



KINGS TRANSIT AUTHORITY

29 Crescent Drive, New Minas Nova Scotia B4N 3G7
Phone – (902) 678-7310 Fax – (902) 678-2545

Sunday, December 3rd, 2017

Acadia Student Union
c/o Grace Hamilton-Burge
15 University Avenue
Wolfville, Nova Scotia
B4P 2R6

Dear Ms. Hamilton-Burge,

On behalf of Kings Transit, I would like to submit our formal proposal to the Acadia Student Union for the ratification and adoption of a student “U-Pass” to begin in September 2018. Our October presentation to the ASU highlighted what Kings Transit has done to make riding the bus an attractive form of transportation for Acadia students. To answer the specific questions, which are required for the ASU to provide a positive recommendation to hold a referendum, let me address them in order.

1. Why is the proposal necessary/useful to Acadia students.
 - a. Statistically speaking, the excellent research done in 2016 by Tzomi Burkhart and you, Grace, illustrated there is a gap between those who have personal vehicles and those who do not. This creates a divide between the “have” and “have not” students who could use extra supports to make services more accessible during their time at Acadia all while addressing the triple bottom line.
 - i. Economically: students would only need to ride the bus twice in a month to justify the cost of their U-Pass. No other university in Nova Scotia or Atlantic Canada can boast those numbers!
 - ii. Socially: opening opportunities to part time jobs in surrounding Towns and Villages, easier access to the hospital for medical or volunteer opportunities would greatly benefit all Acadia students.
 - iii. Environmentally: more students utilizing Kings Transit will reduce the number of vehicles on campus reducing CO2 emissions.
 - b. Anecdotally, during the Acadia Sustainability week, Kings Transit’s general manager, Stephen Foster, and I had the chance to talk to students about using Kings Transit free of charge during the week. Those that we were able to engage were thrilled to hear that their travel needs would be free for the week. Many exclaimed, “Oh! I needed to go to New Minas this week for _____!”

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When we further discussed the potential for a bus pass with extended hours of service, new routes, and a live tracking app, many students were very excited. They explained to us that because of a lack of transportation, they had limited ability to access part time employment and volunteer opportunities, and the U-Pass would remove those barriers. This seemed to echo throughout the foreign student population.

2. What are we offering to students?

- a. Kings Transit is offering safe, effective travel across Kings County from Hants Border to Digby at an amazing price. Extended routes, service hours, free wifi, cameras on the bus and a live tracking app will allow students to know where the bus is and get where they are going on time. Kings Transit buses can accommodate people with disabilities with accessible ramps and automated stop announcements. We have bike racks on the front of the vehicles so that further exploration of the Annapolis Valley is available as well.

3. What is the cost of the service to students?

- a. Kings Transit is offering a student U-Pass for a grand total of \$80/year. This pass would be valid in the summer months and work out to a total of \$6.66/month. Currently a student pass for Kings Transit is \$65/month! **THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE SAVINGS!** A single trip on a Kings Transit bus is \$3.50. At this rate, students would only need to ride twice a month to justify the cost. We would also charge a half-year rate of \$40 to students only studying for one semester.
- b. Comparing rates from other Universities across Atlantic Canada:
 - i. **St.FX: No transit available to students**
 - ii. Dalhousie University: \$153.40/academic year. (From September 1st to April 30th) with no “opt out”
 - iii. St. Mary’s University: \$146/academic year, \$72.50/semester (From September 1st to April 30th) with no “opt out”
 - iv. University of New Brunswick: \$140/academic year, \$70/semester. “Opt in” only available for part time students
 - v. Memorial University: \$275/semester student price (fall, spring, summer), no formal U-Pass program

4. Administering the program

- a. With this proposal, all Acadia students would need to “buy in” to the program. We would accommodate those who are only studying for one semester with a “half pass” price. As previously mentioned, only two trips a month could easily justify the cost to students and save everyone tremendous amounts of money, carbon emissions and time.

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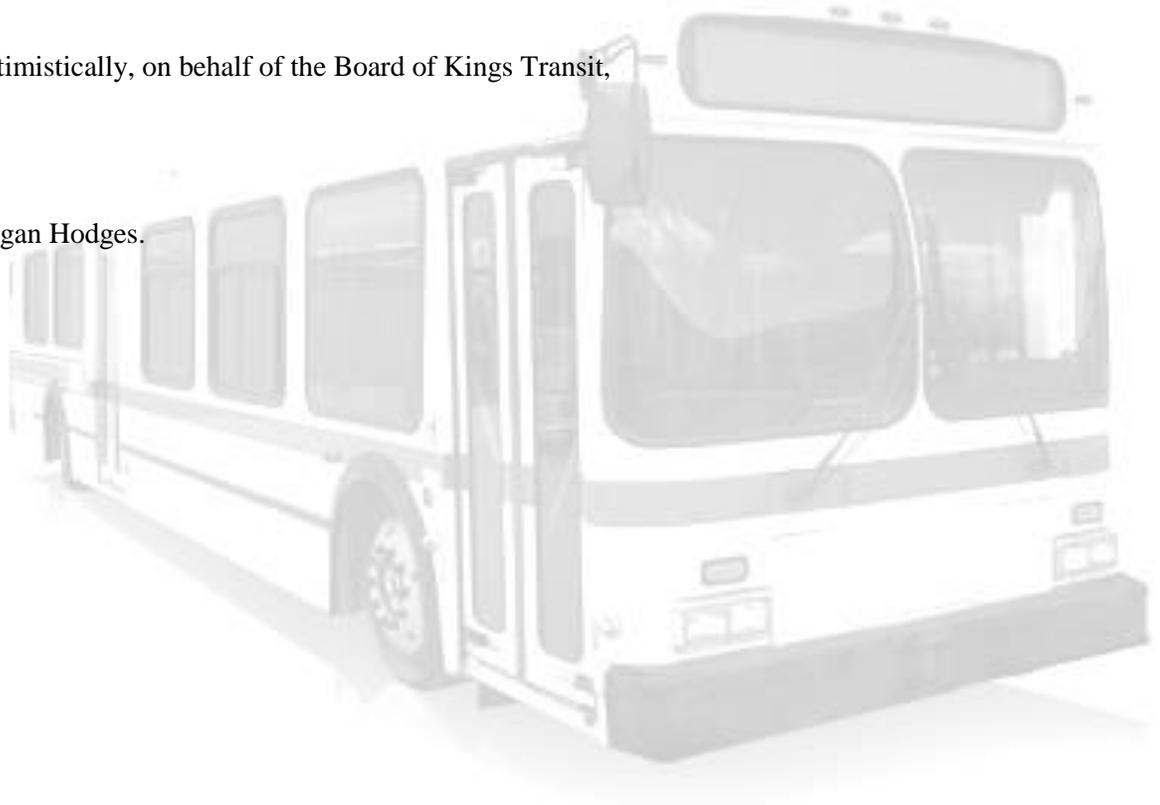
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I passionately implore the Acadia Student Union to consider what this U-Pass will mean for everyone at Acadia. It will be a great advancement for equity among your most vulnerable student population and be an effective tool for meaningful environmental change. Together with Kings Transit, Acadia University is poised to provide a unique and enviable service to its students that other rural Universities could only hope to deliver. This will provide a competitive edge for attracting new students and ensuring that all are able to maintain an enhanced quality of life while living, learning and exploring the Annapolis Valley during their time at Acadia University.

Optimistically, on behalf of the Board of Kings Transit,

Megan Hodges.



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