

# 2025

State of  
**SASKATOON TRANSIT FLEET  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

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*The State of Report is a standardized Corporate Asset Management tool designed to give City Council and Executive Leadership a strategic overview of each infrastructure portfolio. It outlines the current condition, performance, risk levels, service level achievement and asset management capacity, promoting transparent, evidence-based decision-making across the organization. A Corporate Asset Management Consolidated Report consolidates findings from all asset portfolio State of Reports into one overall executive summary report.*

## INTRODUCTION

Saskatoon Transit is a department of the City of Saskatoon. Its mission is to provide cost-effective, safe and affordable public transit services using clean and environmentally friendly equipment to get people to work, education, health care, shopping, social and recreational opportunities.

Saskatoon Transit continues to evolve its maintenance program into a forward-thinking world-class shop that manages a reliable bus fleet for a growing city and a new bus rapid transit system (Link) launching in 2028. An enhanced service model was implemented in 2024, with a strong preventative maintenance focus, using artificial intelligence to inform maintenance needs.

Saskatoon Transit is funded by fare revenue, the Department of Community Resources' Passes and Accessible Transit Grant and a City of Saskatoon contribution. The City's funding model for transit fleet replacement relies primarily on federal government programs. A \$113.2 million fleet renewal plan was approved by City Council in June 2025 for bus purchases from 2024 to 2030 to build capacity for Link, and achieve and maintain an industry-standard fleet age.

*Saskatoon Transit serves nearly a million rides each month. Fixed-route transit, with 42 routes and more than 1,500 stops, and Access Transit serve all corners of the city providing eco-friendly and safe alternative transportation for residents.*

## STEWARDS

Saskatoon Transit is responsible for the purchase and repair of all buses and shelters. Additional service vehicles are contracted through Corporate Fleet Services.

*Table 1: Summary of responsible asset stewards*

| Responsibility                | Description  | Responsible Party                                |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Overall Accountability</b> | Asset Owner  | Director, Saskatoon Transit                      |
| <b>Fleet management</b>       | Manages maintenance and procurement of fixed-route and paratransit buses and all equipment necessary for these activities. | Fleet and Maintenance Manager, Saskatoon Transit |
| <b>Shelters</b>               | Manages inventory, selects appropriate locations for new shelters and coordinates maintenance and repairs.                 | Planning Manager, Saskatoon Transit              |

## CURRENT INVENTORY AND VALUE

Saskatoon Transit has many assets, including buses, shelters and column lifts/hoists. Other shop tools are handled as part of the operating budgets. Three separate facilities are used for Transit maintenance, operations and administrative support:

- Civic Operations Center – 57 Valley Road – Maintained by the P3 facility manager.

- Access Transit - 422 46 St E – Maintained by the Corporate Facilities Management department.
- Customer Service Centre - 226 23 St E – Maintained through a private lease.

Furniture, signage and shelters at the 1,500 bus stops vary across the city. Saskatoon Transit owns and manages the maintenance of the shelters and signage; however, furniture such as benches and waste containers is owned and managed by third parties.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of all assets, including fixed-route fleet equipment, Access Transit fleet equipment, shelter inventory and column lifts. Power mobile equipment refers to light vehicles, skid steers and other light power equipment that is managed through shorter planning and budget periods.

**Table 2: Saskatoon Transit asset inventory (December 31, 2024)**

| Asset                                     | Inventory  | Replacement value<br>(2025 dollars) |
|---|------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Fixed-route fleet</b>                  |            |                                     |
| 30-foot buses                             | 7          | \$4,200,000*                        |
| 40-foot buses                             | 115        | 108,548,500                         |
| 60-foot buses                             | 9          | 13,355,100                          |
| 40-foot battery-electric buses            | 2          | 2,786,100**                         |
| <b>Total fixed-route fleet</b>            | <b>133</b> | <b>128,889,700</b>                  |
| <b>Fixed-route power mobile equipment</b> | <b>7</b>   | <b>480,000</b>                      |
| <b>Access paratransit fleet</b>           |            |                                     |
| 26-foot lift-equipped buses               | 27         | 6,048,000                           |
| 26-foot ramp-equipped buses               | 2          | 540,000                             |
| <b>Total Access paratransit fleet</b>     | <b>29</b>  | <b>6,588,000</b>                    |
| <b>Access power mobile equipment</b>      | <b>4</b>   | <b>240,000</b>                      |
| <b>Column lifts/ hoists</b>               | <b>84</b>  | <b>1,680,000</b>                    |
| <b>Shelters</b>                           | <b>250</b> | <b>1,570,000</b>                    |
| <b>Total inventory replacement value</b>  |            | <b>\$139,447,700</b>                |

\*Purchase Value as of 2017, as these units are no longer available

\*\*Purchase Value as of 2024, cost includes a charger and two dispensers

### Zero-emissions buses

In 2022 City Council approved \$2.64 million to purchase two 40-foot battery-electric buses (BEBs). At that time, the long-term fleet plan included purchasing up to 57 BEBs by 2032 as a critical step towards achieving climate targets outlined in the City of Saskatoon's Low-Emissions Community Plan and Climate Action Plan. Saskatoon Transit applied for funding to purchase BEBs through the capital stream of the federal government's Zero Emissions Transit Fund

(ZETF) and was subsequently notified in 2024 that the application was not approved as the program was fully subscribed.

Saskatoon Transit also applied for funding under the planning stream of ZETF to complete a planning study for the transition to a zero-emission fixed-route fleet, which was approved. The Canadian Urban Transit Research and Innovation Consortium completed the study in 2025 and recommended that the data-driven pathway forward for Saskatoon Transit is to purchase diesel buses as the most cost-effective solution for fleet renewal in the short to medium term. Saskatoon Transit will revisit the study in 2030 to determine if the total cost of ownership of zero-emission buses and the greenhouse gas reductions from the power grid have improved.

The two battery-electric buses arrived in 2024 and are in regular service.

## ASSET PERFORMANCE WITH DATA CONFIDENCE

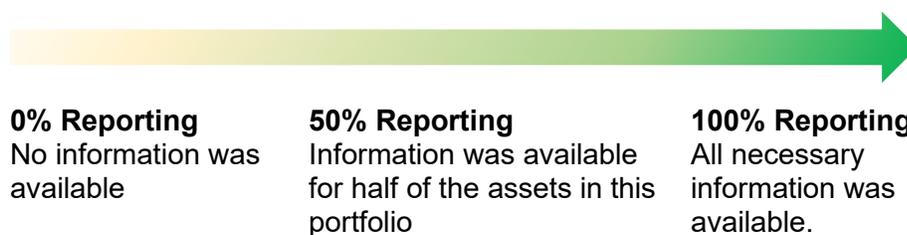
### Data Confidence & Reporting Levels

To support more transparent reporting and insights, the framework reports two metrics alongside the data: Data Confidence (Table 3) and Reporting Levels (Figure 1).

*Table 3: Data Confidence: Perceived accuracy of the information*

| Rating | Description     | Description   |
|--------|-----------------|---|
| 5      | Highly Reliable | High-quality data sources (trusted, timely, complete, consistent, accurate and relevant)            |
| 4      | Reliable        | Mix of high-quality and some lower-quality data sources requiring subject matter expert assumptions |
| 3      | Uncertain       | High-level assumptions by subject matter experts inferred from suspect quality data sources         |
| 2      | Very Uncertain  | Primarily based on high-level subject matter expert assumptions                                     |
| 1      | Unknown         | Data source is not known  |

*Figure 1: Reporting Levels: Availability of data in mandatory fields for each asset*



### Current Condition of Asset Service Life

The monitoring level for asset condition is dependent on the asset class and is rated on condition (Table 4).

**Table 4: Condition rating structure**

| Condition Description | % of Estimated Service Life Used | Explanation   |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Very Good (VG)</b> | 0–20%                            | New unit, no wear/tear.   |
| <b>Good (G)</b>       | 21–50%                           | Normal maintenance cost, good overall condition, low km.  |
| <b>Fair (F)</b>       | 51–80%                           | Maintenance cost begins to rise, moderate km usage.   |
| <b>Poor (P)</b>       | 81–100%                          | Unit needs to be replaced, high km, maintenance costs at a steep incline, body condition deteriorating. |
| <b>Very Poor (VP)</b> | >100%                            | Units no longer operational, potential safety issues, not economically feasible to maintain.            |

The current condition of assets is outlined in Table 5, using the condition rating structure from Table 4, with assigned level of data confidence outlined in Table 3 and level of reporting using the Figure 1 rating scale.

**Table 5: Current condition of assets as of December 31, 2024**

| Asset                     | Average age (years) | Target average age (years) | Data Confidence (1-5) | Reporting Level | Condition of assets |       |       |      |           |
|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------|-------|------|-----------|
|                           |                     |                            |                       |                 | Very good           | Good  | Fair  | Poor | Very poor |
| <b>30-foot buses</b>      | 8                   | 7.5                        | 4                     | 100%            |                     |       | 100%  |      |           |
| <b>40-foot buses</b>      | 11.2                | 7.5                        | 4                     | 100%            | 8.5%                | 18.5% | 30.5% | 9.5% | 33%       |
| <b>60-foot buses</b>      | 10.4                | 7.5                        | 4                     | 100%            | 33%                 |       |       | 55%  | 12%       |
| <b>Para-transit buses</b> | 4.4                 | 3                          | 4                     | 100%            | 15%                 | 26%   | 8%    | 40%  | 11%       |
| <b>Shelters</b>           | n/a                 | 25                         | 2                     | 50%             | 40%                 | 11%   | 11%   | 30%  | 8%        |
| <b>Column Lifts</b>       | 6                   | 20                         | 4                     | 100%            |                     | 84%   | 16%   |      |           |

A high level of data confidence exists within the bus fleet and hoists. Bus shelter data confidence and reporting are lower due to the absence of service standards and newly established maintenance programs. Steps to address increasing data confidence will be taken through improved reporting within the bus shelter maintenance program.

## Condition Assessment Methodology & Programs

The preventative maintenance program includes a routine inspection of all fixed-route assets every 2,500 kilometres. During an inspection all defects are identified to be repaired and the condition of the bus is rated. An annual safety inspection is also performed as part of the Commercial Carrier Profile requirements and vehicle licensing.

Access Transit asset conditions are similarly assessed through routine inspections. This is when a mechanic can identify common areas where rust and corrosion tend to develop. In response, targeted preventative treatment measures have been applied, such as a rust inhibitor and undercoating in vulnerable areas. These proactive steps help avoid labour-intensive rust repair work during the unit's service life.

The facilities at Civic Operations Center and Access Transit use Stertil-Koni mobile column lifts to raise vehicles for working under them. These lifts are subject to yearly inspection and certification performed by Stertil-Koni-approved technicians. The lifts are also subject to pre-use checks by the technician using them.

The most recent audit of bus shelter condition was completed in 2018. Shelters are regularly cleaned; however, the general condition of the shelter is not formally tracked during this process. Repairs for broken glass and other damage are driven by customer complaints and staff observations.

## Service Levels

Saskatoon Transit Service Standards were established and approved in November 2021. Transit's fixed-route service operates 365 days per year with peak, midday and night service on weekdays; morning, midday and night service on Saturdays; and Sunday/Statutory Holiday service. Access Transit operates 365 days per year with weekday, Saturday and Sunday/Statutory Holiday service.

Saskatoon Transit currently requires 87 buses to meet morning and afternoon peak service levels and service standards each weekday. Service level standards for bus availability have been met every day since the fall of 2022.

The industry standard spare ratio for a transit fleet is approximately 25 to 30%. This means that for every 100 buses in service, a transit authority would ideally have 25 to 30 additional buses available for mechanics and technicians to complete preventative maintenance, required repairs and for other operational needs, such as unplanned bus changeovers on routes.

Performance measures related to assets and maintenance are noted below for fixed-route transit service (Table 6) and Access Transit (Table 7).

**Table 6: Performance measures: Fixed-route assets at year-end**

| Description   | Measure              | 2022     | 2023     | 2024     |
|---|----------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Average fleet age</b> (years)  | 7.5                  | 10.7     | 10.6     | 10.5     |
| <b>Service reliability - kilometres between breakdowns</b> (road calls) | <i>Min. 8,000 km</i> | 8,071 km | 7,899 km | 7,506 km |
| <b>Spare ratio</b>  | 25–30%               | 41%      | 32%      | 34.6%    |

**Table 7: Performance measures: Access Transit assets at year-end**

| Description   | Measure              | 2022            | 2023            | 2024            |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Average age of fleet</b><br>(years)                                | 3.0                  | 4.5             | 3.8             | 4.2             |
| <b>Service reliability - distance between breakdowns</b> (road calls) | <i>Min. 8,000 km</i> | <i>7,683 km</i> | <i>5,749 km</i> | <i>4,544 km</i> |
| <b>Spare ratio</b>  | 25-30%               | 27%             | 31.3%           | 31.3%           |

## Asset Criticality & Risk

Saskatoon Transit will develop a Risk Management Plan and Register for the next budget cycle.

### Critical or Key Risks

- Saskatoon Transit requires dedicated capital funding to ensure the bus fleet is operational and service levels are met. The fleet renewal plan is contingent on several factors to realize the fully funded plan.
- The current fleet average age is above industry standard.
- Future service hour expansions will reduce the fleet spare ratios.
- New bus purchase lead times are greater than 12 months.
- Parts availability continues to experience uncertainty.

Saskatoon Transit is a critical public service, and any impact on fleet availability has a direct impact on service for public transportation. The current fleet replacement plan is funded through 2030 and will bring the average fleet age to industry standard by 2026, with no buses older than expected useful life by 2029. The percentage of older buses will decrease year over year, as will the risk of large repairs and unplanned downtime inherent with an aged fleet.

Saskatoon's population growth continues to put pressure on service-hour expansion. When combined with lengthening lead times for new bus purchases and decreases in parts availability, pressures on spare ratios and fleet availability increase.

## INVESTMENT STRATEGIES & NEEDS

Saskatoon Transit has evaluated asset conditions to develop annual programs and maintain the assets at a minimum lifecycle cost. Condition assessments are conducted and used to establish condition levels and develop fleet renewal or investment plans.

Saskatoon Transit's approved fleet renewal plan considers population growth and modal shift towards more bus usage over time. It includes \$113.2 million invested from 2024 to 2030 to maintain Saskatoon Transit's diesel-powered fixed-route and gas-powered paratransit fleet at the industry-standard for average age. Approximately \$34.4 million was approved and invested in 2024 and 2025, leaving \$78.8 million for years 2026 to 2030 to purchase 60 fixed-route buses and 22 Access Transit buses. The funding plan in Table 8 is contingent on the following:

- federal government approval of the submitted Canada Public Transit Fund (CPTF) five-year capital plan with a subsequent contribution agreement;
- federal government approval to grant an exemption to CPTF to allow for the purchase of fixed-route diesel buses until 2030;
- federal government approval to revise the current Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) complement of battery electric buses to diesel buses;
- continued annual funding of \$110,000 from the provincial Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities program; and
- annual City funding of the bus replacement reserve.

Bus purchases from 2031 through 2034 remain unfunded and total approximately \$91.7 million.

**Table 8: Approved 2024-2030 funding sources for fixed-route and Access Transit buses**

| Funding Source                                  | Amount               |
|---|----------------------|
| ICIP  | \$60,000,000         |
| Canada Public Transit Fund                      | 16,765,065           |
| City Borrowing                                  | 23,500,000           |
| Transit Assistance for People with Disabilities | 770,000              |
| City Bus Replacement Reserve                    | 12,876,100           |
| <b>Total Funding</b>                            | <b>\$113,911,165</b> |

## Lifecycle Programs & Analysis

Bus fleet maintenance activities are fully funded through operating budgets. Due to the risk of fleet failure, regulatory requirements and service impacts, maintenance activities on buses are not deferred.

In 2024, Saskatoon Transit introduced an enhanced service model to transition away from a reactive shop to a proactive shop with a strong preventative maintenance program. With new buses scheduled to arrive each year, the fleet is growing and being renewed and the average condition of buses will improve over time. There will be fewer large repairs, and mechanics can focus more on planned maintenance to keep the fleet reliable and in good condition.

### Improvements

1. Filling Service Line positions dedicated to routine bus maintenance, with an opportunity for career advancement within the section.
2. Restarting a night shift for mechanics to leverage off-peak hours to schedule planned and preventative maintenance instead of pulling buses off the road.
3. A supported Apprenticeship Program, providing sustainable opportunities for career advancement.
4. All vacant positions filled, improving the bus-to-mechanic ratio.
5. Fully implemented the recommendations from the Investigation of Service Disruptions Audit.

In 2025, Saskatoon Transit introduced a new operating model for monitoring, repairing and maintaining bus stop shelters. Quint Development was awarded a contract for this work as a one-year pilot project. Quint Development is a non-profit organization that operates social enterprises and other community programs, such as the Saskatoon Wellbeing Employment Enterprise Program (SWEET), which employs marginalized community members to work full-time on tasks related to neighbourhood revitalization and urban maintenance. A SWEET team regularly monitors all shelters and follows up on complaints requiring clean-up, including snow clearing and repairs.

## Recommendations & Action Plans

Saskatoon Transit requested exemptions and revisions to current funding agreements to allow for the approved fully funded fleet renewal plan to be realized and will report back to City Council with alternate funding options for the fleet renewal plan if these are not approved.

The five-year fleet renewal plan (2026 to 2030) uses diesel fixed-route buses and gas-powered Access transit buses based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the CUTRIC report. The CUTRIC report will be revisited in 2030 at which time the fleet renewal plan will be updated for years beyond 2030.

Saskatoon Transit will continue to monitor the Zero Emissions Bus (ZEB) landscape for technological advances and changes in the Saskatchewan power grid, which may make the transition to ZEBs more cost-effective and beneficial.

Saskatoon Transit will seek any additional opportunities for federal and provincial funding programs for ongoing fleet renewal.

The current pilot program for shelter maintenance is on contract through the end of 2025. Continued monitoring through this pilot program will help to assess the current state of these assets and will inform service levels and funding moving forward.

## FORECASTED STATE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

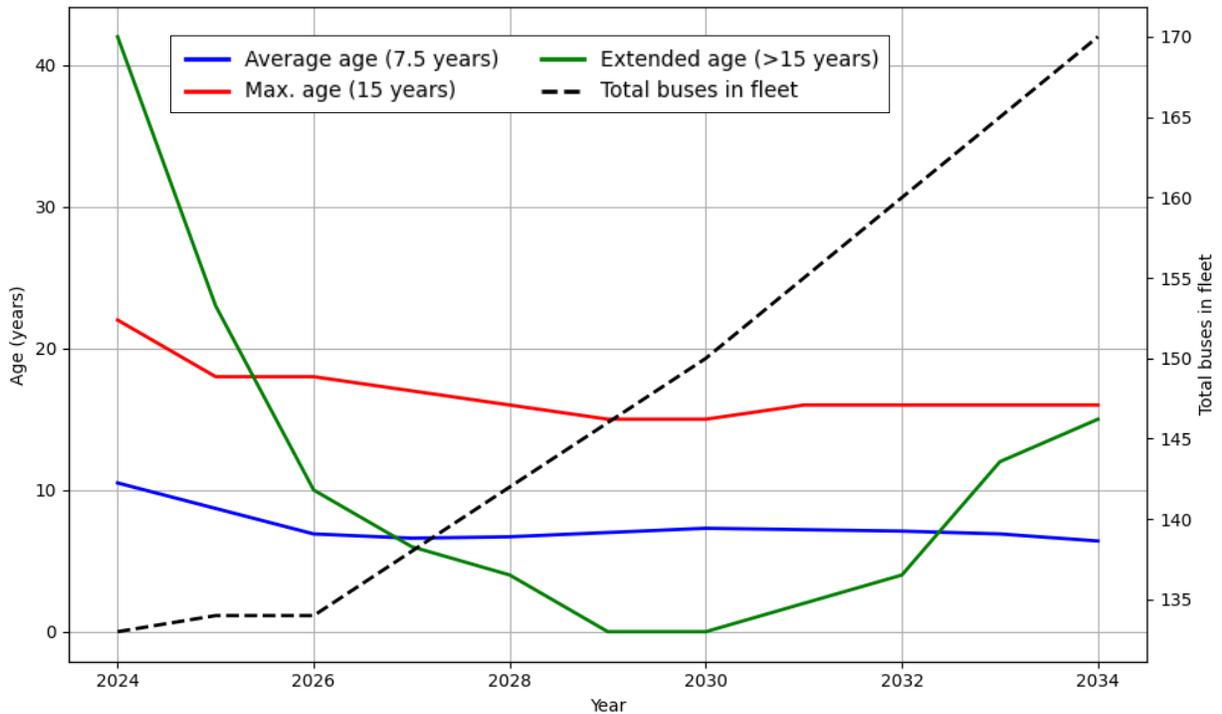
The Canadian industry standard for the service life of a bus is approximately 15 years or 800,000 kilometres. With a uniformly distributed fleet, the average age of the entire fleet ranges from 6 to 7.5 years. Saskatoon Transit's annual average travel per bus is 50,000 kilometres.

As new buses are purchased, older buses that are no longer financially feasible to maintain will be retired. While 60 fixed-route buses and 22 Access Transit paratransit buses will be purchased from 2026-2030, the total inventory will not increase by that number. See Tables 9 and 10.

**Table 9: Age of fixed-route fleet (years)**

| Fleet Age                                     | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Total Transit Fleet</b>                    | 133  | 134  | 134  | 138  | 142  | 146  | 150  | 155  | 160  | 165  | 170  |
| <b>Average Age</b><br>Industry Standard (7.5) | 10.5 | 8.7  | 6.9  | 6.6  | 6.7  | 7.0  | 7.3  | 7.2  | 7.1  | 6.9  | 6.4  |
| <b>Max Age</b><br>Industry Standard (15)      | 22.0 | 18.0 | 18.0 | 17.0 | 16.0 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 |
| <b>Extended Age</b><br>(>15)                  | 42.0 | 23.0 | 10.0 | 6.0  | 4.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 2.0  | 4.0  | 12.0 | 15.0 |

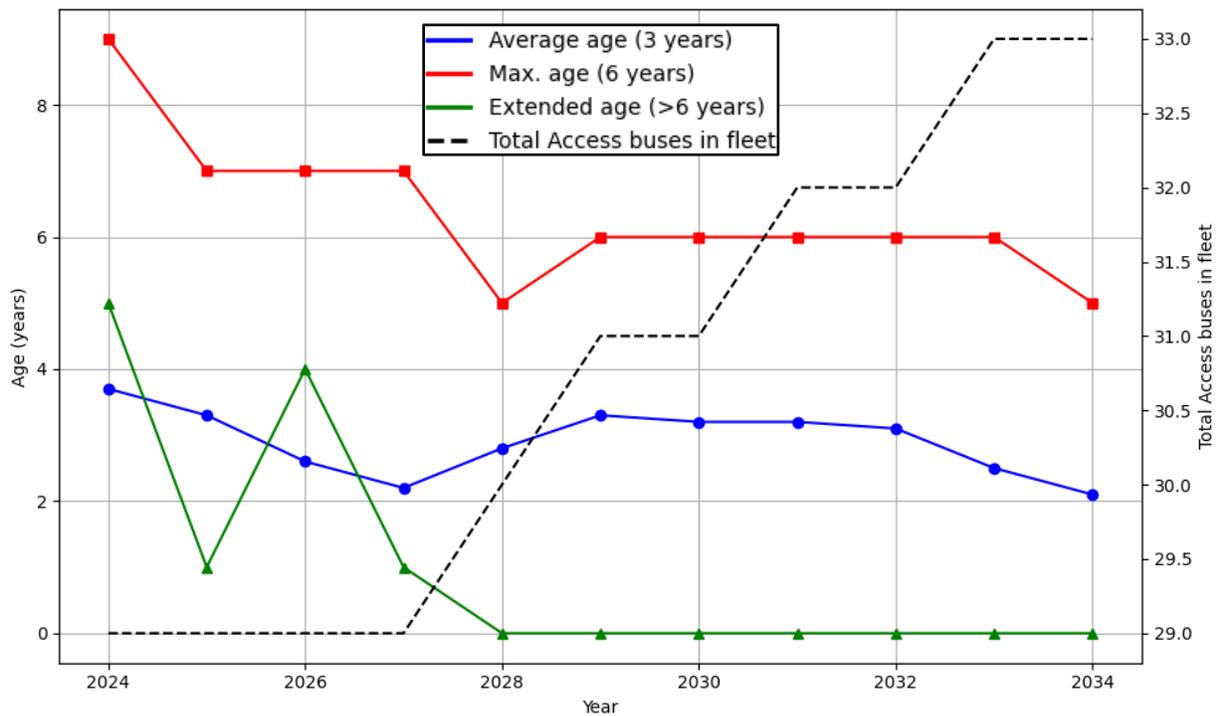
**Figure 2: Age of fixed-route fleet over time**



**Table 10: Age of Access Transit fleet**

| Fleet Age (years)                 | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 | 2027 | 2028 | 2029 | 2030 | 2031 | 2032 | 2033 | 2034 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Total Access Transit Fleet</b> | 29   | 29   | 29   | 29   | 30   | 31   | 31   | 32   | 32   | 33   | 33   |
| <b>Max Age</b>                    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Industry Standard (6)             | 9.0  | 7.0  | 7.0  | 7.0  | 5.0  | 6.0  | 6.0  | 6.0  | 6.0  | 6.0  | 5.0  |
| <b>Extended Age (&gt;6)</b>       | 5.0  | 1.0  | 4.0  | 1.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  | 0.0  |

**Figure 3: Age of Access Transit fleet over time**



## **APPENDIX 1 - Approved Transit Fleet Renewal Plan – June 2025**

Saskatoon Transit's updated fleet renewal program for 2026-2030 was approved by City Council in June 2025, with funding to purchase diesel buses for the fixed-route fleet and gas buses for the Access Transit fleet.

The updated fleet renewal plan considers population growth and modal shift towards increased bus usage over time, requiring an increase in Saskatoon Transit's fleet from 134 buses in 2026 to 150 buses in 2030.

The plan identifies that population growth and achieving a reduction in trip denials will require an increase in Access Transit's fleet from 29 buses in 2026 to 31 buses in 2030.

By the end of 2026, the average ages of both fixed-route and Access Transit fleets are forecast to be within industry standards of 7.5 years and three years, respectively.

Refer to the Administrative report for more information: [Updated Transit Fleet Renewal Plan – June 2025 \[IS2025-0608\] – Standing Policy Committee on Transportation – June 3, 2025.](#)