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Item No. 12.3.1

Request for Transportation Standing Committee Consideration		
<p>X Agenda Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon Wednesday the week prior to the meeting)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Added Item (Submitted to Municipal Clerk's Office by Noon at least one working day prior to meeting)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Request from the Floor</p>
<p>Date of Meeting: August 24, 2023</p>		
<p>Subject: Review of HRM's Rural Transit Program</p>		
<p>Motion for Transportation Standing Committee to Consider:</p> <p>That the Transportation Standing Committee direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide a staff report to review HRM's Rural Transit Program to assess existing regional services, identifying gaps in regional service, conduct a rural/regional transit service need analysis, and identify and recommend potential rural transit models and opportunities, including aligning with the JRTA and connecting into the Halifax Transit network. Potential models should include looking at rural and regional transit through an equity and sustainability lens, as well as how inter-community regional transit can support goals of sustainable regional growth, rural economic development, and community and individual well-being.</p>		
<p>Reason:</p> <p>Halifax's Rural Transit Funding Program was approved in 2014, almost 10 years ago. During that time we've seen the creation of two rural transit providers, Mus-go Rider and Bayrides, providing a valuable service to residents in those specific catchment areas. However, gaps in service continue to exist in many of HRM's rural communities. The question is whether or not HRM's rural transit funding program is delivering a fair and equitable regional transit service, and to identify where gaps still exist and how these gaps can be addressed. With a significant population living outside the transit boundary, rural and regional transit is an important tool for supporting and shaping sustainable growth and development in our region. It is also critical to rural economic development, supporting rural community health and well-being, supporting all ages and abilities, and addressing issues of social isolation, income inequity, access to services, food security, access to all HRM residents to our region.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to submitting an application to the Federal Rural Transit Solutions Fund to support this work. And it would be great if this report could return to the TSC in no-longer than a year so ideas can inform and support the JRTA, as well as inform HRM's Rural Transit Program going forward.</p>		
<p>Outcome Sought:</p> <p>Staff report reviewing HRM's Rural Transit Program and providing future recommendations to address rural service gaps.</p>		
<p><i>Councillor Patty Cuttell</i></p>		<p><i>District 11</i></p>

