

Park and ride fee possible

€150,000 per month to run park and ride service

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The park and ride service into Valletta may soon come at a charge.
Photo: Darrin Zammit Lupi

Motorists travelling into Valletta may have to pay to use park and ride transport into the capital, a service that has been free ever since it was introduced four years ago.

“The matter of possibly charging users of the park and ride system is on the agenda of ongoing negotiations with the preferred bidder for the new public transport operation,” a spokesman for Transport Malta said.

The government is in the final stages of concluding the procurement process with Arriva Consortium, the preferred bidder for the 10-year public transport contract.

The new public transport service would include three park and ride sites, including the one in Blata I-Bajda, being integrated into the new bus network, the spokesman said.

Valletta mayor Alexei Dingli said he was not aware of the possibility of introducing a park and ride fee and, thus, he preferred not to comment.


The park and ride service into Valletta started in November 2006 as part of the government’s plans to cut traffic congestion in the capital. As a result of the so-called controlled vehicle access (CVA) system, several streets, like

Merchants and St John, were pedestrianised and paved. Under CVA, vehicles going into Valletta pay a fee according to their duration inside the capital.


The government initially planned to run the park and ride scheme through a private operator that would charge minimal fees, of about €1.40 per trip, for those who parked their car in Blata l-Bajda and caught the shuttle minivan into Valletta. But it then decided that the scheme should be provided free of charge and the operation would be financed through income derived from CVA charges.

Figures released last November showed that the TM paid CVA Technology Ltd €150,000 per month for the operation of the system. The government raked in €2.1 million from the CVA system between May 2007 and the end of August 2009.

Comments

joe felice pace(1 week, 1 day ago) 

A measure that should have been introduced at the very beginning.

Lee Micallef(1 week, 1 day ago) 

Its a fact that anything thats starts off free you end up paying for in the end !

Jon Attard(1 week, 1 day ago) 

This is shameful. It is an ingeniously-devised mechanism for the extortion of money.

First we make sure that we have the Renzo Piano project so that we can close down the Yellow Garage, then we do our best to ensure that most parking spaces around Valletta are painted green so that only residents can park there (never mind that during the day the overwhelming majority of these parking slots are empty) and then we introduce a charge for using the inconvenient park and ride which is the last option for many frustrated workers.

Businesses in Valletta are being discriminated against as their clients and their employees already have to face higher costs to commute to the place to do business. This discrimination will now become more accentuated.

Perhaps it is high time to teach whoever comes up with these brilliant ideas a lesson s/he will remember ... luckily election time is close.

J Xerri(1 week, 1 day ago) 

I hope the discussions would solve the problem faced by mature people and others who find it very difficult to board the present mini-buses due to the height of boarding steps.

B Agius(1 week, 1 day ago) 

Park & Rides should have been built in each village close to bus services. People park and then catch the bus. It would've solved some of the problem of traffic in Valletta but also would've reduced some traffic from all over Malta. With the new Bus service being considered and more buses going to other central places other than Valletta, having Park & Ride in villages makes more sense. Not everyone works in Valletta or shops there.
