

HALIFAX TRANSIT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

IT'S MORE THAN BUSES - JULY 2023



WHY IT'S MORE THAN BUSES?

HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS ONLY OPTIONS TO SUBMIT TRANSIT FEEDBACK IS THROUGH 311. A PHONE CALL AT SPECIFIC TIMES OF DAY DETERS RIDERS FROM SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES & FRUSTRATIONS TAKING TRANSIT IN HRM.

WE'RE TAKING HALIFAX TRANSIT EXPERIENCES SERIOUSLY, AND ARE SHARING HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROBLEMS RIDERS TO EXPERIENCES TO SHOWCASE WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED & CHANGED.

[MORETHANBUSES.CA](https://www.morethanbuses.ca)

WHAT WE HEARD FROM HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS (JULY 2023)

Reliability across the network is poor. Wait times of 30-60 minutes for a bus aren't uncommon, and buses frequently run upwards of 30+ minutes behind schedule during rush hour and weekends.

Routes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 & 29 were specifically called out for unreliability.



Many transfers are inconsistent, unreliable, or just simply aren't scheduled to line-up at all. Many trips require too many transfers to work, and significantly increase travel time. Drivers often don't wait or help to facilitate transfers with buses pulling into terminals.

Dartmouth & Cole Harbour are notably pain points when it comes to riders transferring.

Many riders experiencing overcrowding on corridor routes, including multiple situations of riders being turned away on weekends when buses run less frequently due to overcrowding.



Notable lack of transit coverage in Bayers Lake, West Bedford, Dartmouth, Dartmouth Crossing, Cole Harbour & Fall River.



Multiple situations of conflicting information from Halifax Transit and 3rd Party Apps.

Significant failure in communicating transit delays and cancellations.

Cancellations, planned and sudden continue to be an ongoing issue for riders, impacting reliability.

Lack of seating/shelter/shade at bus stops. Lack of working AC on buses, accessibility concerns surrounding Mumford & Lacewood Terminals. Cleanliness of transit is a concern.

Where to buy fares is inconsistent, confusing and dated. More options to buy fares, and the implementation of electronic fare options has been neglected and delayed too much.

Ongoing concerns surrounding driver behavior, COVID-19 protocols, and overall accessibility.



It's More Than Buses

Advocates for better transit in Halifax

ABOVE IS A SUMMARY OF THE SPECIFIC ISSUES THAT HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS EXPERIENCE BASED ON FEEDBACK RECEIVED.

QUOTES FROM HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS

(JULY 2023)

"I can no longer rely on the only transit system of Halifax. I don't own a car and relying on the bus is stressful, keeps me waiting for 30-40 minutes with huge delays."

"In theory, I have an express bus that passes very near my home, and goes within a 10 minute walk of my work, it would be great and take about the same time as biking to work for me. However, this is one of the buses that had its service reduced back in the fall, sufficiently that I wouldn't be able to get to work in the morning for my regular hours. I could change my hours to accommodate this, but did not want to give up so much of my afternoon/evening."

"...bus service throughout the peninsula was miserable. multiple trips along the 7 were cancelled, and the 10 appeared to be running 60 minutes+ behind schedule, or simply not arriving at all."

"I was traveling up Windsor waiting for a 4 or 90. I could see the 90 on the map, but all that drove by was an empty out of service bus. Waited a few more minutes for a 4, but the bus was full and refused to pick up more passengers. Next 4 or 90 not estimated to come for 30+ minutes. Gave up on transit and just walked, ending up late."

"The Bedford Highway leading into Windsor Street Exchange was completely backed up, and the bus was stopped in traffic in direct sunlight for over 20 minutes without working AC on the bus. I felt very lightheaded from the heat and had to get off the bus halfway to stop at a cafe to cool off. The 8 only comes every 30 minutes during rush hour and because of the traffic, I called a cab to take me the rest of the way home."

"When a 29 finally arrived, they wouldn't let us on board because we had someone with a wheelchair which they couldn't fit due to overcrowding."

"...all routes nearby (2, 3 & 8) were all running 30-45 minutes behind schedule during rush hour when they were supposed to be coming every 15-20 minutes."

"Mumford terminal is a thoroughly unpleasant experience, even after the improvements. It's still hard to tell which route stops where, busses routinely stop in the wrong area, inadequate seating and shade; and it's ludicrous that you can't buy a ticket at the terminal."

"What annoys me is there is no mechanism for a bus to alert another bus that they have people who need to transfer to the bus ahead. So as one bus arrives, the driver of the bus ahead puts pedal to the metal and a seamless transfer does not happen."

"When I regularly took the 3 to get to work in Dartmouth, the bus was routinely 8+ minutes early. It was hard to anticipate ... so by the time I could see the bus was going to be early, I couldn't make it. When I missed the bus, there was a very long wait for the next one, and I would miss my connection with the 55 which runs very infrequently."

"I hardly ever take the bus. There are so many connections and it takes so long to do a few kilometres."

"Transit has made some hostile architecture decisions around Lacewood Terminal that is, frankly, ageist- removing seating and wifi to stop teenagers from spending any time there creates barriers for everyone else."

"I find the scheduling is awful. All busses from one major stop or terminal going to a similar destination leave at the same time and before busses ending their route at that terminal arrive. I.e., busses going downtown from bridge terminal leave all around the same time and about 5 minutes before busses coming from the rest of Dartmouth ending at bridge term arrive."

"... hard to rely on transit when a) it is not very frequent, and b) there are frequency changes throughout the day and between weekday and weekend. The system is set up around commuters only so it makes it very difficult to make trips that are off peak. It needs to change to more of a transfer based system so that trips between terminal can happen at greater frequency."

"I've stopped doing some things because of how cumbersome taking the bus has become. ... HRM is so out of touch with how a transfer-based system works. You can't have a transfer-based system with buses that run hourly, which is the brunt of the routes in Dartmouth. No point in having the corridor routes running frequently if the connecting buses are not coming along for long periods of time."

"There's a bus stop on Susie Lake Crescent that is literally just a sign in the grass and there's no sidewalk anywhere near it on this busy stroad, not even a concrete slab to stand on. ... There's no way to safely get from the sidewalk on Chain Lake Drive to any of the stores. You either have to walk on the ramps used by cars or climb the steep grassy hill. Can't imagine anyone with even a minor disability issue being able to do this safely."

**REAL COMMENTS FROM HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS.
WE NEED OFFICIALS LIKE YOURSELF TO PUSH FOR BETTER TRANSIT.**

HALIFAX TRANSIT FEEDBACK SUMMARY

IT'S MORE THAN BUSES - SEPTEMBER 2023



WHY IT'S MORE THAN BUSES?

SUBMITTING COMPLAINTS & FEEDBACK TO HALIFAX TRANSIT ISN'T A SIMPLE PROCESS AND DETERS RIDERS FROM SHARING THEIR EXPERIENCES & FRUSTRATIONS TAKING TRANSIT IN HRM. WE'RE TAKING HALIFAX TRANSIT EXPERIENCES SERIOUSLY, AND ARE SHARING HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROBLEMS RIDERS EXPERIENCE TO SHOWCASE WHAT CAN BE IMPROVED & CHANGED.

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WHAT WE HEARD FROM HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS (SEPTEMBER 2023)

Options to purchase and pay for transit fares is challenging at best, and a barrier to using transit at worst. Multiple riders are frustrated at the lack of electronic fare options, or at least more options to purchase tickets/passes.



Many riders indicated poor communication from Halifax Transit for multiple instances:

- Conflicting/inaccurate information provided from transit apps.
- Lack of information surrounding scheduling or trip planning.
- Poor communication surrounding planned and sudden cancellations.

Cancellations, and lack of proper communication around what trips are cancelled/running late continue to be a pain point for multiple Halifax Transit riders.



Transit reliability was noted to be poor across the network for a variety of reasons:

Buses are frequently off schedule or significantly delayed.



Inconsistency or low frequency of buses provides challenges or confusion for riders.

Transfers continue to be unreliable and a turn-away for many Halifax Transit riders.



Overcrowding on buses is a growing issue, and can be a barrier for some people to consider transit.

Specific Routes Identified as Unreliable:

1

8

29

90

320

Infrastructure at key transit terminals or bus stops is often inadequate, contributing to poor transfers or wayfinding.

Many trips take 3-4 times longer by bus than by car, making transit an unappealing option for residents.

Concerns surrounding driver behaviour, or the cleanliness of transit.



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VOICE YOUR EXPERIENCES AND CONCERNS WITH HALIFAX TRANSIT AT
[MORETHANBUSES.CA/SHARE-YOUR-TRANSIT-FEEDBACK/](https://morethanbuses.ca/share-your-transit-feedback/)

QUOTES FROM HALIFAX TRANSIT RIDERS (SEPTEMBER 2023)

“Cash only or bus tickets is a huge barrier for me and many others I know. Bus either came early or late, and the tracking on the app I used wasn't accurate.”

“I used to bus to and from a friend's in Herring Cove. They lived in a very rural area and I'd often get the bus back late. Since so many routes would be cancelled but not update to show them as cancelled until after they were supposed to have gone I'd be left standing alone in the dark on the street. Felt very unsafe.”

“Buses being often (very) late but showing as departed on time on apps despite not even arriving yet. Sometimes it's 15 minutes late before Google maps will change from telling you it left the stop on time to that it's late and won't be there for a while yet. Makes it next to impossible to plan trips.”

“Driver did not know the route. Missed his turn off Dutch Village completely, then sat parked by the side of the road for five minutes, did not update the passengers.”

“My only complaint with Halifax Transit is the system of paying for a fare. The need to use exact change or to find a retailer to buy a sheet of tickets from is antiquated and I think a real barrier to use for some people, especially tourists.”

“All runs downtown take longer than they used to. My personal experience is mostly with the #4, which has a great deal of trouble with predictability; sometimes early, sometimes late, impossible to tell which it will be despite the alleged ability to track in real time.”

“Getting tickets! It's absurd that I have to either have exact change OR I have to go to a random grocery/drug store (from a well-hidden list) to get a physical ticket fare. We need card tap on the buses/ferries, or at the VERY least, tickets should be sold at major transit centres like the ferry terminal.”

“If the location I want to go requires a transfer, I'll opt to drive instead because the transfer times listed in the schedules never match up and I've missed too many appointments because I was stranded at a transfer point.”

“Transferring between routes is a total gamble. more often than not, the bus you want to transfer onto pulls out as your current bus is pulling in, the former using the latter's arrival as his cue to leave.”

“I wanted to take bus 320 from the airport to the city, however, there was a huge lineup of people waiting for the bus, and only enough room for about half of them. I had to wait an hour for the next bus. This route should run much more frequently.”

“Bus 8 was hugely delayed, so I took bus 29 to get from Bayers & Connaught to North & Gottingen. Horrible idea, worst late-night bus ride of my life. It was packed to the brim, extremely slow, and I was let out in the middle of nowhere, where I then had to walk to the underside of the bridge so that I could climb a winding road up a huge hill to finally get to my destination.”

“Busses not showing up, being extremely late, being early and not waiting, only coming every hour, being slower than walking... it's truly not worth taking the bus in this city.”

“The #90 inbound was so full at 8 am that as of Flamingo Drive, the bus driver couldn't let anyone else on. Folks moved back as much as possible, and at times on the route the driver was letting people enter by the back door if they showed their pass.”

“The #90 has always been crowded even not during the school year & when there is more staff, running the #90 every 15 min during peak times should be considered.”

“As a short person, crowded buses can be a challenge. I have to find a vertical pole to hang onto. I can't reach the overhead horizontal poles, and don't get me started on those hanging straps; those things are a menace the way you swing around with no means of bracing yourself. So, there have been times when the bus is so crowded when it pulls up, I see that there's no way I can get to a pole, so I don't get on.”

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