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Fan Pier's Fallon skippers cultural ferry

By CHRIS CASSIDY

Fan Pier developer Joe Fallon told the Herald yesterday he hopes a new \$5 Boston Harbor ferry service to the city's top museums will become a year-round attraction that will convince more visitors to travel around the Hub by water.

"I think it's important for the waterfront to become a part of Boston," said Fallon, whose Fan Pier development is an anchor of the booming Seaport District. "We've never really utilized it to its maximum potential, and I think this is one way to start."

Fan Pier is subsidizing a new 44-passenger ferry service, called the Cultural Connector, that takes sightseers to six stops between the Seaport and Charlestown eight times a day from 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. A single ride is \$5 and a day pass is \$15.

The air-conditioned vessel makes stops at the Institute of Contemporary Art, the Boston Tea Party Museum, the Boston Children's Museum, the New England Aquarium, Faneuil Hall and the USS Constitution.

The service, operated by Boston Harbor Cruises, launched with little fanfare on Memorial Day weekend, but Fallon, city officials and tourism executives will hold a ribbon-cutting and celebratory launch Friday.

For now, the ferry will run through Labor Day weekend.

"I would love to see this be so successful that it went into year-round use," Fallon said. "For right now, we want to see how we can make it better and listen to what our patrons have to say."

Some museums are offering deals for ferry passengers. The ICA, for example, provides a \$2 discount off the \$15 admission price, said ICA spokeswoman Kelly Gifford.

"Bostonians are getting more and more aware of everything that's going on at the waterfront," said Gifford. "As the neighborhood begins to flourish, I think waterfront transportation services will also grow."

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STAFF PHOTO BY TED FITZGERALD

GO BY BOAT: The Cultural Connector is a new \$5 Boston Harbor ferry service that takes sightseers to six of the city's top museums, such as the ICA, above.