



Lethbridge
SCHOOL DIVISION

Lethbridge School Division
Holy Spirit Catholic School Division

Student transportation services presentation

1. Statement of issue



Lethbridge School Division and Holy Spirit Catholic School Division request that Lethbridge City Council reconsider its recommendation to transfer school bus services back to the school divisions



The two school divisions request the city continue to support this collaborative endeavour.



This partnership is beneficial not only to the school boards, but also to the ratepayers of the City of Lethbridge.

2. History of the partnership



The city partnership for school bus services has existed for over 50 years.



It is recognized as a unique, efficient agreement, one which the Province of Alberta is examining as a delivery model going forward for other jurisdictions in the province.



This partnership has always worked collaboratively to address any challenges or concerns of any of the parties in the agreement, in support of an efficient, effective school-transportation service.

3. How school bus service is funded



The Province of Alberta provides grant funding to school boards to provide transportation for students.



The school divisions use the funds provided by this provincial grant to transport students who live 2.4 kilometres or more from their designated schools.



The contract between the City of Lethbridge and the school divisions is based on a **cost-recovery model**.

3. How school bus service is funded



In the 2018/2019 school year, school divisions made payments to the City totalling \$3.2 million.



This partnership exists at no cost to the City of Lethbridge. All charges are directed to the school divisions. In fact, a surplus of \$74,000, was reported last year and has been applied to offset the divisions' 2019/2020 invoices.



The school bus budget for 2019/2020, as provided by the City of Lethbridge, is \$2.8 million. This amount not only includes direct bussing costs, but also coverage for administration, overhead and insurance.

3. How school bus service is funded

City of Lethbridge School Bussing 2019/2020 Budget

	Current Year Budget	Prior Year Budget	Change
Driver and Coordinator Wages & Benefits	\$ 1,393,600	\$ 1,382,400	.81%
Administration Wages & Benefits	144,600	148,000	12.33%
<i>Administration Recoveries</i>	(14,300)	(32,000)	
Training/Education	8,000	6,500	23.08%
Reception & Conventions	1,000	1,000	-
Memberships & Subscriptions	800	800	-
Medical Fees	2,600	2,500	4.00%
Parts & Supplies	234,000	209,000	11.96%
Radio Maintenance	64,200	62,800	2.23%
Maintenance Work Order Time	153,600	145,000	5.93%
Overhead	256,500	235,200	32.69%
<i>Overhead Recoveries</i>	(50,700)	(80,100)	
Fuel	301,900	297,800	1.38%
Insurance	258,300	261,400	(1.19%)
Computer Hardware, Software & Network	12,500	12,900	(3.10%)
School Bus Parking & Bus Washes	50,800	45,200	12.39%
Total Estimate (less GST)	\$ 2,817,400	\$ 2,698,400	4.41%

	2019/20 Split	2019/20 Allocation	Less P/Y Surplus	2019/20 Invoice
Lethbridge School Division	57.9405%	\$ 1,632,416	\$ 42,039	\$ 1,590,376
Holy Spirit Catholic Schools	42.0595%	\$ 1,184,984	\$ 32,312	\$ 1,152,672
		\$ 2,817,400	\$ 74,351	\$ 2,743,049

**Information provided by City of Lethbridge - Transit Services*

4. The Current Agreement



According to the Student Transportation Memorandum of Understanding, the City of Lethbridge:



- is tasked with providing the school divisions with “annual proposals for the costs of services, based on an agreed-upon level of services.”



- shall provide invoicing “on a regular basis for all capital, operations and maintenance costs, as well as all related administration costs; such invoices will cover the services provided to [the school divisions] on a pro-rated basis of all included costs.”

4. Risk exposure



According to the Student Transportation Memorandum of Understanding:



“Each party agrees to indemnify and hold the other party, its successors, assigns, directors, officers, staff and other employees harmless from and against any form of liability, losses, damages and expenses of any kind or nature incurred by the other party, its successors, assigns, directors, officers, staff and employees by reason of any and all manner of actions, suits, claims or demands whatsoever at law or in equity which may be asserted against them by any and all third parties by reason or any matter, cause or thing whatsoever arising from the negligence or willful misconduct of the other party, its employees, agents or any party acting on behalf of or under the party’s authority. This indemnification shall survive the termination of this Agreement.”



Liability concerns: The school divisions will present solutions to the concerns the City of Lethbridge has in regards to the risk associated with school buses and school bus drivers.

5. Issues to consider



Impact to parents and students: Paying a third-party vendor means transportation costs will increase for parents, for the same level of service. This can be a huge encumbrance to many families, especially lower-income households.



Impact to Lethbridge Transit: Current busses may be further underutilized and employment opportunities for bus drivers and staff will be lost. Contributions towards existing administration and overhead will no longer be available.



Impact to Lethbridge: Funds that would otherwise be directed to Lethbridge will instead be sent to an external transportation company, negatively impacting the local economy.

6. Our partnership



The partnership between the city and the school divisions has been good for kids, good for our schools and good for city taxpayers.



Through Team Lethbridge, the school divisions and the city have a close working relationship, as illustrated by Mayor Chris Spearman's quote below, in a letter to the Hon. Adriana LaGrange, Minister of Education, dated Sept. 25, 2019.



“On behalf of the City of Lethbridge, Lethbridge School Division and Holy Spirit Catholic Schools, we would like to thank you for the meeting with our representatives on Sept. 18, 2019. We are hopeful that the meeting provided you with a greater understanding of how our three organizations work together, not only on capital projects but on transportation. Our school boards and the City of Lethbridge have a history of working proactively in the development of schools sites within city boundaries and will continue to do so.”

6. Our partnership (more than just bussing)



Historically, our ability to collaborate has provided unquestionable benefits that have improved the overall health of our communities.



Collaboration has been at the centre of a number of our agreements (Elections, Joint-Use, etc.). This has ensured land, facility and transportation infrastructure has all been more effectively implemented, used and managed.



The divisions understand the city is looking for efficiencies. We look forward to further consultation to find solutions that are truly beneficial to all partners.

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