



SOU'WEST NOVA TRANSIT ASSOCIATION

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Serving the Communities of Shelburne County

To: The Council of the Municipality of the District of Barrington:

November 3, 2021

All throughout the pandemic Sou'West Nova Transit has continued to help residents of your municipality access medical and dental care, complete food shopping, banking and other essential errands, visit loved ones, receive COVID-19 vaccinations, and more.

Thanks to generous fare reduction grants from your municipality each year, Sou'West Nova Transit has been able to offer 50% off all fares over \$20 to municipal residents paying out of pocket for travel! This is supplemented by other subsidy sources provided by multiple funders/projects for specific types of travel, allowing your grants to last longer and allowing us to offer additional reductions to riders who need it most.

Since April, the start of our fiscal year, residents of the Municipality of Barrington have benefitted from over \$11,000 of fare reductions, with over \$5300 coming from the municipal grant for this purpose!

The reality is that a growing number of the riders we support are seniors living near or below the poverty line, or folks with incomes high enough that they can't access government assistance when available but low enough that a diagnosis requiring regular medical travel can lead to serious financial strain. We are also experiencing an unexpected increase in requests for long distance medical travel. These frequent trips to Yarmouth, Liverpool, Bridgewater, Kentville and Halifax not only reduce our capacity by bringing drivers and vehicles out of the area for long periods or entire days, but they also lead to a significant drain on our fare subsidy resources as we struggle to cover our costs while keeping this essential travel affordable for riders with financial need.

We are reaching out to all our town and municipal units because we want to continue to offer the same level of fare support to our riders through the end of this fiscal year, but based on funds remaining in our coffers and our projections, we will not have sufficient resources to do so. If your budget would allow for an additional grant of any amount to specifically benefit your residents traveling for essential purposes, it would make a big impact!

Thank you for your consideration and continued partnership!

Sincerely,


Renata Tweedy, Manager (info@souwestnovatransit.ca, 902-619-9305 (c))
On behalf of the Sou'West Nova Transit Board of Directors