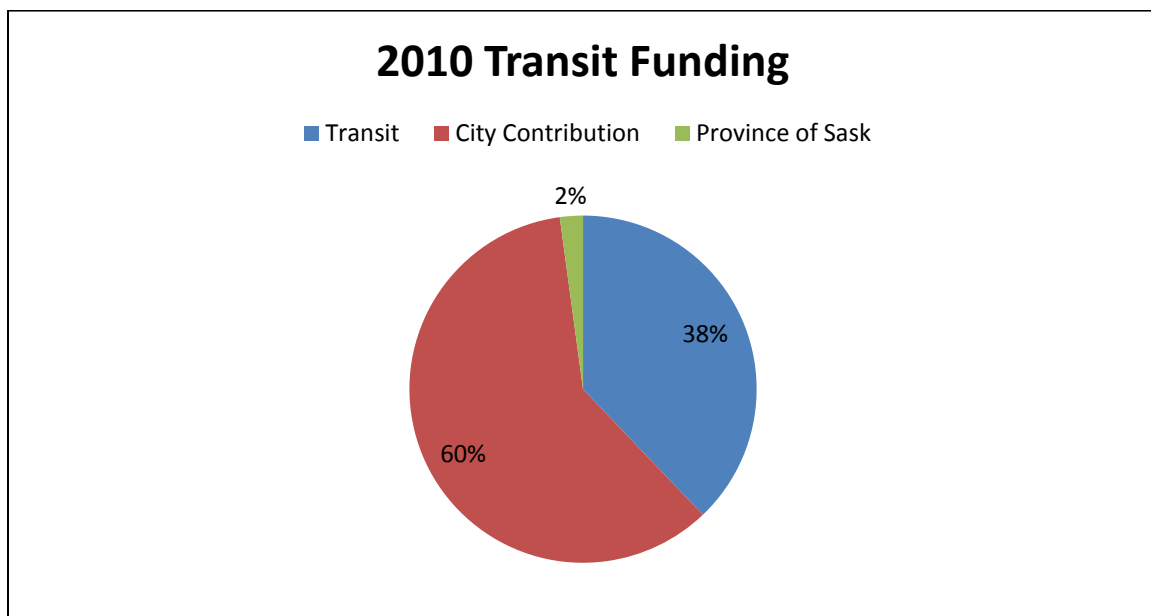
In 2010, Saskatoon Transit Services experienced 39 lost time incidents for a total of 1,295 lost time days. Both measures are the lowest over the last five years. Safety statistics are presented in the following charts, which show the lost time incidents and days by year as well as frequency rates (number of incidents or days per 200,000 hours worked).



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OUR FINANCES

In 2010, Transit's operating budget was \$30.4 million. Funding for the Transit Operations in 2010 was provided through the following: the mill rate contributed 60% of the cost of operating, Saskatoon Transit revenue paid for 38%, and the remaining 2% is funding from the Province of Saskatchewan to help pay for the low income Discount Bus Program.



Saskatoon Transit costs were 2% over budget in 2010, increasing the City's contribution by \$602,000. The variance from budget is due to lower than budgeted fare revenue of \$538,000 due to lower than budgeted ridership, movement in the type of fare purchased from regular media to the discounted bus pass, and lost revenue due to reimbursing vendors for the inventory of fare product they had when Transit switched to the new Go-Pass media.

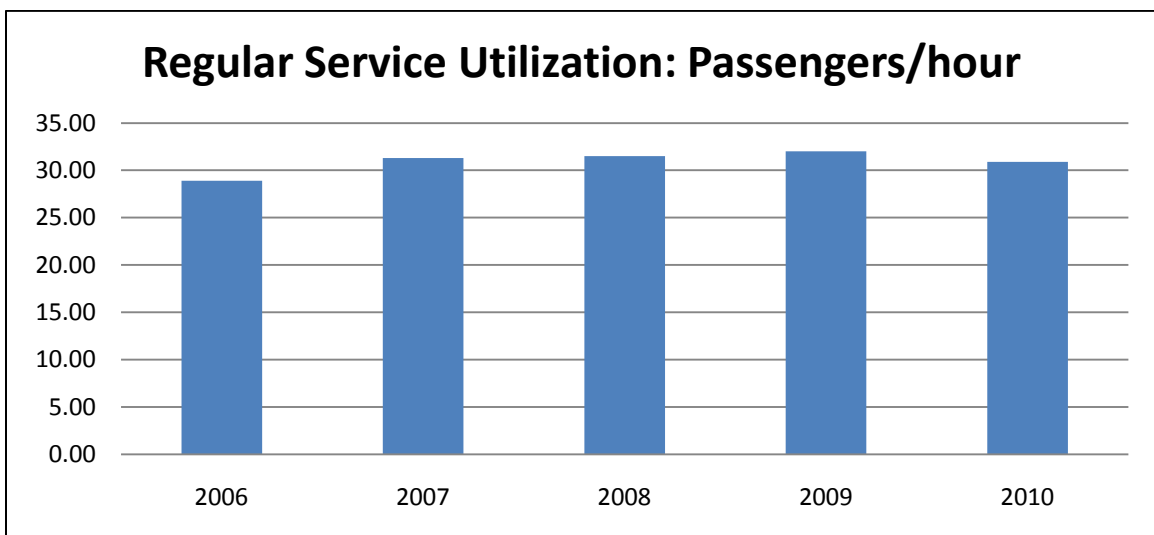
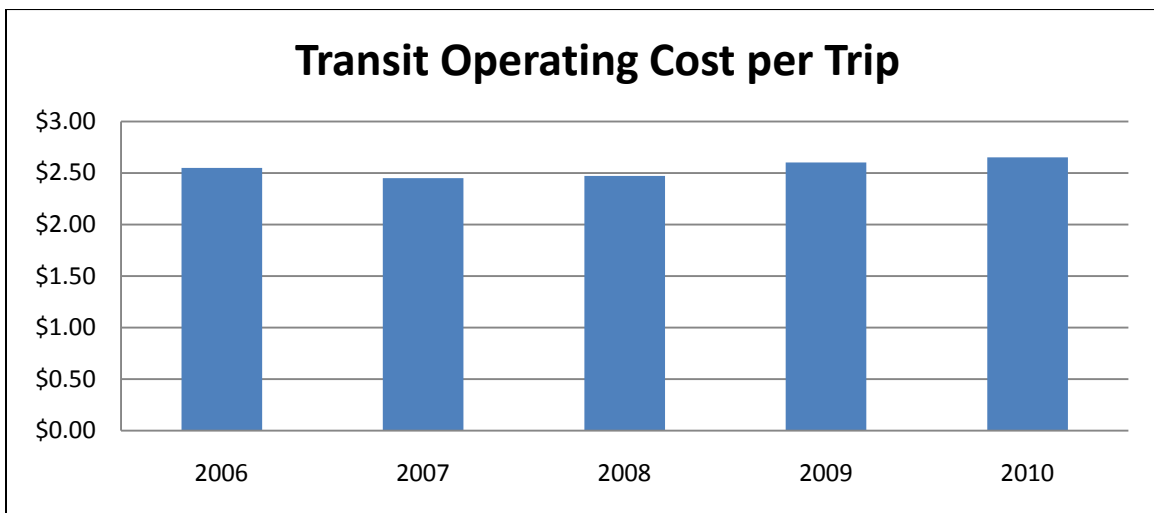
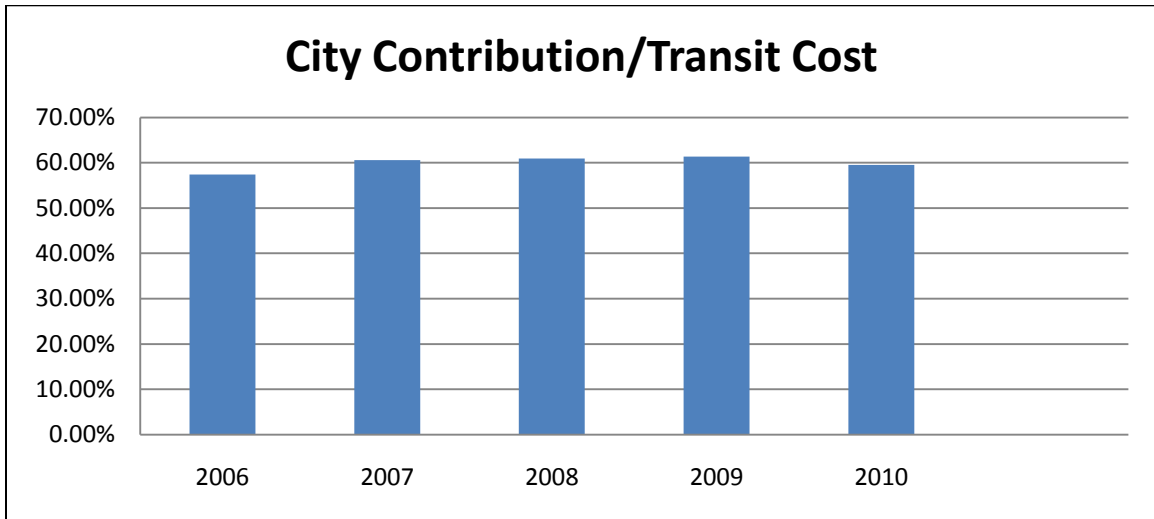
In addition, transit operations and fuel expense exceeded budget by \$697,000, but lower than budget Transit maintenance and other expenses helped to offset these over expenditures.

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2010 Transit Utility Operating Budget Variance (\$000)

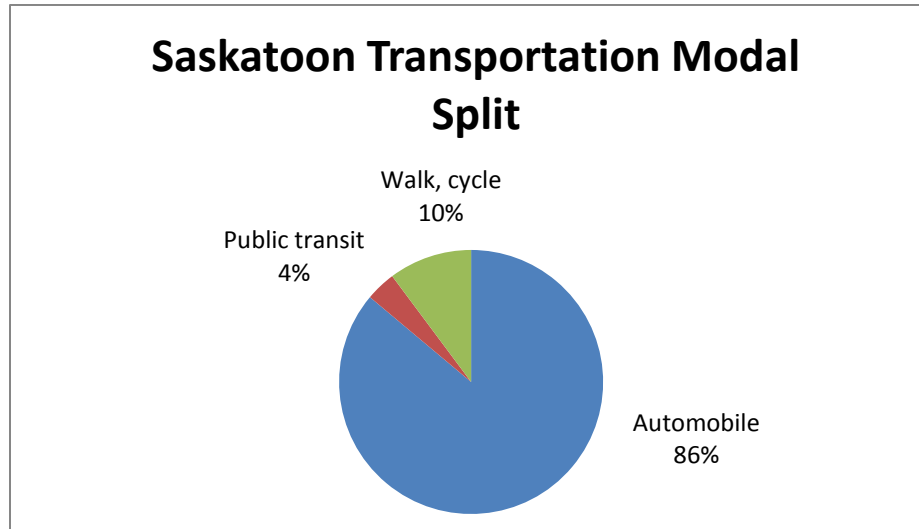
	Budget	Actual	Variance	%
Revenue:				
Fare Revenue	\$10,782	\$10,244	(\$538)	- 4.99%
Charter, advertising, and other	1,301	1,344	44	3.38%
City Contribution	17,754	17,754	0	0.00%
Province of Sask	539	657	118	21.89%
Total revenue	\$30,375	\$29,999	(\$376)	- 1.24%
Expenses:				
Transit Operations	\$16,621	\$17,206	\$585	3.52%
Fuel, Lube & Oil	3,666	3,778	112	3.05%
Transit Maintenance	4,802	4,396	(406)	- 8.45%
Building Maintenance	1,015	1,015	1	0.05%
City Hall Services	637	617	(20)	- 3.15%
Grants-in-lieu of taxes	183	125	(59)	-32.02%
General & admin	1,546	1,560	14	0.89%
Capital (debt & reserve)	1,905	1,905	(0)	- 0.01%
Total expense	\$30,375	\$30,601	\$226	0.74%
Revenue less expense	(\$0)	(\$602)	(\$602)	
Increase to City Contribution	0	\$602		

Several initiatives were implemented in 2010 to increase ridership and revenue. A discounted employer/employee bus fare program (Eco Pass) was introduced in the fall and has slowly been evolving as a positive ridership and revenue generator for transit. Transit continues to purchase and install bike racks to encourage new riders to combine multi-modal transportation options and effectively increase ridership. Three new 60 foot articulating buses have been purchased to better match ridership on some routes, and ultimately improve upon operational efficiencies. While these initiatives have helped to reduce the City contribution as a percent of total operating costs to 60%, a slowdown in ridership growth has increased the cost per trip and decreased the utilization rate per hour.



OUR WORK

A More Environmentally-Sustainable City - The City of Saskatoon is working on making public transit more efficient and attractive, but it will be important to compliment improvements with a more transit-oriented approach to planning growth and designing development. An integrated approach between the City's Saskatoon Transit, Transportation, and Planning and Development Branches will support a community shift towards transit as a primary mode of transportation. As Saskatoon grows, traffic congestion and commuting times will continue to increase, and this shift to a public transportation focus will become more and more important.



Transit Relocation - Numerous issues have evolved supporting the need to relocate Saskatoon Transit to a new location, including:

- an immediate need for expansion and upgrade to both the storage and maintenance areas;
- the current location of transit operations and facilities is not compatible with the adjacent neighbourhood;



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- the auto body area for Transit is in a separate facility at the north end of the city, in a building intended to be dedicated to Access Transit; and
- Transit is continuing to increase the size of its fleet and is purchasing various bus sizes and types.



Aging Bus Fleet – Through the assistance of Federal funding, strides have been made over the last four years to replace older, unreliable buses with new buses. The average age of Saskatoon’s bus fleet is still relatively high in comparison to other comparable transit systems – 12.2 as opposed to 9.5 years old. This is a result of an insufficient number of buses being purchased over the last 20 years.

The cost to repair older buses and/or procure diminishing parts has become a challenge and changes to emission technology on new buses has increased repair time and costs. As Transit increases service hours, the size of its fleet increases.

IN CONCLUSION

The success of Saskatoon Transit is dependent on the dedication and skills of its employees and their efforts are greatly appreciated. The guidance and support of City Council, the City Manager, and the General Manager of the Utility Services Department is also acknowledged and appreciated.

Saskatoon Transit and its staff look forward to the challenges and the opportunities that the future will provide.