



April 24, 2024

To: Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee

Re: Support for anticipated Motion by Councillor Franke to support a London Transit Fare Free Day on Sunday Sept 22, 2024.

Please include this correspondence in the public record for the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee Meeting on Tuesday May 7, 2024

Changing behaviour is hard. People often need an incentive, or to be pulled by necessity.

For me, trying something new is best done when I am not under time pressure. Therefore, providing an opportunity to travel by transit on a Sunday makes sense. It is also, I imagine, the day with the least ridership, and therefore the least expensive day to offer this. Car free day is a worldwide event, happening every September 22 – and **there will not be another year that Car Free Day falls on a Sunday for many years.** If we delay until another year, it will be more expensive to do since it will fall on a weekday. Other reasons to support this motion include:

- This lines up with the high school pilot at Clarke Road starting in September. There will be more talk in the community about taking transit – so this is good timing.
- We are not asking people to ditch their cars, but to be strategic about when they could use transit, like going downtown on a Sunday where you are encouraged to walk around and explore, not just drive in and out to do a quick pick-up/take-away.
- In today's climate, affordability is a top priority for many people. "Risking" money on transit can seem like an unaffordable expense. Offering that people could ride for free for a day to test it out would remove that barrier.
- We know we need to improve our mode share targets in order to meet our climate targets, and we need to try some new strategies.

Once you have tried something new, it feels more comfortable. Many people cannot imagine wanting to travel without their cars. But sometimes, when you are put in a new situation (like when we travel to other cities), we are more open to trying transit. This proposal might do well to partner with Tourism London to invite Londoners to "explore London as a tourist" and hop-on/hop-off London Transit for a day.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mary Ann Hodge
Climate Action London