



Amalgamated Transit Union

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ATU Local 583

Calgary, AB:

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 583's bid to prevent the outsourcing of outdoor transit maintenance jobs was labelled as "disingenuous" by Councillor Ward Sutherland, vice-chair of The City of Calgary's finance committee. It could be easy to side with his inflammatory characterization, except that would require ignoring the substantial facts that contradict his statement.

In 2016, The City initiated a Zero-Based Review (ZBR) which recommended that Calgary Transit should outsource outdoor maintenance positions responsible for safety and cleanliness, tasks such as ice and snow removal from passenger areas and trash and debris removal from C-Train platforms. The report is heavily redacted and details from a variety of segments have not been shared with ATU Local 583, their affected employees or the public.

Neil McKinnon, Executive Vice President for the Union believes that this act of keeping information away from the Union impacts their ability to work together to find mutually beneficial solutions. He said, "We (the Union) not only seek transparency to help our members, but also to aid in finding more practical solutions to fiscal prudence for The City that we believe will yield a better long term result." He points out that these workers who have years of experience delivering these services can provide a wealth of knowledge in cost-saving measures, yet their participation has not been considered.

The ZBR Report identified assumptions and potential risks which make this action tenuous at best and could result in increased cost, loss of productivity and costly legal action that may come as a result of transit patrons slipping on ice/snow, complexity of transition, service disruption due to contractor performance, inflation of vendor costs and ultimately, customer impact.

The Columbia Institute, a center for civic governance, issued a report in 2016 titled, "Back In House — Why Local Governments Are Bringing Services Home. Of the 15 Canadian cases studied, 80 per cent of services were inevitably brought back in house because of many factors including multiple claims that, "the (full-picture) price tag was better." It further states that public, not private, delivery of public services in the case studies reviewed meant enhanced control over quality and flexibility. In fact, in 27 per cent of the Canadian examples, service quality of

outsourced functions was an issue. The City of Calgary has outsourced municipal jobs in the past and ultimately brought them back in-house.

With so many unknowns and potential for failure, the only way to ensure a solution that Calgarians can trust requires full disclosure of details in the Zero-Based Review, and open discussion between The City and the executives at ATU Local 583. Working together is the only proven way The City can achieve the desired cost savings, efficiencies and high-level service Calgarians deserve.

Backgrounder

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 583 proudly represents the 3,100 transit workers of Calgary. Members include transit operators, and transit maintenance service positions. ATU Local 583's goal is to defend and fight for their members' collective bargaining rights, wages, pensions, job security and other benefits.

ATU Local 583 works to address and respond to the needs of each member, and aims to strengthen and support their union on a daily basis. The union represents its members in disputes and negotiations, strives to develop safer working conditions and to improve labour relations.