Beat: Travel

Halifax Transit Will Provide Free Rides

On Fridays Throughout The Summer

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USPA NEWS - Starting on July 1st, Halifax Transit service will be free of charge every Friday for conventional bus, Access-A-Bus, Regional Express Service along with the ferry. The Alderney ferry will also be free all day, every Saturday during this period. This program will conclude on August 31st. It should also be noted that every Tuesday throughout the year Halifax Transit service is free for Seniors.

The timing was perfect for Halifax Transit to roll out the free ride program as thousands of people were out celebrating Canada Day making parking and driving throughout the HRM challenging.

The plan was approved by the Halifax Regional Council in April 2022 as a way to promote transit services that are available within the community, and encourage new/existing riders to explore the city in turn supporting the local economy.

In a statement on Tuesday, June 7th, Ryan Nearing from Halifax Regional Municipality corporate communications said, "The hope is to encourage residents and visitors to just get out there and explore different parts of the municipality." The statement went on to say, "The provision of free fares is also intended to assist with COVID-19 business recovery, by encouraging residents and visitors to visit local businesses or access dining and entertainment around the municipality."

Many people, that I had the chance to speak with, said that the idea of taking the bus makes good sense, and could see the value of reducing fuel consumption, parking fees and bridge tolls. However, some said that they would not have any idea where to start with learning transit routes, schedules, and where to find appropriate bus stops, but they were pleasantly surprised to discover how easily the information can be found on the Halifax Transit website.

The intent of this article is not to promote Halifax Transit as a money making venture for HRM, but instead to introduce the idea of the utilization of transit services that many may not be familiar with. After 2 years of pandemic lockdowns and restrictions people are ready to get out and enjoy life again. Whether its going to a movie, visiting a coffee shop, shopping at a local business or visiting a park, people are on the move. There is no doubt that the new reality is a higher cost of living and everyone is feeling the pinch. Many are looking at lifestyle changes that can help ease the challenges. Integrating public transit into the daily routine is simple change that could yield noticeable positive results. Halifax Transit is hoping that the free rides will turn the spotlight on the the convience and economic/environmental advantages of taking the bus.

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V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Brian Teepell

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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