

# STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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**DATE:** May 12, 2023

**TO:** MAYOR AND COUNCIL

**NAME AND TITLE:** Blake McIntosh, Director, Civic Operations

**SUBJECT:** Free Transit Fares Policy 2023 Update

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Draft Revision of Free Transit Fares Policy

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That Council APPROVES the revised “Free Transit Fares Policy” as attached to the report dated May 12, 2023 from the Director of Civic Operations titled “Free Transit Fares Policy 2023 Update.”

**PURPOSE:**

To bring forward updates to the Free Transit Fares Policy, approved in 2017.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Preserve the environment: implement local government actions that advance environmental protection including climate change and adaptation.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Free Transit Fares Policy was approved by council nearly six years ago, with the intent to provide written structure to the implementation and execution of days in which fares are not to be collected on transit. These days include, effective annually:

- Clean Air Day
- Election Days (federal, provincial, local, and byelections)
- Go By Bike Week (formerly Bike To Work Week)
- “Food for Fare” (fares substituted with food bank donation)
- National Seniors Day
- “Free Fares for Class” (fares for school field trips are covered by request)

Since the policy was adopted, changes to these holidays and events have taken place, and the need to make updates has arisen. The following changes will be in effect upon adoption of the new policy:

Section	Former	Revised
Introductory paragraph	The following policy reduces transit cash fares to zero on the Prince George transit systems (conventional, community and custom transit) annually for the following promotions:	This policy reduces transit cash fares to zero on the Prince George Custom and Conventional transit systems, annually for the following promotional days and events:

1.	Clean Air Day, once a year annually for all riders;	Clean Air Day, as determined by the federal government, set once annually;
3.	For the whole week during Bike to School and Work Week for registered participants, with the presentation of their bike helmet to drivers;	“Go By Bike Week” event taking place in the late spring or early summer (not including Go By Bike Week events taking place at other times of the year), for registered participants with the presentation of their bike helmet to the transit operator;

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

The proposed changes are not expected to have any financial impacts to the existing budget. Coverage of fare revenue comes from the City’s transit operating budget, while marketing and promotional resources come from the marketing budget shared between the City and BC Transit.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The proposed amendments to the Free Transit Fares Policy update are meant as a housekeeping item to ensure clarity around implementation of promotional free fare periods. There are no expected financial implications to these changes.

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:**

Blake McIntosh, Director, Civic Operations

PREPARED BY: Michael Coulson, Transit Planner

**APPROVED:**

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2023/05/31