

A Renewed Proposal for Full Subsidization of The Rapid

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Problem/Background

Our goal in this project was to renew interest in a proposal to fully subsidize The Rapid for students, staff and faculty at Calvin College. The original report was written by Dieter Bouma in May 2006 and submitted by the Environmental Stewardship Coalition, a student organization at Calvin. The original report focused on methods of making transportation to and from the campus more sustainable. This included ideas such as full subsidization of the Rapid, introduction of car pooling spaces and encouraging students and faculty to walk or ride a bicycle. The revised report focuses specifically on the benefits of full subsidization of The Rapid as well as the steps that can be taken by Calvin College that make it a feasible option. Additionally, the report focuses on why Calvin, as a Christian college, should look in to methods of sustainable transport and how full subsidization of the Rapid would achieve part of this goal.

Proposition

Full subsidization of The Rapid will encourage a more environmentally friendly mode of transportation than the single-occupant vehicular mode of travel most students, staff, and faculty at Calvin choose. The college may further encourage this mode of transit by:

- 1) Lobbying for the expansion of The Rapid's timetable on routes 6 and 24 so that students with night class, labs, and other activities can still ride the bus home.
- 2) Designing a more accessible bus stop on campus, such as in front of the Spoelhof Center.
- 3) Better advertisement of available services on Calvin's website and around campus.

Supporting Arguments

- 1) The full subsidization of The Rapid is a perfect opportunity to act on the college's recent draft of a Sustainability Statement, which reminds us that as Christians we are called to be caretaker's of God's creation.
- 2) If the cost of a yearly permit at Calvin College was increased to \$40, the money to provide full subsidization of The Rapid would be raised. Calvin's current parking permit cost (\$25) is significantly lower than other colleges of similar size.
- 3) The full subsidization of the bus would mean that students would not have to carry money with them and would save those who ride the bus at least \$20 a month.



Table 1. Full-time resident and commuter parking permit prices at Colleges of similar size and location in a city as Calvin, 2005-2006.

College	Full-time Resident	Full-time Commuter
Wheaton College	\$150	
Gordon College	\$200/year	\$130
Hope College	\$125/semester	\$70/year
Eastern University		\$35/semester
North Park University	\$130	\$60
Bridle University	\$150	\$100
Washington University	\$370 - \$653	
Calvin College	\$25	

Table 2. Additional increase in parking permit price to accommodate full subsidization of faculty, staff and student bus ridership

Ridership Increase	Annual Number of Riders	Price Increase ¹	Total ²
No Increase	20124	\$5.11	\$30.11
One-fold	40248	\$10.22	\$35.23
Two-fold	60372	\$15.33	\$40.34
Three-fold	80496	\$20.45	\$45.45
Four-fold	100620	\$25.56	\$50.56
Five-fold	120744	\$30.67	\$55.68
Six-fold	140868	\$35.78	\$60.79
Seven-fold	160992	\$40.90	\$65.90

¹One ride costs \$.80 ²Price Increase + Current Price



Conclusions

It is possible for Calvin college to fully subsidize The Rapid by increasing parking permits fees. This would be in line with the college's commitment to sustainability on campus. This would also increase the ridership of The Rapid, thus making it possible for the college to further subsidize the bus.

If you'd like a copy of the updated proposal, sign the sheet by the poster or email either of us.

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