



P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Information Item No. 3
Transportation Standing Committee
November 26, 2020

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

-Original Signed-

SUBMITTED BY:

Dave Reage, MCIP, LPP, Director, Halifax Transit

-Original Signed-

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Options for Paid Access to Halifax Transit Park & Rides

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

On September 17, 2019, Halifax Regional Council adopted By-law U-105, which amended the existing transit fare structure and approved a motion directing the Chief Administrative Officer to “prepare a report investigating the feasibility of implementing a fee for access to Halifax Transit Park & Rides”.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter

70(1)(d) The Municipality may establish or maintain parking facilities.

102 Subject to the approval of the Board for those services that are subject to the Public Utilities Act, the Council may, by by-law, prescribe charges for the provision of services for persons who use or benefit from the service, on a basis to be set out in the by-law.

BACKGROUND

In a staff report dated June 11, 2019 (Attachment A), Halifax Transit recommended a number of fare structure changes. This included a recommendation to investigate the feasibility of implementing a fee for access to Halifax Transit Park & Rides.

Halifax Transit provides over 2,000 parking spaces at 13 locations which are primarily at transit terminals. The locations and approximate capacity of each facility is detailed below.

Table 1: Terminal and Park & Ride Parking Capacity

Location	Capacity
Woodside Terminal	515
Sackville Terminal	385
Portland Hills Terminal	230
Hubley Centre	185
Cobequid Terminal	145
Porters Lake	132
Alderney	110
Bridge Terminal	100
Fall River	90
Maybank Field	50
Sheldrake Lake	48
Downsview	40
Mumford Terminal	30
Total	2,060

As outlined in the *Moving Forward Together Plan*, Park & Ride facilities complement transit by providing an option for those who would like to travel by transit but need a vehicle to complete some portion of their trip. These facilities are also important for those who do not have another option to access transit service, for example those living outside the Halifax Transit service area. As most Park & Ride passengers are travelling to downtown, Park & Rides may help to manage roadway congestion and reduce vehicle emissions.

The introduction of a fee for access to Park & Rides would be most appropriate for sites which have high usage rates and where there is potential for non-transit passengers to consistently take advantage of the free parking and thus reduce the number of spaces available to transit passengers. The Integrated Mobility Plan (IMP) encourages carpooling and therefore intermittent use of Park & Ride lots for carpooling, where capacity allows, has not been considered in this analysis. Only sites which are at risk of reaching capacity due to consistent use by non-transit users were considered as potential sites to consider introducing a fee for access. Transit staff complete an assessment of Park & Ride usage each year in the fall.

The results of the last five years are displayed in figure 1 below. Sites with the with the highest consistent usages rates were identified as potential sites to consider introducing a fee for access.

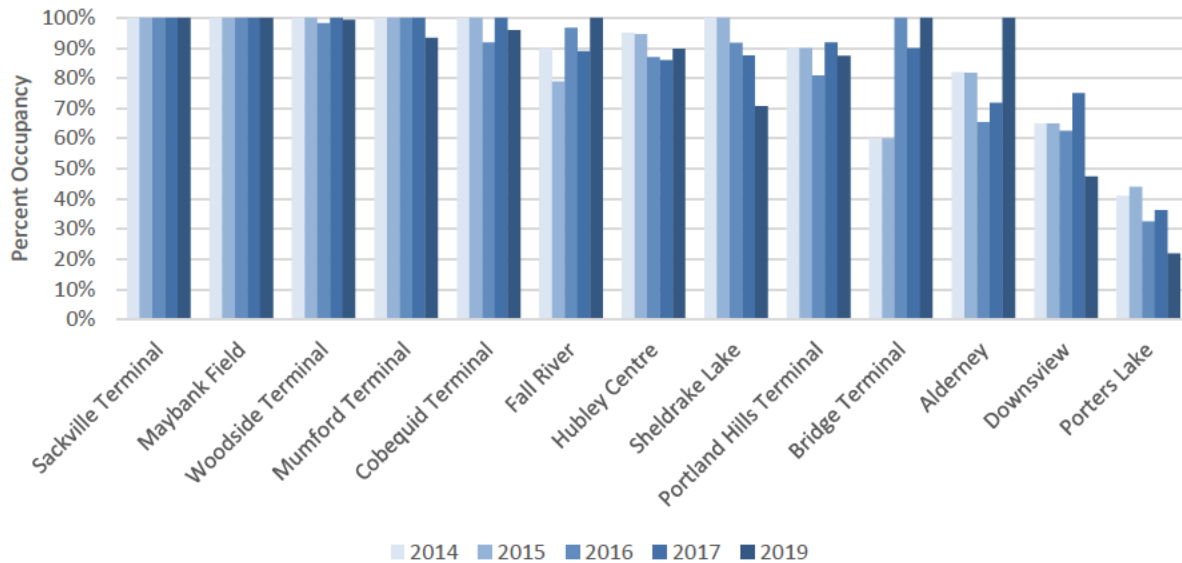


Figure 1: Park & Ride Usage Rates 2014 to 2019

DISCUSSION

The following section evaluates each facility’s candidacy for the implementation of fees, as per the criteria discussed above (i.e. sites which have high usage rates and where there is potential for non-transit passengers to consistently take advantage of the free parking).

Usage rates at Sackville Terminal, Cobequid Terminal, Maybank Field, Woodside Ferry Terminal, and Mumford Terminal and have been consistently high over the past five years. Three additional sites, Bridge Terminal, Alderley Gate and Fall River are also discussed below as these three sites have demonstrated an upward trend in usage.

Sackville & Cobequid Terminals

Both terminals are located in Sackville and are surrounded by residential and commercial land uses that are not expected to generate any misuse of the parking spaces by non-transit passengers, as surrounding destinations provide both on street and off street parking options. Additionally, the transit service changes introduced in November 2019 as part of the *Moving Forward Together Plan* are anticipated to reduce the parking demand at these two terminals as express service is now provided within the local community, which allows more passengers to forgo driving and parking at one of these terminals to access transit service. Therefore, neither of these sites are considered as good candidates to introduce fees for access.

Maybank Field

Maybank Field is an unpaved, gravel lot located in central Dartmouth. It is one of the smallest Park & Rides in the network with approximately 50 parking spaces. The facility is surrounded by a number of recreation sites, but none are anticipated to conflict with peak transit travel periods. Free parking is also provided at all other major destinations nearby, so it is unlikely that non-transit passengers are parking at this facility. As such, introducing a fee for access is not suitable.

Mumford Terminal

The Mumford Terminal Park & Ride is located on the Halifax Shopping Centre lands. This site does attract a significant amount of parking demand as it is a significant commercial hub in the west end. However, the number of spots dedicated to transit passengers is minimal and they are not in a desirable location for those going to Halifax Shopping Centre, or most parts of the Annex, therefore it is not likely that people planning to use transit will park there. Further, as the site is leased by HRM, and therefore implementation and enforcement of paid access here would be complicated. For these reasons, it is not a good candidate to introduce a fee for access.

Bridge Terminal and Alderney Terminal

The Park & Ride facilities at the Bridge Terminal and Alderney Terminal are unlike the other sites in the network. Fees for access are currently in place at these locations, but neither site is owned or operated by Halifax Transit. The Bridge Terminal Park & Ride is operated by the Zatzman Sportsplex, who set the fees and collect revenue. Parking passes are sold on a quarterly basis for \$135 per pass and pass holders are not required to be transit passengers. The lot functions as a pay and display lot, and violators are ticketed. The Alderney Terminal Park & Ride is operated by the Alderney Landing Board of Directors who set the fee and collect the revenue. Currently, monthly parking passes are sold for \$30 to Halifax Transit monthly or annual pass holders. As these sites are not operated by Halifax Transit, and fees for access are already applied, they are not discussed any further.

Fall River

The Fall River Park & Ride is a rural Park & Ride facility served by the Route 320 Airport Express. This site is not surrounded by any other land uses that would be expected to result in any misuse of the parking spaces by non-transit passengers, so introducing a fee for access would not help address any capacity issues if this lot continues to see high usage rates. Staff will however, continue to monitor lot capacity.

Woodside Ferry Terminal

The Woodside Ferry Terminal is the largest Park & Ride in the network with 515 parking spaces. Due to proximity to the NSCC Ivany Campus, Dartmouth General and Nova Scotia Hospital, it is one of the few terminals situated near land uses that generate significant parking demand and where the adjacent parking lots require payment. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Park & Ride lot is subject to use by non-transit users. These characteristics suggest that this site is a potential candidate for introducing a fee for access.

Options for Introducing Fee for Access

Staff identified and evaluated four options for the introduction of fees in the development of this report. These options, in addition to the relative advantages and disadvantages of each are described in Table 2. While these options could apply to any of the Park & Ride sites listed above, the focus is largely on the Woodside Ferry Terminal as it is the most viable candidate site.

Table 2: Fee for Access Comparison

Option	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages / Concerns
1. Monthly parking passes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking passes specific to each site location could be sold through HRM Customer Service Centers or via the online permit portal • Tickets would be issued for vehicles that do not have a valid pass or have not paid the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would likely eliminate all non-transit use as long as rates were competitive with neighbouring sites. • Could generate additional revenue to offset operating costs of the parking lot. • Could allow for competitive pricing based on the location of lots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would increase cost of commuting via transit. • May negatively impact transit ridership and result in passengers choosing not to take transit.

	appropriate fee for access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could potentially be integrated into the new on-street parking system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires additional parking enforcement or some form of monitoring.¹ • Could introduce complexity if vendors started selling passes for multiple parking sites.
2. Daily parking passes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily parking passes could be sold via a pay station. • Tickets would be issued for vehicles without a valid pass or have not paid the fee for access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would likely eliminate all non-transit use as long as rates were competitive with neighbouring sites. • Could generate additional revenue to offset operating costs of the parking lot. • Could potentially be integrated into the new on-street parking system currently being implemented. • Some combination of Option 1 and 2 could be considered to enhance flexibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would increase cost of commuting via transit. • Cost prohibitive option for those needing to park every day • May negatively impact transit ridership and result in passengers choosing not to take transit. • Requires additional parking enforcement or some form of monitoring.² • Each lot would require one or more parking pay stations (est. at \$7,500 each).
3. Validation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No fee to access the lot would be required, but proof of a validated transit fare would be required to exit the Park & Ride lot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would eliminate all non-transit use. • Would avoid an additional fee for transit passenger usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires physical infrastructure at Park & Rides (gates, etc.) and either staff or infrastructure to manage validation and fare collection for those exiting without transit fare.³
4. Free parking permits for transit pass holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular transit pass holders could apply for a free parking permit. • Tickets would be issued for vehicles without a valid permit or have not paid the fee for access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would eliminate some of the non-transit use. • Would avoid an additional fee for transit passenger usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would not eliminate the potential for students with UPasses from parking at Woodside Terminal without the intent to use transit. • Reduces access to the Park & Ride sites for infrequent transit users that do not have a pass. • Requires physical alterations at Park & Rides (gates, etc.) and/or staff to manage access.⁴

The implementation of any of the options listed in the above table will result in additional administration.

¹ Up to one full time employee or contract staff may be required per zone, but may vary depending on roll out

² Up to one full time employee or contract staff per zone, but may vary depending on roll out

³ Validation technology would have to align with the selected Halifax Transit fare technology. The cost of this type of validation technology is estimated to exceed \$80,000 and would require gates containing authentication infrastructure (estimated to exceed \$10,000). Managing the validation through staffing would require additional contract staff as well as gates costing an estimated \$3,000 each.

⁴ Anticipate a minimum one full time employee or contract staff.

Woodside Terminal Park & Ride Option Assessment

Introducing a fee for access at Park & Ride sites requires careful consideration of parking rates within the immediate vicinity of the site as well as the rates within the end destination. In the case of Woodside Ferry Terminal, the fees at the adjacent parking lots and downtown Halifax are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Parking Fees at Relevant Sites

Sites	Fee Structure
NSCC Ivany Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking passes are available for staff, students and carpoolers (defined as 3 or more people signed up to travel together) • Passes are \$20 for the academic year • Parking lots operate on a first come, first served basis
Dartmouth General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metered parking is \$2 per hour and \$1 per hour after that to the daily max of \$8 • Monthly parking passes are \$35 per month plus \$10 deposit
Nova Scotia Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metered parking is \$1 per hour • Daily parking passes are \$5 per day • Onsite parking is free between the 6 PM and 8 AM
Downtown Halifax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily rates range from \$10 to \$24 • Monthly rates range from \$150 to over \$200 per month

Based on the rates at adjacent parking lots, a daily rate of \$8 or a monthly rate of \$35 would likely be required at the Woodside Ferry Terminal. These rates would deter non-transit users from using the Woodside Park & Ride but still make transit an attractive option to parking in downtown Halifax. Of note, these rates are similar to rates that used to be required to access the Woodside Park & Ride (\$5 per day or \$30 per month with a transit pass)⁵.

Site Usage Assessment

In the development of this report, staff conducted a site usage assessment at the Woodside Park & Ride, complete with detailed passenger observations to better assess the capacity issues, determine whether non-transit users were using the Park & Ride and if so, to what extent. Time-lapse cameras were installed in late January 2020 to provide insight into parking demand trends and lot capacity and a detailed site observation was conducted in early February 2020. The cameras determined that vehicles would start to enter the parking lot near 6 AM and by 8 AM the lot would be consistently full. The detailed observations determined that approximately 4% of the 467 people that were observed parking at the Woodside Park & Ride left the site without using a bus or ferry. The results suggest that there are a very low number of non-transit passengers using the Park & Ride.

As the detailed observations determined that the overwhelming majority of the Park & Ride users were transit passengers, the burden of any new fee for access would largely be borne by existing transit users, would increase the cost of commuting via transit, and may have a negative impact on transit ridership. As such, staff do not recommend pursuing a fee for access. This recommendation is further reinforced by the fact that Woodside is currently experiencing very low usage rates as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and capacity may be less of an issue in the short to medium term.

Alternative Means to Address Capacity Issues at Park & Rides

⁵ Information on when passes were first sold and when the practice ceased is not known.

While staff do not recommend pursuing a fee for access to transit Park & Rides at this time, the observations at Woodside Terminal Park & Ride did provide data to indicate that the number of transit riders using Park & Rides could be increased if more passengers adopted Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures. These measures include ride sharing/carpooling or switching from driving

to more sustainable modes such as transit or active transportation to get to and from the terminal. The observations determined that the average vehicle occupancy rate entering the Woodside Park & Ride was 1.04. This low rate suggests that even if only a few transit passengers adopted TDM measures, the number of passengers utilizing transit at these locations would be increased.

Halifax Transit supports TDM measures in the following ways:

- Providing a free online ridematching platform, which matches people based on proximity to origin and destination points and travel route as well as similar working hours and compatible carpooling preferences.
- Reducing barriers to transit ridership in an effort to reduce vehicular traffic, aligning with HRMs TDM plan.
- Working collaboratively with other municipal departments to deliver education and promotional messaging and programming to encourage residents to use sustainable modes of transportation or flex their work options to reduce overall and peak-hour trips by vehicle.
- Providing options through the SmartTrip program for UPass and EPass holders to receive discounts on shared vehicle memberships, guaranteed rides home via taxi in the event of emergencies and the opportunity for member organizations to host skills and safety training for cycling.
- Continuing to improve the transit system through the use of bus lanes, the *Moving Forward Together Program*, Bus Rapid Transit and other transit priority measures to provide a more efficient and reliable service for passengers reducing the need for personal vehicles within the areas served by transit.
- Working collaboratively with other municipal departments on creating complete streets, AAA bike networks and investigating micromobility options that will allow passengers to move smoothly between transit and other transportation options.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The capital and operating costs for introducing paid access would vary by Park & Ride lot and would be dependent on the fee access option. If Halifax Transit staff were directed to introduce fees to access, a business case would be developed to better understand the costs of administration, enforcement, infrastructure required to restrict entry and/or sell parking tickets or passes, as well as revenue generation under different fee options for specific locations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In February 2020, engagement on Halifax Transit ferry service and ferry terminal Park & Rides was undertaken via the Talk Transit online engagement platform as well as surveys onboard the ferries. A total of 551 residents responded to the survey. The survey highlights are provided in Attachment B.

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Staff report dated June 11, 2019 – Amendments to By-law U-100- Halifax Transit Fare Strategy

Appendix B: Talk Transit Ferry Services Survey Results

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Morgan Cox, Coordinator, Project Planning, Halifax Transit, 902.476.2875

HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5 Canada

Item No.
Transportation Standing Committee
July 25, 2019

TO: Chair and Members of Transportation Standing Committee

SUBMITTED BY: Original Signed



Dave Reage, MCIP, LPP, Director Halifax Transit

Original Signed



Chief Stuebing, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: June 11, 2019

SUBJECT: Amendments to By-law U-100 - Halifax Transit Fare Strategy 2019

ORIGIN

This report originates from:

1. Halifax Transit Draft Multi-Year Budget & Business Plan 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, presented to the Budget Committee on January 30, 2019 which recommended a fare increase to cover the increase to Halifax Transit's operating budget for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021.
2. At the October 25, 2018 meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee, the following motion was passed:

The Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report on the feasibility of:

- i. Implementing a Transit Pass Program similar to Kingston, Ontario's that would provide a bus pass to all high school students along with orientation sessions at schools;
- ii. Increasing the age that children ride free until from 5 to 16 as part of the fare strategy.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, R.S.N.S. 2008, section 102 allows Council, by by-law, to prescribe charges for the provision of services for persons who use or benefit from the service, on a basis to be set out in the by-law.

Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, R.S.N.S. 2008, subsection 69(1) enables the Municipality to provide a public transportation service, and clause 79(1)(o) provides authority for Council to expend money to provide public transportation.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council:

1. Adopt By-law U-105, the purpose of which is to amend Schedule 1 of By-law U-100, the User Charges By-law, establishing changes to the existing fare structure and fares as set out in Attachment C to this report.
2. Direct the CAO to begin planning a Student Transit Pass pilot program by meeting with HRCE and CSAP officials to discuss potential partnership opportunities, program details, timelines, logistics, marketing and costs.
3. Direct the CAO to prepare a report investigating the feasibility of implementing a fee for access to Halifax Transit Park & Rides.

BACKGROUND

Halifax Transit fares

Halifax Transit's standard adult fare was last increased (from \$2.25 to \$2.50) on September 30, 2013. Before the increase in 2013, the standard adult fare was increased (from \$2.00 to \$2.25) on July 1, 2009. Before the increase in 2009, the standard adult fare was increased (from \$1.75 to \$2.00) in January 2005.

Halifax Transit's approved Multi-Year Budget & Business Plan 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, includes a 25-cent fare increase to assist in funding Halifax Transit operating costs in 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. The increase in Halifax Transit's operating budget for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 is due to several factors including, but not limited to, increased wages, increased cost of fuel, service increases associated with the *Moving Forward Together Plan*, etc.

The proposed 25-cent fare increase has been approved by Regional Council as part of the 2019/2020 budget; however, specifics of the rollout of the fare increase were not in place at that time.

Student Transit Pass Program

At present, the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) offers passes to qualified students who are outside of the established walking distance, but for whom school busing is not an option. Each month, they provide 750 – 900 passes to students at six schools. These are provided by Halifax Transit at the rate of \$50 per pass per month.

DISCUSSION

Halifax Transit fares

Change in approach

Historically, Halifax Transit has considered fare increases as required and applied fare increases uniformly (e.g. a 10% increase of all passenger classifications, for all products/media, across all services). With technology changes coming (electronic fares), Halifax Transit is changing the approach to fare increases to focus more on industry best-practices, strategic goals and planning for the future in an effort to increase ridership, reduce cash handling, and provide more options and convenience to passengers.

Jurisdictional scan

Jurisdictions in the first table were selected based on fleet size and/or population data in range with Halifax Transit's fleet size and/or population. The second table includes Atlantic Canadian jurisdictions with greater than twenty buses. Data source is the *CUTA DATA Canadian Transit Fact Book, 2016 Operating Data*, published November 2017 (except where indicated ↑ for increases and ↓ for decreases

from CUTA data, based on current fares published on jurisdictions' websites). Sorted by Adult Cash Fare, lowest to highest.

The cells highlighted in red indicate the jurisdictions lowest in their category and cells highlighted in yellow indicate where Halifax Transit is second-lowest in the category.

Jurisdictions Based on Fleet Size / Population	R/C Ratio	Adult Cash Fare	Adult Monthly Pass	Child Cash Fare	Child Monthly Pass	Senior Cash Fare	Senior Monthly Pass	Buses	Municipal Population	Service Area Population
Canada	54%	\$3.02	\$81.67	\$2.48	\$54.67	\$2.66	\$51.51	16,450	23,990,515	22,973,041
Pop. 400,001 - 2,000,000	44%	\$3.38	\$101.34	\$3.13	\$68.50	\$2.78	\$51.50	7,047	9,613,239	9,132,022
Pop. 150,001 - 400,000	41%	\$3.37	\$97.17	\$2.21	\$52.67	\$3.06	\$54.02	1,693	2,538,206	2,371,963
Halifax, NS	35%	\$2.50	\$78.00	\$1.75	\$58.00	\$1.75	\$58.00	323	425,871	316,780
Victoria, BC	46%	\$2.50	\$85.00	\$2.50	\$45.00	\$2.50	\$45.00	282	367,770	314,696
London, Ont	52%	\$2.75	\$81.00	\$0.00↓		\$2.75	\$57.50	206	385,100	385,100
Hamilton, Ont	50%	\$3.00	\$105.60↑	\$3.00	\$88.00↑	\$3.00	\$29.50↑	251	536,917	490,673
Waterloo Region, Ont	39%	\$3.25	\$86.00↑	\$3.25	\$73.00↑	\$3.25	\$73.00↑	249	541,395	452,684
Laval, Que	33%	\$3.25	\$95.00↑	\$3.25	\$57.00↑	\$3.25	\$57.00↑	306	430,077	430,077
Longueuil, Que	42%	\$3.25	\$98.50↑	\$3.25	\$58.50↑	\$3.25	\$58.50↑	444	419,677	419,677
Mississauga, Ont	48%	\$3.75↑				\$1.00		467	764,300	764,300
Durham Region, Ont	39%	\$3.75	\$117.00↑	\$2.50	\$65.00	\$2.50	\$46.00	186	673,075	567,421
Brampton, Ont	46%	\$4.00↑	\$124.00↑	\$4.00↑	\$105.00	\$1.00	\$52.00	407	593,638	588,200
Gatineau, Que	43%	\$4.00↑	\$97.00↑			\$2.60	\$41.00↑	364	278,589	278,589
York Region, Ont	40%	\$4.00	\$150.00↑	\$4.00	\$63.00↑	\$4.00	\$63.00↑	539	1,186,907	1,083,442
Averages for Jurisdictions	43%	\$3.41	\$103.91	\$2.86	\$69.31	\$2.65	\$52.25	336	561,586	524,987

Atlantic Canadian Jurisdictions > 20 Buses	R/C Ratio	Adult Cash Fare	Adult Monthly Pass	Child Cash Fare	Child Monthly Pass	Senior Cash Fare	Senior Monthly Pass	Buses	Municipal Population	Service Area Population
Halifax, NS	35%	\$2.50	\$78.00	\$1.75	\$58.00	\$1.75	\$58.00	323	425,871	316,780
Moncton, NB	38%	\$2.50↑	\$64.00↑	\$2.50↑	\$49.00↑	\$2.50↑	\$49.00↑	31	116,940	116,940
St. John's, NL	29%	\$2.50↑	\$78.00↑	\$2.00↑	\$53.00↑	\$2.50↑	\$53.00↑	42	153,400	137,590
Saint John, NB	47%	\$2.75	\$77.00	\$2.50	\$66.00	\$2.50	\$55.00	42	120,000	100,420
Fredericton, NB	39%	\$2.75	\$80.00	\$2.75		\$2.75	\$50.00	25	58,220	58,220
Averages for Jurisdictions	38%	\$2.63	\$74.75	\$2.44	\$56.00	\$2.56	\$52.33	35	112,140	103,293

Some key observations and implications from the jurisdictional scan:

Key Observation	Implication
Jurisdictions Based on Fleet Size / Population	
1. Halifax Transit is tied for lowest Adult Cash Fare, \$0.85 lower than average for evaluated jurisdictions.	Fares should be increased to be more in-line with similar jurisdictions and a plan should be put in place for periodic increases in the future.
2. Halifax Transit has second lowest Child Cash Fare, \$1.23 lower than average for evaluated jurisdictions.	

Key Observation	Implication
3. Halifax Transit has lowest cost Adult Monthly Pass, \$22.47 lower than average for evaluated jurisdictions.	Monthly passes need to be more competitive relative to tickets. Current pricing requires too many trips for the monthly pass to be a better value than tickets.
4. Halifax Transit's Child Monthly Pass is \$9.45 lower than average for evaluated jurisdictions.	
5. All 11 evaluated jurisdictions offer at least one electronic fare media payment option.	Halifax Transit should implement an electronic fare media payment option.
Atlantic Canadian Jurisdictions with > 20 Buses	
6. Halifax Transit is in a similar position relative to Canadian jurisdictions when compared to other Atlantic Canadian jurisdictions.	Even in similar economic conditions, Halifax Transit has relatively low fares. Fares should be increased to be more in-line with similar jurisdictions.

Halifax Transit passenger classifications (fare categories):

Current Passenger Classifications		Recommended Passenger Classifications	
Halifax Transit currently classifies passengers based on age or school criteria.		Halifax Transit recommends that passenger classifications be changed in the following ways.	
Adult	non-students aged 16 - 64	Adult	Change the age to 18+
Senior	aged 65+		Eliminate the senior fare; to be included under Adult fare
Child	aged 5 - 15	Youth	Change the age range to 5 - 17 (13 - 17 for the duration of the pilot to offer free travel to children 12 and under) and combine with the Student fare classification.
Student	full-time student with valid student ID		Eliminate the Student fare classification

Significant changes are recommended to the passenger classifications.

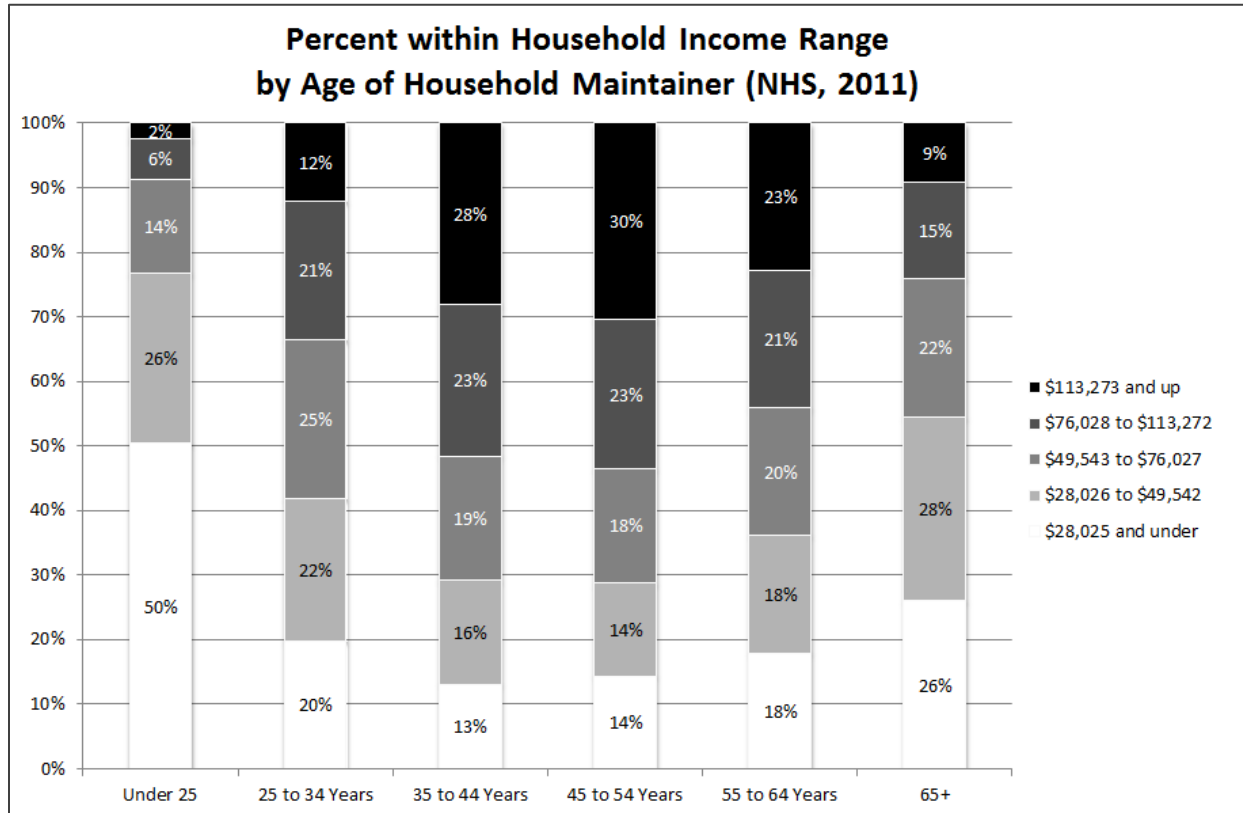
The first major change is to implement a pilot program whereby the age limit for free travel on Halifax Transit is raised from 4 and under to 12 and under. The pilot would begin on September 30, 2019 along with the new fares. The pilot would last 6 months, allowing Halifax Transit staff to gauge the long-term impact to both ridership and to Halifax Transit's operating budget. The jurisdictional scan has indicated that many agencies are increasing the age limit at which children ride free as allowing easy access to public transit for more children encourages the use of public transportation which will ideally lead to continued use into adulthood. At the conclusion of the pilot, Halifax Transit will analyze the impact of the pilot to revenue. If the pilot demonstrates a loss of revenue that is acceptable to Regional Council, the change could be made permanent in the future.

Because of the changes recommended to the former Child classification, a new Youth classification should be created to replace the 13-15 range of the former Child classification and be expanded to 17, also eliminating the need for a separate Student classification as it would be redundant.

The Senior classification should be eliminated and included in the Adult classification. As found in the jurisdictional scan, many other jurisdictions do not have a separate fare for seniors. If the implied intent of the Senior classification was to protect seniors with less available funds to use for travel, Halifax Transit now has other programs in place to protect vulnerable seniors (such as free travel for seniors on Tuesdays, the low-income transit pass program, and the ESIA pass program).

The 2011 National Household Survey compiled the average household income of Halifax residents grouped by the age of the primary household maintainer. The data is broken into income deciles, grouped below in Figure 1. Figure 1 details the breakdown of average household income by primary household maintainer's age as of 2011. Figure 2 illustrates the same data as of 2001. The household income breakdown in 2011 indicates that of households in Halifax where the primary household maintainer is 65 years old or older, approximately 26% have an average household income of \$28,025 or less, below the Halifax Low Income Index which in 2011 was \$30,000 per household.

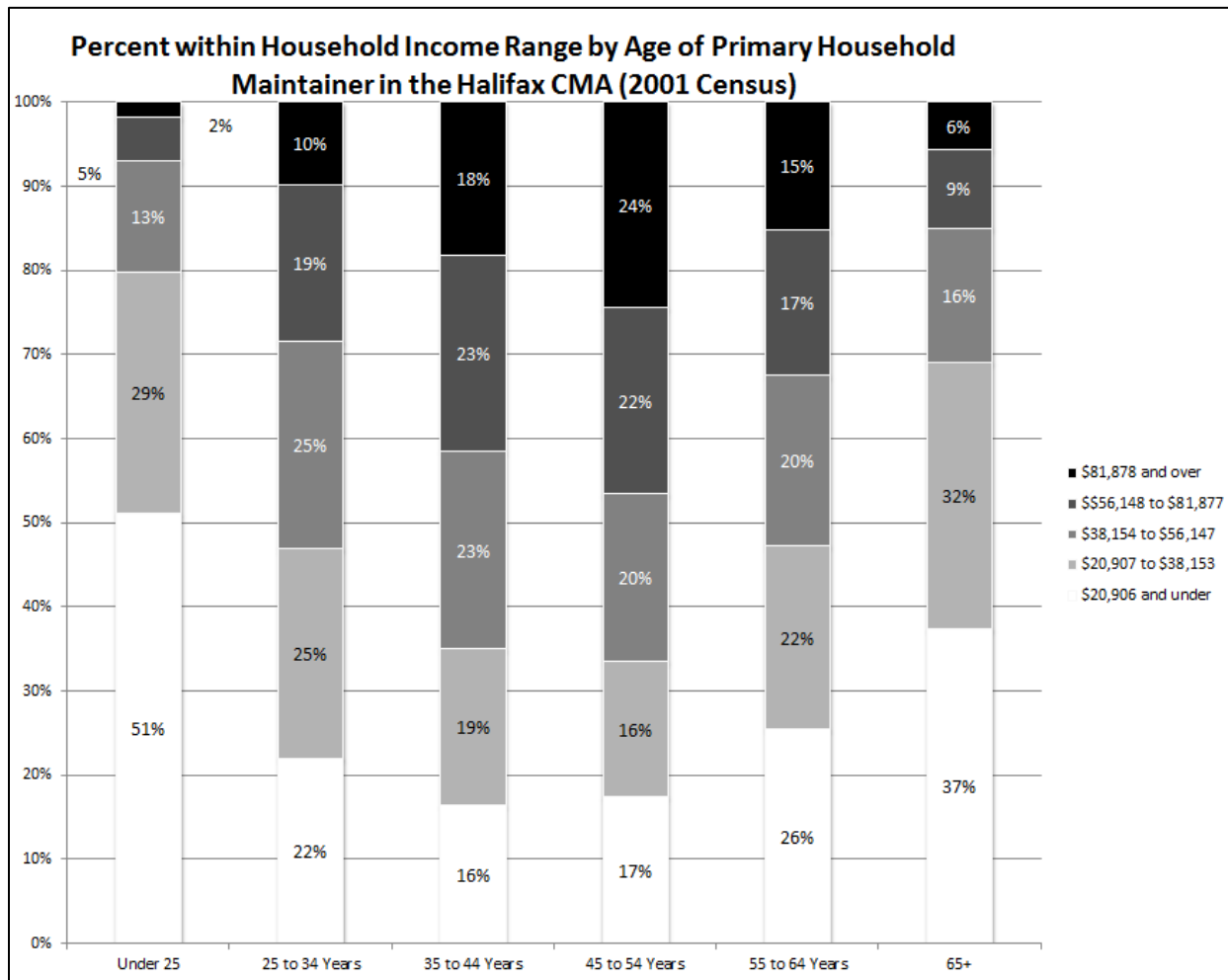
Figure 1: Income Range by Age of Household Maintainer (2011)



The oldest age cohort is overrepresented in the lowest income category when compared to households led by maintainers in other age cohorts between the ages of 25 and 64. However, households with a maintainer under the age of 25 are at least twice as likely to be in the lowest income category when compared to any other age cohort.

Figure 2 details the breakdown of average household income by primary household maintainer's age as of 2001. Similar to 2011, the household income breakdown in 2001 indicates that of households in Halifax where the primary household maintainer is 65 years old or older, approximately 37% have an average household income of \$20,906 or less, and 57% have an average household income of below \$29,460.

Figure 2: Income Range by Age of Household Maintainer (2001)



Based on an income threshold of approximately \$30,000 per household or less, between 2001 and 2011, the number of Senior-led households that fell within this category declined from 57% in 2001 to 26% in 2011. Over the same period, the number of seniors residing in Halifax has increased by 29%, indicating that while the number of Seniors is increasing, so too is the average household income of this age cohort. While Seniors are overrepresented in the lowest two income categories (i.e. more than 20% of households of fall into each of the lowest income categories), so too are other age cohorts.

Because the impacts to revenue of both the change to the age at which children are able to ride free (the pilot) and the elimination of the senior classification approximately offset, both are recommended together. Implementing one change but not the other would represent a significant change to Halifax Transit’s revenue (as indicated in the financial implications section).

Halifax Transit fare products and fare media

Currently, Halifax Transit offers several ways for passengers to pay a fare. The following is a listing of all methods a passenger could potentially pay a fare when boarding a Halifax Transit bus/ferry along with recommendations for their continued use and potential new methods:

Current Fare Products & Fare Media	Recommended Fare Products & Fare Media
Cash CDN and US coins and banknotes	Continue the use of cash for the foreseeable future but encourage other, preferred fare media.
Paper tickets visual inspection Adult and Senior/Child single ride	Continue the use of tickets for the foreseeable future with the goal of eliminating in favour of electronic fare media.
Paper transfers visual inspection	Continue the use of paper transfers for the foreseeable future with the goal of eliminating in favour of electronic fare media.
Monthly pass paper flash-pass (MetroPass, MetroLink Pass, MetroX Pass)	Replace current monthly passes with account based electronic fare media (smart card, mobile tap/flash). Continue the use of current flash-pass until this is implemented.
UPass plastic flash-pass	Replace current plastic flash pass with account based electronic fare media. Continue the use of current flash pass until this is implemented.
EPass annual plastic flash-pass photo of user printed on pass	Replace current plastic flash pass with account based electronic fare media. Continue the use of current flash pass until this is implemented.
ESIA pass annual plastic flash-pass (DCS) photo of user printed on pass	Replace current plastic flash pass with account based electronic fare media. Continue the use of current flash pass until this is implemented.
HRCE student pass annual flash pass	Continue and possibly expand the program
	Electronic fare Media (Smart Card/Mobile) – Any electronic fare media should be an e-Purse/account-based solution, so Halifax Transit can offer loyalty/best value programs and day/multiple day passes to riders.
	Contactless Bank Card – In the future, implement contactless bank card tap payment.

Halifax Transit public concessionary fare policies:

Current Concessionary Fare Policies	Recommended Concessionary Fare Policies
UPass discounted pass for full-time post-secondary students 4-month, 8-month, and 9-month programs	Continue the UPass program but rates should be increased to be more in-line with other jurisdictions.
EPass discounted annual pass available to SmartTrip employers paid through payroll deduction cost 87.5% of 12 monthly passes	Continue the EPass program. Eliminate premium fare options and allow base EPass users to use the pass for any fare type.
Low income transit pass monthly pass at 50% discount	Allow for incremental expansion of the program.
Child aged < 5 - free	Continue but change age to children < 13 ride free after a pilot is conducted to understand the budgetary impact of this change.
Free Park & Ride	Conduct a study to evaluate implementing a fee to park in Park & Ride lots
Visually impaired free with valid CNIB card	Continue unchanged.
Seniors free on Tuesday from 10:00am to 3:30PM and after 6:00PM	Continue unchanged.
Personal Care attendant with AAB client free	Continue unchanged.
Refugee 1-year settlement support program free WIH pass	Continue unchanged.
Ferry: Canada Day, Natal Day, New Year's Eve after 6 PM free	Continue unchanged.
Other – special events volunteers, etc. free	Continue on a case-by-case basis.

An investigation into the feasibility of implementing a fee for access to Halifax Transit Park & Rides should be conducted. This would address the issue of Halifax Transit Park & Ride lots quickly filling with non-users of Halifax Transit at the expense of passengers. An example where this is currently an issue is the Woodside Ferry Terminal parking lot.

Halifax Transit transfer policy

A transfer allows passengers to connect to other buses or ferries to complete a trip without paying an additional fare. Transfers are valid for up to 90 minutes after the last time point on the route on which the transfer was received. If a transfer is needed, it must be requested by the passenger when boarding the bus or ferry. Transfers are available on all routes and Access-A-Bus passengers may also request transfers.

Current Transfer Policies	Recommended Transfer Policies
Issued when paying fare	Continue unchanged.
Valid for 90 minutes after end of route	Continue unchanged.
Valid on all HT routes and services	Continue to accept transfers on all Halifax Transit routes and services. Continue to require an additional fee when using a transfer from conventional service to premium service. There may be special cases where transfers would not be valid such as special event services, etc.
Passenger requests transfer upon boarding	Continue unchanged.
Additional fares for MetroLink, MetroX and Airport	MetroLink is being eliminated. Continue unchanged for MetroX and Airport.

Halifax Transit service tiers:

Current service tiers		Recommended service tiers	
Standard Fare	Conventional bus Ferry Access-A-Bus	Standard Fare	Continue unchanged.
Limited-Stop	MetroLink		MetroLink premium fare is being eliminated.
Regional Express	MetroX	Regional Express	Continue unchanged.
		Airport	Airport cash fare to be increased to \$6.

Very few changes are recommended for the current service tiers other than the elimination of the MetroLink premium fare and an increase to the cash fare for the Route 320 Airport/Fall River.

The MetroLink premium fare is being eliminated, as it will no longer be required over the longer term. There are currently only two MetroLink routes, the 185 Sackville Link and 159 Portland Hills Link. The *Moving Forward Together Plan* includes the redesign of transit routes and services, including the replacement of existing MetroLink routes with new express routes.

In November 2019, the Route 185 Sackville Link will be discontinued and replaced with the express routes 183, 185, and 186. Between the Sackville Terminal and Scotia Square, these routes will provide the same frequent, express services as currently provided by the Route 185. However, they will start/end their trips in residential communities, allowing more passengers access to express service, and will also travel beyond Scotia Square, bringing passengers closer to other downtown destinations.

As the Route 159 will be the only remaining MetroLink route, and there are plans to change this route as part of the Moving Forward Together Plan, and premium MetroLink vehicles are being retired and the route is often serviced with a standard conventional vehicle, it is recommended that the premium MetroLink fare be discontinued as part of the upcoming fare changes.

The Route 320 Airport/Fall River serves both commuters and occasional travelers. As identified in the *Moving Forward Together Plan*, this route provides a regionally significant connection from a tourism and economic development perspective and as such is exempt from minimum ridership guidelines. This route provides a significantly higher level of service than other Regional Express routes, operating consistently all day, seven days a week.

To reflect the reduced ridership expectations, higher level of service, and resulting higher level of cost to operate this service, a higher cash/single rider fare is appropriate. A jurisdictional scan was completed, and the proposed single ride fare is \$6, which is considered more reflective of the value of service to travelers. All other fare medium (tickets, passes, etc.) will remain consistent with other Regional Express service, so as to not impact commuters or frequent travelers.

Fare table

See Attachment A of this report.

Student Transit Pass Program

Halifax Transit staff has been asked to explore the possibility of a student transit pass program, providing free and unlimited transit to HRM youth, similar to the Kingston, Ontario program model.

The potential opportunity to work closely with the two school boards (HRCE and CSAP) to explore options for this type of program is supported by direction provided by the *Integrated Mobility Plan* which calls for building sustainable commuting habits in youth. Based on the success of the program in Kingston, Ontario, a similar program in Halifax could contribute to meeting this IMP goal.

There are, however, several points to be carefully considered before a particular approach is recommended:

- Cost: the potential cost of the program could be substantial. In Kingston, this cost is primarily borne by the school board. Further discussion is required to determine if this is possible in Halifax, or if a partnership opportunity exists.
- Implementation: The logistics of the program implementation is considerable. It is likely that if a partnership is established, staff would likely recommend a pilot program of one grade level, perhaps at one or two schools which are well served by transit. This pilot would be critical to working through implementation challenges and ensuring a smooth roll out of the overall program.

At this time, the User Fee By-law amendments recommended include provisions to allow for a pilot with high school students to proceed. Over the next year, staff will meet with HRCE and the Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP) school officials to discuss the potential partnership opportunities, program details, timelines, logistics, marketing and costs. Prior to implementing a pilot project, a detailed programming strategy, including costs and timelines, will be brought before Council for consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The planned cash fare increase of 25 cents for conventional transit and the other strategic fare changes, e.g. reduction in the relative cost of the monthly passes and increase in the relative cost of paper tickets, are expected to increase fare revenue by approximately 4.5% or \$1,550,000 dollars per year. For 2019/20 the impact should be approximately half the annual amount or \$775,000. This number is difficult to estimate accurately, since riders will change their cash/ticket/pass purchasing behavior. Anticipated changes to ridership levels and the resulting revenue impacts has been factored into the estimate. In the approved 2019/20 Halifax Transit operating budget, \$812,000 was included for additional fare revenue from the approved fare and pass increases commencing mid fiscal year.

The revenue impact of Alternative 1 is approximately the same as for the proposal. The elimination of the senior fare and the increase in age of children travelling free (up to 12 years) each has a financial impact of approximately \$600,000 per year, in opposing directions.

RISK CONSIDERATION

There are not significant risks associated with the recommendations of this report. The risks considered rate low.

Every fare increase comes with the risk that ridership will be negatively impacted; however, new programs have been developed over that past several years to protect the most vulnerable users of Halifax Transit. Currently, 900 participants in the Low-Income Transit Pass program receive monthly transit passes at 50% and nearly 10,000 individuals in the Halifax region are now receiving monthly transit passes through the provincial department of Community Services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The November edition of Halifax Transit's Talk Transit survey focused on fares.

Highlights of the survey include:

- Overall, people are satisfied with Halifax Transit's current fare structure
- Respondents believe monthly passes should be priced in a way that makes more sense relative to tickets
- Many passengers would prefer to pay transit fare with smartphones/smart card technology

Participants were asked for their thoughts on the cost of monthly passes. The followings responses were noted:

- Monthly passes should be the price of traveling 15 days a month (30 trips) 39%
- Monthly passes should be the price of traveling 18 days a month (36 trips) 27%
- Monthly passes are appropriately priced relative to tickets 29%
- Other 5%

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There were no environmental implications identified associated with this report.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council may choose to keep the Senior fare category and the age limit at which children travel for free as status quo.

As mentioned in the financial implications section of this report, the revenue impact of keeping the Senior fare category and the age limit at which children travel for free as status quo is comparable to the revenue impact of the recommendations.

The positive impact to our revenue if we remove the senior fare category is approximately \$600,000. The negative impact to our revenue if we run a pilot to increase the age at which children ride free is approximately \$600,000. Therefore, by doing both, the only real impact to revenue/budget is the overall effect of the fare increase (\$755,000 this year, 1,550,000 per year going forward). By doing neither, the only real impact to revenue/budget is the overall effect of the fare increase (\$755,000 this year, 1,550,000 per year going forward).

2. Council may choose to make amendments in addition to the amendments identified by staff. Based on the nature of any amendments, a supplementary report may be required.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Fare Tables – 2019 Transit Fare Strategy By-Law U-100 Amendments

Attachment B - Showing proposed changes to By-law U-100

Attachment C - By-law U-105

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Marc Santilli, Manager Technical Services, Halifax Transit, 902.490.6649

Ferry Services Survey Results

Talk

Transit

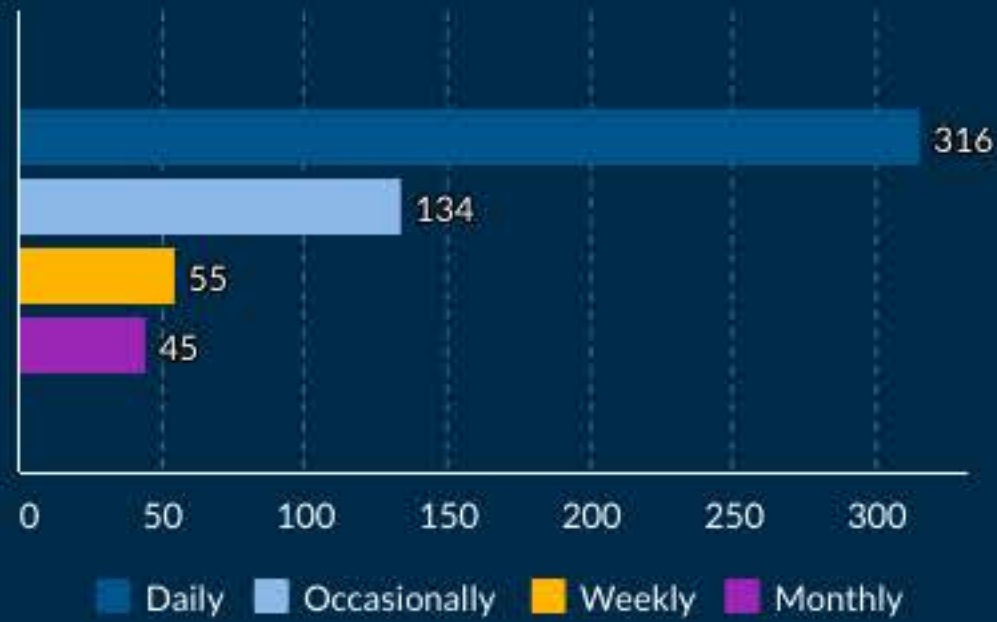
HALIFAX

Highlights

- The majority of respondents typically do return trips on the ferry.
- Many residents noted that the bus and ferry connection needs to improve.
- Some participants encouraged the improvement of Woodside ferry terminal including escalators, elevators, and overall design.
- A large number of respondents expressed the desire for longer ferry service hours including night and weekend service for Woodside ferry.
- Many residents also wish for ferry services in additional locations.
- 99.3% of respondents rated their experience with the ferry as excellent or good and repeatedly noted how friendly ferry staff are.



How often do you ride the ferry?

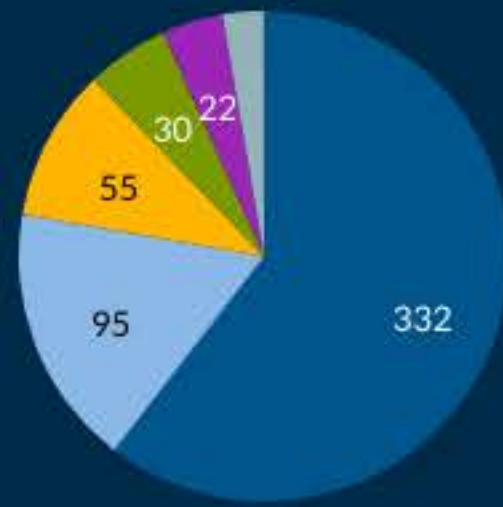


Which ferry route do you take most often?



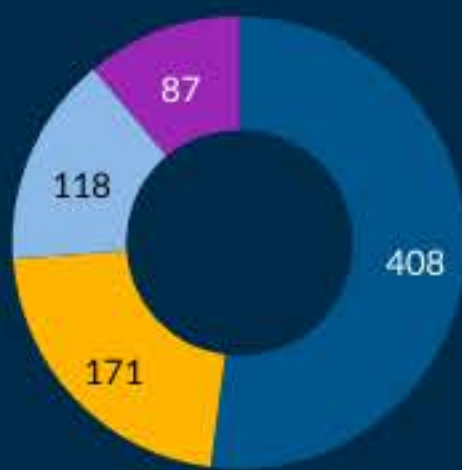
- Alderney/Halifax Route (56.1%)
- Woodside/Halifax Route (36.43%)
- I take both routes equally (7.47%)

What is your primary reason for taking the ferry?



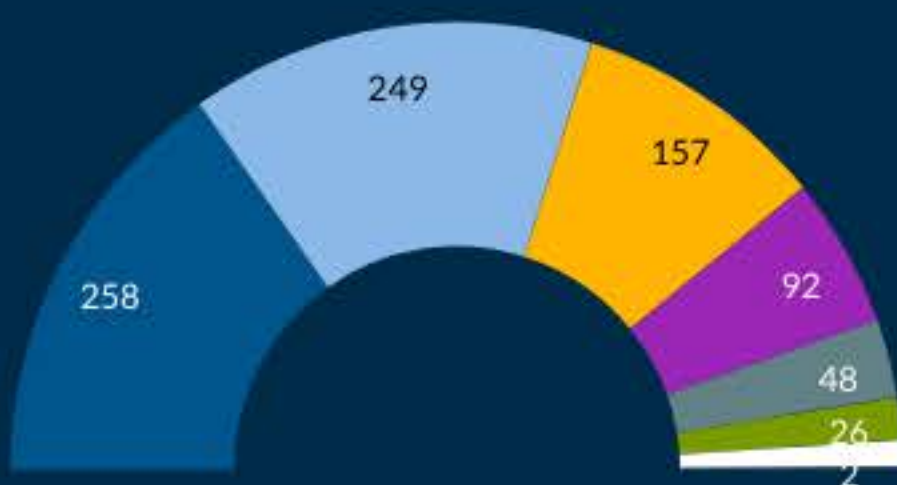
- Work (60.47%)
- Entertainment such as restaurants, bars, and events (17.3%)
- School (10.02%)
- Daily errands, shopping and appointments (5.46%)
- Visiting friends and family (4.01%)
- Other (2.73%)

When do you typically ride the ferry?



- Weekday commute hours (7 a.m. - 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.) (52.04%)
- Weekends (21.81%)
- Evenings (after 6 p.m.) (15.05%)
- Weekdays (10 a.m. - 3 p.m.) (11.1%)

How do you get to the ferry?



- Bus (30.42%)
- Walk (29.36%)
- Drive alone and use the Park & Ride (18.51%)
- Get dropped off (10.85%)
- Bike (5.66%)
- Carpool and use the Park & Ride (3.07%)
- Other (1.89%)
- Motorcycle (0.24%)

Ferry Services Survey Results: Park & Ride

Talk

Transit

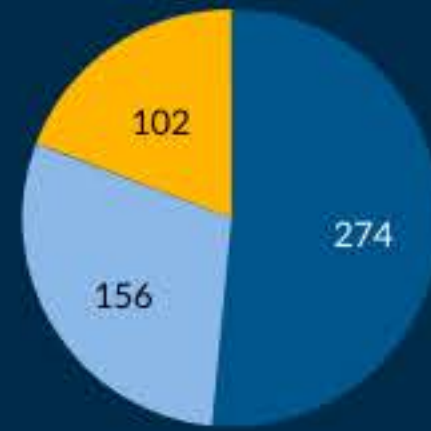
HALIFAX
TRANSIT

Highlights

- The majority of respondents commented on the lack of availability at both Alderney and Woodside Park & Ride lots and desired consistent guaranteed parking availability.
- Many respondents noted that the Woodside Park & Ride lot is full before 8 a.m. and the majority of the lot is used by non-ferry users. Snow removal was also noted as an issue for space in the winter.
- Some felt that Alderney Park & Ride was too far from the actual ferry terminal.
- Overall, residents are in favour of a free Park & Ride system.

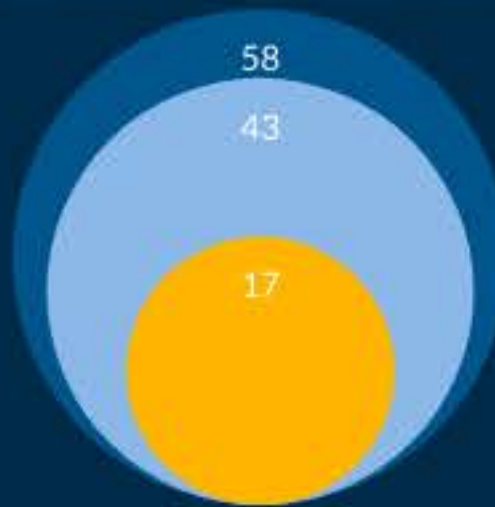


Are you aware of how ferry terminal Park & Ride facilities work?



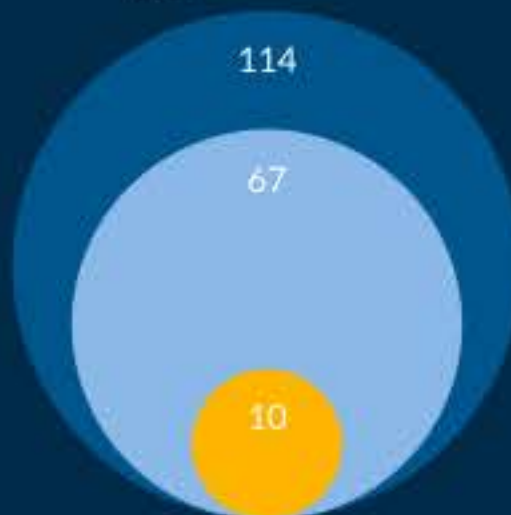
- Yes, I am aware (51.5%)
- No, I am not aware (29.32%)
- I am somewhat aware, but could use more information (19.17%)

Based on your experience or knowledge of the Alderney ferry terminal Park & Ride facility, please rate the availability of parking.



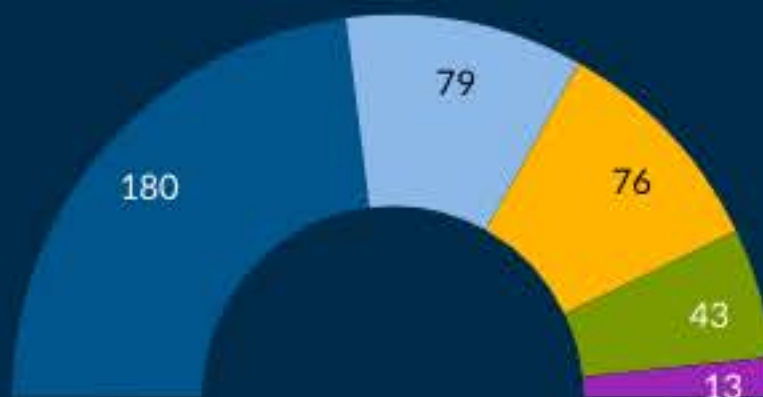
- I am not able to easily find parking at the Alderney ferry Park & Ride (49.15%)
- I am able to easily find parking at Alderney ferry Park & Ride (36.44%)
- I have never found parking at the Alderney ferry Park & Ride (14.41%)

Based on your experience or knowledge of the Woodside ferry terminal Park & Ride facility, please rate the availability of parking.



- I am able to easily find parking at Woodside ferry Park & Ride (59.69%)
- I am not able to easily find parking at the Woodside ferry Park & Ride (35.08%)
- I have never found parking at the Woodside ferry Park & Ride (5.24%)

How could a ferry terminal Park & Ride encourage you to incorporate transit or ferries as part of your trips?



- Consistent availability of parking spaces (46.04%)
- Better communication about how Park & Rides work (20.2%)
- Pre-paid passes with guaranteed parking availability (19.44%)
- Daily or weekly parking rates instead of monthly passes (11%)
- Parking spaces closer to the ferry terminal (3.32%)



Thank you for responding to the Talk Transit Ferry Services survey! The answers you provided will help improve our Ferry and Park & Ride services.

www.shapeyourcityhalifax.ca/talktransit

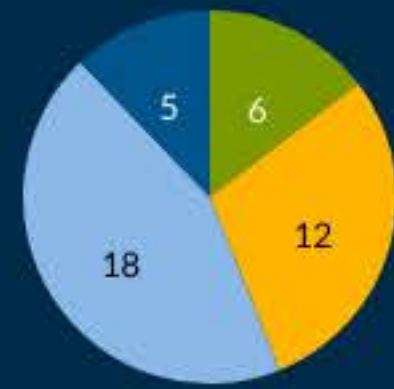
Ferry Services Survey Results: Cyclists Satisfaction

Highlights

- The overwhelming majority of respondents felt that increased security and surveillance for bike racks were needed to prevent bicycle theft.
- Some participants suggested an indoor, secure bike lock-up room within terminals.
- A few respondents felt that additional and better bike rack designs would also assist cyclists and provide more room for bike parking.
- One respondent suggested a change room for cyclist commuters.
- The lack of bike lanes to Woodside Terminal discouraged some respondents from cycling to the ferry due to safety concerns.



Rate your satisfaction with bike parking at ferry terminals



- Very satisfied (14.63%)
- Satisfied (29.27%)
- Somewhat dissatisfied (43.9%)
- Dissatisfied (12.2%)

Travelling by bicycle to the ferry terminal:

61.7%

Bring their bike on the ferry and keep biking on the other side

17%

Take their bike on the ferry and park on the other side

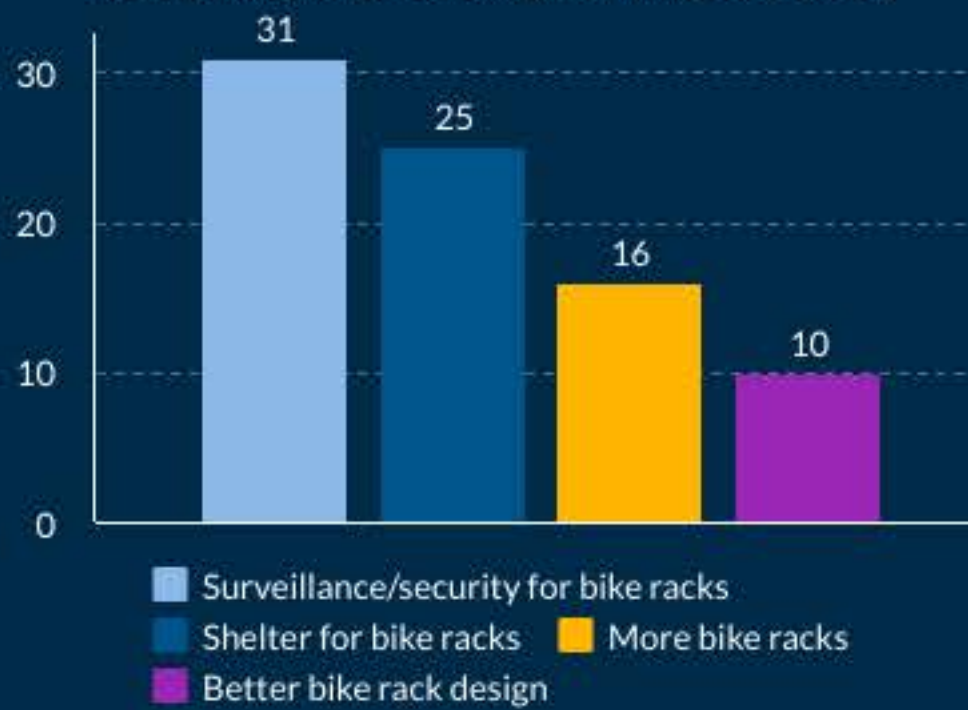
12.8%

Park their bike at the terminal before getting on the ferry

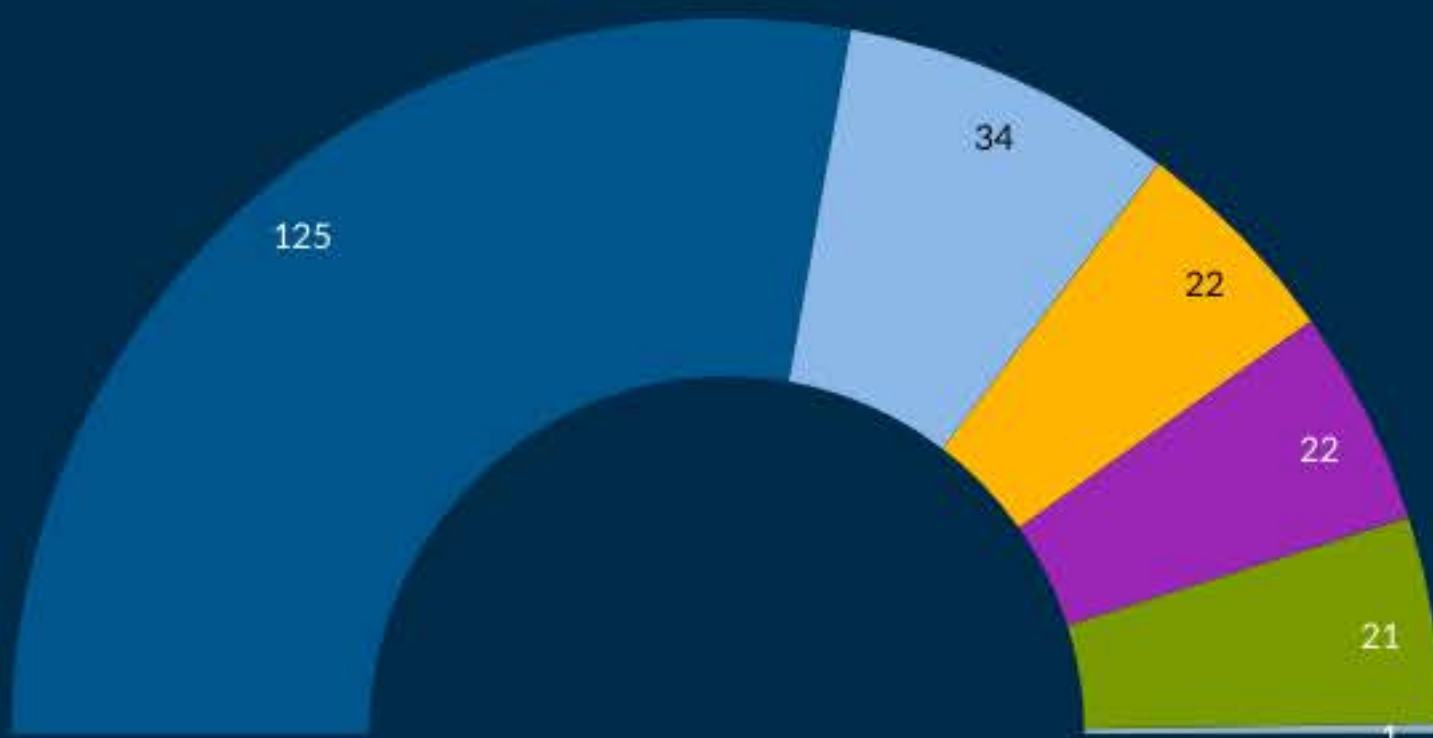
8.5%

Don't take their bike

From the list below, which two changes to bike parking at ferry terminals would you like to see?



If you drive to the ferry terminal, what is your main reason for driving instead of taking the bus?



- It is faster and more convenient to take my car (55.56%)
- I do not live close to a bus route (15.11%)
- The bus doesn't come at the right times (9.78%)
- The bus connection to the ferry schedule is difficult (9.78%)
- The bus doesn't often enough (9.33%)
- I have mobility issues that prevent me from using the bus (0.44%)