



University Students' Council

Western University, Room 340, UCC Building • London, Ontario N6A 3K7 • Tel: (519) 661-3574
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Honourable Rod Phillips,
Ministry of Finance
Frost Building South - 7th Floor
7 Queen's Park Cres.
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

Dear Minister Phillips,

On behalf of 30,000 undergraduate students at Western University, we would like to express our sincerest support for the City of London's call, to the provincial government, to support the London Transit Commission (LTC). As COVID-19 continues to impact our municipality, particularly in our health and economic sectors, the City of London's financial position has grown increasingly dire, impacting the LTC's ability to provide important services to post-secondary students and the broader London community. Further, as our economy begins to reopen and social distancing remains in effect, the LTC will struggle financially, due to reduced riding capacity and revenues.

In London, 35 000 students rely on public transit to travel between school, work, and play, contributing over \$350 million to the municipality's economy each year. The LTC enables Western students to meaningfully engage in their communities, further their education, and participate in the economy. An investment in London's municipal transit systems will support London's fiscal position, allow the LTC to maintain the service that they have historically provided, and contribute to Western students' ability to access post-secondary education. Our transit system will not be able to survive cuts to existing services - without your support, students will undoubtedly struggle to navigate the city this Fall.

This May, the Large Urban Mayors Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO) proposed a 3-phase response to municipal recovery, with a specific focus on the need to support public transit. To date, this request has not been adequately addressed.¹ Across the country, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) estimated that public transit systems have lost \$400M per month, accounting for 30-50 percent of the net losses in municipalities.² As the window to support public transit rapidly closes, the USC is calling on the provincial government to work alongside

¹ While the federal government has announced that the funding from the Gas Tax Fund would be accelerated and provided in a lump sum payment (Infrastructure Canada, <https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/gtf-fte-eng.html>, June 1, 2020), this does not represent new funding as requested by LUMCO and FCM.

² Federation of Canadian Municipalities. "Protecting vital municipal services." April 28, 2020. <https://data.fcm.ca/documents/resources/reports/protecting-vital-municipal-services.pdf>

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its federal partners to ensure that public transit continues to be a key element of economic recovery and growth, through emergency relief funding as proposed by LUMCO.

Sincerely,

Matt Reesor, President, University Students' Council

Mackenzy Metcalfe, Vice-President External Affairs, University Students' Council

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