



University Students' Council Standing Policy

TRANSIT & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY POLICY PAPER



Original Authors

Bianka Sriharan
Associate Vice President, External Affairs
University Students' Council

Eunice Oladejo
Vice President, External Affairs
University Students' Council

DEDICATION

This paper is dedicated to the students who have lost their lives in a pedestrian-related incident. The USC is committed to fighting for a safe community where students not only feel safe, but are safe. We built this policy paper in hopes to address the many concerns that we have heard from our campus community regarding the safety of pedestrians.

Legislative History

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Western Ontario is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have long-standing relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London. The local First Nation communities of this area include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee Delaware Nation. In the region, there are eleven First Nation communities and a growing Indigenous urban population. Western University values the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original peoples of Turtle Island (North America).

To learn more about these Indigenous communities and how you can best be an ally, please refer to the London & Middlesex Indigenous Culture Card. For more information about land acknowledgements, please refer to the article “Rethinking the Practice and Performance of Indigenous Land Acknowledgment” by Robinson et al. A land acknowledgement is an important step in recognizing colonial history but should by no means be the full extent to which we acknowledge and support indigenous communities.



OVERVIEW

The Transit and Pedestrian Safety Policy Paper addresses major concerns relating to accessible and affordable transportation options for students, as well as pedestrian related injuries and fatalities. With major changes to transportation being made over the past few years, such as the closing of Greyhound Canada and the impact of COVID-19 on many transportation services, student-facing recommendations are essential to outline changes that can be made to make these mobility options accessible to students.

Additionally, this paper seeks to discuss and pose recommendations related to pedestrian safety on and off campus. Our campus and London community has seen many pedestrian-related incidents take the lives of community members. This has raised concern for students on the safety of pedestrians within our community. As many Western students are pedestrians within London, this paper seeks to propose recommendations on how safety measures can be implemented to address this issue.

Through consultation with students, the City of London, and Western, the Transit and Pedestrian Safety Policy Paper presents recommendations to our university and government stakeholders to ensure that steps are taken towards improved pedestrian safety measures and accessible transportation for students.



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Principle: Pedestrians should feel safe at all times throughout the year while walking throughout London.

Principle: The City of London should have zero pedestrian related fatalities.

Principle: Pedestrian safety measures should be proactive to avoid pedestrian related incidents.

Concern: Pedestrians may face many potential risks in low lit areas on and off campus, specifically female identifying pedestrians.

Concern: Pedestrian traffic is not prioritized during winter months due to maintenance deferrals on campus, limiting safe pathway options for pedestrians.

Concern: Certain intersections that support high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and public transit lack adequate pedestrian safety measures, leaving them vulnerable to pedestrian related incidents.

Concern: The pedestrian safety measures in the Vision Zero Principles and Road Safety Strategy are not proactive.

Recommendation: The City of London and Western should implement more lighting fixtures in areas of low-light as identified by the Safe Cities London Scoping Study and by conducting student surveys on a regular basis.

Recommendation: Western should support, through funding, the continual safety of students on campus by creating more awareness about the functionality and usage of the Emergency Phone Poles.

Recommendation: The City of London should make data related to collisions, deaths, injuries and other relevant metrics for pedestrian safety public and accessible.



Recommendation: Western should gauge student satisfaction regarding snow clearing services on campus through surveys.

Recommendation: The City of London should commit to further prioritizing snow removal on sidewalks around campus and leading up to bus stops that are frequently used by students.

Recommendation: The City of London and Western should better coordinate snow removal efforts to ensure snow removal standards are consistent on and off campus.

Recommendation: Western should prioritize their commitment to the vehicle free campus plan to ensure students can walk safely on campus without oncoming traffic.

Recommendation: The City of London should lower the speed limit of Sarnia Rd around campus to 40km/h to correspond with the lowered speed limits of Richmond Rd and Western Rd.

Recommendation: The City of London should commit to the implementation of a Leading Pedestrian Interval at the Western and Sarnia Road intersection to manage the flow of high volume traffic between vehicles and pedestrians.

Recommendation: The City of London should continue to update the pedestrian specific measures in the Vision Zero principles, Road Safety Strategy and Mobility Master plan through consultation with members of Western.

Recommendation: The City of London should support student pedestrian safety on Western Road by identifying vulnerable intersections and adding additional safety features such as Leading Pedestrian Intervals.

Walking is a common form of transportation for many students, especially on campus and its surrounding areas during peak hours of the day. Student safety



is a priority at all times, and this extends to walking routes to and from campus. Pedestrian fatalities and injuries are far too common in the London community. In 2021, there were 8 pedestrian fatalities, and since the start of 2022, there have been 2.¹ Pedestrian-related safety measures must be proactive in order to prevent future incidents. To ensure that pedestrian safety is truly prioritized, there needs to be greater collaboration and action from both the City of London and Western University.

First and foremost, the City of London should make all data related to collisions, deaths, injuries, and other relevant metrics for pedestrian safety, public and accessible. Currently, this information is collected by London Police Services and requires the completion of Freedom of Information form to access the information. This process can take up to 30 days. Making such data easily accessible is a crucial step in identifying gaps in current pedestrian safety initiatives and ensuring maximum public awareness of the issue. The lack of public accessibility of this data is concerning as this is a persisting issue in the city and the effectiveness of measures that may have been taken by the City of London to address it are unclear.

Moreover, another gap in pedestrian safety, both throughout the city and on campus, is the lack of adequate lighting at night. As many students may spend long days on campus and walk home or to a bus station late at night, areas of low light create risks for pedestrians that would not otherwise exist during daylight hours. This is specifically a cause for concern for women, who are more likely to feel unsafe after dark. The 2014 General Social Survey conducted by Statistics Canada found that only 38% of women felt safe walking after dark in their neighborhood, compared to 64% of men.² This sentiment of overall uneasiness after dark is not a baseless fear as women are disproportionately represented as victims of many violent crimes in general.³ According to the State of the Criminal Justice System

1 Megan Stacey, "Screams, shock and a pedestrian killed in a Western Road parking lot", London Free Press, April 12, 2022, <https://lfpres.com/news/local-news/london-police-investigating-after-pedestrian-struck-killed-on-western-road>

2 Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. "Canadians' Perceptions of Personal Safety since COVID-19." The Daily - , June 9, 2020. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200609/dq200609a-eng.htm>.

3 Government of Canada, Department of Justice. "State of the Criminal Justice System Annual Report, Con-



Annual Report, women are not only more likely to be victimized in violent crimes, but the crime rate affecting women is also growing faster than for men.⁴ These trends, paired with low visibility and high uncertainty at night, are a cause for concern for the vast majority of women. Safe Cities is a worldwide United Nations initiative that sheds light on violence against women and girls.⁵ The initiative has been implemented in London by ANOVA and the City of London with the goal of understanding where London needs improvement to better protect women and girls. The Safe Cities Scoping Study provides data collected from women and girls in London about unsafe areas in the city. The Safe Cities Scoping Study suggests that increased lighting is one of many protective factors that can help people feel safer at night.⁶ Increased lighting at night helps to improve overall visibility which has two major benefits. The first is that pedestrians are able to better identify potential risks such as obstructions on walkways or if there are people around them. The second benefit is that people operating vehicles are able to see pedestrians much clearer as well.⁷ The City of London should implement more lighting fixtures in areas of low-light as identified by the Safe Cities London Scoping Study, especially in the downtown area.⁸ The focus on the downtown area is necessary as the study highlighted this location as having a high volume of individuals who felt unsafe and experienced harassment. With many students living within, and often visiting, these areas on evenings and weekends, this is an area that should be prioritized.

Although the Safe Cities Study provides extremely valuable data about the locations where Londoners feel unsafe, it does not include much campus or student specific data. To bridge that gap, Western and the City of London should conduct student surveys to collect data about where students feel unsafe. This should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that information on campus and the Near Campus

clusion.” State of the Criminal Justice System Annual Report, July 7, 2021. <https://justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/state-etat/2021rpt-rap2021/p8.html>.

4 Ibid.

5 ANOVA, “Safe Cities London Scoping Study” Accessed April 21, 2022.

6 Ibid.

7 Fotios, Steve, and R. Gibbons. “Road lighting research for drivers and pedestrians: The basis of luminance and illuminance recommendations.” *Lighting Research & Technology* 50, no. 1 (2018): 154-186.

8 ANOVA, “Safe Cities London Scoping Study” Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://www.anovafuture.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Safe-Cities-London-Scoping-Study.pdf>.



Neighbourhood is up to date. By conducting this data gathering, Western University and the City of London can ensure they are using their resources most effectively by targeting areas with the most safety concerns and tracking our progress as a community.

In addition to more light fixtures on campus, Western should create more awareness about the Emergency Phone Poles located throughout campus. In 2021, there were 25 uses of the Emergency Phone Poles, with none of these calls being reported as an emergency case. In 2020, 22 calls were made, with none of these calls being reported emergencies as well.⁹ Through consultations with students on campus, it was made clear that many students are not aware of the utility of these poles and in what situations they would be used. This creates a gap in Western's safety initiative as students are not aware of the resources available to them or how to use them. By updating Western's campus safety information website or creating more awareness through safety campaigns and other related initiatives, students would be able to better understand how to use the Emergency Phone Poles and feel more comfortable through awareness of their safety options.

The winter months also create safety risks for pedestrians in the community. Although the City of London is responsible for clearing the snow and ice within city spaces and Western University is responsible for on campus spaces, there should be coordination between their snow removal efforts. The lack of coordination between both snow clearing efforts creates an issue at the borders of campus. At the edges of campus where both Western and the City of London end their snow clearing practices, there can be leftover ice, missed sidewalks or even the creation of large snow banks. This is not only inconvenient, but dangerous for pedestrians. Better coordination is needed to ensure that snow removal standards are as consistent and as efficient as possible.

To address campus specific concerns in the winter months, Western should gauge student satisfaction regarding their snow removal practices. It is common for

⁹ Jean-Claude Aubin in discussion with Eunice Oladejo via email, April 20, 2022.



Western to block off certain pathways or stairs on campus where they do not clear any snow or ice. The creation of these maintenance deferrals limits the available pathways for students and is especially concerning at high foot-traffic areas such as in front of the University Community Centre (UCC) or North Campus Building (NCB). Additionally, as students are trying to get to class in the allotted 10 minute travel time, the deferred maintenance in high traffic areas creates not only an inconvenience but also a safety risk for students as they are more likely to either bump into one another or walk on snowy and icy paths to avoid a collision. By gathering student feedback, Western can identify pinch points on campus and ensure that they match their expenditures on snow removal to the walking habits of students. This feedback should be collected on a regular basis as new or modernized buildings that affect traffic flows are built, or as plans which reflect campus mobility are developed.

Additionally, the City of London should further prioritize the removal of snow on sidewalks leading up to bus stops frequently used by students. Many sidewalks leading up to bus stops are either cleared prior to the majority of snowfall or too late.¹⁰ This creates an issue for individuals who rely on public transportation. Many students use public transit, especially during the winter months and the lack of snow clearing on these sidewalks renders their travels more difficult and potentially dangerous.

Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for people aged 15-29 years old.¹¹ In 2020, there were 116 pedestrian fatalities and 2742 pedestrian injuries as a result of vehicle collisions in Ontario alone.¹² In 2015, a student pedestrian was struck and killed by a vehicle on campus.¹³ This led to many calls on the university and the City

10 Living in London, "Winter Maintenance." City of London. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://london.ca/living-london/roads-sidewalks-transportation/maintenance-reporting/winter-maintenance>.

11 "Road traffic injuries," World Health Organization (November 2016), <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs3>

12 "Preliminary 2020 Ontario Road Safety Annual Report ..." Ministry of Transportation. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://files.ontario.ca/mto-3/mto-preliminary-orsar-2020-en-2021-11-18.pdf>.

13 "18-Year-Old Female Pedestrian Critically Injured on Western Campus." London, October 9, 2015. <https://london.ctvnews.ca/18-year-old-female-pedestrian-critically-injured-on-western-campus-1.2600644?cache=yx-tvsdvfhyq%3Fclipid%3D89926%3Fautoplay%3Dtrue%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue%3Fot%3DAjaxLayout%3Fcon->



of London to implement greater safety measures to prevent this from happening again. This tragedy sheds light on an important issue that must be addressed in a number of ways.

First, the prioritization of a vehicle free campus is a necessary step in preventing any further pedestrian related accidents on campus. The City of London should support Western's efforts to reduce vehicular traffic around campus. There are various high traffic areas surrounding campus and they currently do not have proactive pedestrian safety measures in place. The first area of concern is Sarnia Road. The City of London should lower the speed limit of Sarnia Road in the campus area to 40km/h from 50km/h, as part of their ongoing initiative to decrease speed limits all around London.¹⁴ This would correspond with the lowered speed limits of Richmond Rd and Western Rd, which would greatly reduce the chances of speeding cars in the area. The Western and Sarnia intersection has been identified as a safety risk by the USC as the intersection is close to 3 first year residence buildings, student housing, the recreational center and 3 major buildings. The area has over 9000 pedestrian crossings between 8am and 5pm, and 7615 car crossings over a period of 24 hour.¹⁵ This is unusually high traffic for a city of London's size which has 474,786 residents.¹⁶ In comparison, Downtown Toronto has a population of around 250,000, which does not account for visitors or commuters who spend time in Downtown Toronto everyday.¹⁷ The average intersection in Downtown Toronto has around 9000 pedestrian crossings as well.¹⁸ It is clear that this intersection is high traffic and is specifically frequented by students during the peak period. Based on other intersections of similar traffic and usage, a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI)

tactForm%3Dtrue%3FcontactForm%3Dtrue.

14 "Area Speed Limits." City of London. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://london.ca/living-london/roads-side-walks-transportation/road-safety/area-speed-limits>.

15 "Traffic Study 2015/ 2016," Western University. http://www.uwo.ca/ipb/publicaccountability/documents/WesternUTrafficStudy2015_16.pdf

16 Government of Canada, Statistics Canada. "Census Profile, 2016 Census London [Census Metropolitan Area]", October 27, 2021. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMACA&Code1=555&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=london&Search-Type=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>.

17 Chris Fox, "Downtown population will nearly double by 2041 amid building and baby boom: Keesmaat", CTV News, April 5th, 2016, <https://www.cp24.com/news/downtown-population-will-nearly-double-by-2041-amid-building-and-baby-boom-keesmaat-1.2846605>

18 Ibid.



would be an efficient and easily implementable solution. An LPI would give pedestrians a 3-7 second head start on crossing the road before the light turned green for vehicles that are going the same direction as pedestrians.¹⁹ An LPI is cost effective and could be easily implemented as part of the city’s ongoing initiative to update safety measures at high traffic intersections, including the Western and Sarnia intersection.

The City of London currently has pedestrian safety plans, such as the Vision Zero Principles and the Road Safety Strategy. They provide meaningful frameworks for improving pedestrian safety, but lack accountability mechanisms and do not require proactive measures for improving safety. For example, neither framework provides deadlines for proposed projects or identifies areas for further investigation. The lack of frequent updates creates gaps in safety initiatives, which focus on solving existing issues rather than preventing accidents in other areas. The City of London should continue to update these initiatives, as well as their upcoming Mobility Master Plan, through consultation with members of the Western community to ensure that the student voice is included in the City’s commitments to pedestrian safety. Additionally, the City of London should identify vulnerable intersections, specifically in the Western Road corridor, and develop additional safety features where appropriate. Continuous collaboration between Western University and the City of London is essential in making sure that students safely navigate the campus area on foot, as well as the identification of gaps and concerns as the London and Western student population grows. London has been identified as a fast growing city and it is imperative that student concerns are addressed in the ongoing changes to transportation planning in the city.

19 NACTO, “Leading Pedestrian Interval.” National Association of City Transportation Officials, July 24, 2015. <https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/intersection-design-elements/traffic-signals/leading-pedestrian-interval/>.



RAPID TRANSIT/ REGULAR TRANSIT

Principle: All undergraduate students should have access to sustainable, and affordable transit options.

Principle: Students should be able to easily access and use the bus to travel to campus and throughout the community as needed.

Principle: Students should have the most up to date information about their transit options to ensure they arrive to their destination on time

Principle: Students are supportive of mitigating climate change and their transportation options should be updated to reflect this.

Principle: Rapid transit should be as accessible as possible to students.

Concern: Transportation options for students are limited by high costs.

Concern: Students face uncertainty with LTC route and operational level changes, causing travel time to be higher than normal both throughout the community and to campus.

Concern: Some students may use personal vehicles instead of public transportation as a result of long wait times and infrequent bus trips.

Concern: Students are not often informed of LTC changes in a timely manner.

Concern: Diesel and natural gas powered buses are fueled by non-renewable resources, contributing to the ongoing climate crisis.

Concern: The proposed rapid transit routes do not connect areas frequented by students to the rest of London.



Concern: The proposed rapid transit stops are not near campus rendering them less accessible to students.

Recommendation: Western University should subsidize the LTC Bus Pass that the USC negotiates and offers to all undergraduate students to ensure all students have access to ethical, sustainable, and affordable transit options.

Recommendation: The LTC should increase efforts to honor their previous commitment to restoring operating levels of 2019 and commit to filling the gaps where possible.

Recommendation: The LTC and City of London should increase the frequency of popular bus routes at peak times for students.

Recommendation: Bus route changes should be updated as soon as possible on Google maps.

Recommendation: The City of London should completely phase all LTC buses to zero-emission electric buses.

Recommendation: The City of London should implement Rapid Transit infrastructure to connect campus, the North and West to the rest of London

Recommendation: The City of London should maximize the frequency of Rapid Transit around peak transit times for Western students.

Recommendation: Hubs of rapid transit should be placed on the peripheries of campus to ensure Rapid Transit is accessible to students and to minimize on-campus traffic congestion and bus stand-still time.

Public transit is a preferred mode, and often primary mode, of transportation for many Western University students. LTC users rely on public transit to arrive at their destinations on time, explore the city and travel home in a safe and cost effective



manner. Western students are a sizable portion of the LTC ridership and support these principles. The USC encourages the use of public transit options as it is sustainable and all students should have access to sustainable transportation options. Since student ridership is most common during peak hours of the week, there should be greater emphasis on student needs and concerns surrounding both regular and rapid transit options.

As it stands, the USC negotiates a reduced price for the LTC bus pass for all students. While this lowers the cost of the bus pass, it is yet another cost that students must incur in addition to other expenses associated with being a student. The average tuition cost for a first year domestic student at Western is between \$7,700 and \$14,000.²⁰ In addition to tuition, students have to pay for housing, school supplies, food and other expenses. In addition to this, with the cost of housing in London having increased over the past few years along with hydro and gas prices, it is more expensive to be a student now than ever before. Furthermore, Western should provide support to students by subsidizing the remaining costs of the pass to ensure that all Western students will have guaranteed access to the bus passes. This would greatly increase the availability of ethical, sustainable, and affordable transportation options for students in London.

As Western returns to a mostly in-person learning environment, the number of students on campus will continue to grow. This results in a greater reliance from students on the LTC, leading many students to wait at bus stops for longer periods of time due to decreased operational levels. It is essential to students that the bus service is reliable as a mainform of transportation for many students. They plan their routes in order to be in class on time and the current operational levels may hinder this. As London emerges from the pandemic and travel within the city resumes to pre-pandemic levels, the LTC and City of London need to prioritize the restoration of operational levels from 2019, with an emphasis on increased frequency for routes 34 and 106 as outlined by the LTC's updated 2021 Service Plan.²¹ Additionally, bus

20 Tuition and Financial Aid, "Step 3: Review Costs & Aid." Western University. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://welcome.uwo.ca/next-steps/finances/index.html>.

21 Staff Report, "2021 Service Plan Update", London Transit <https://www.londontransit.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Staff-Report-2-Enclosure-1-AMENDED.pdf>



route changes and delays should be updated as soon as possible on Google Maps so that students can accurately plan their trips to and from campus, and throughout the community. This will help mitigate the number of students waiting at already crowded bus stops and prevent overcrowding on buses themselves.

As the city returns to pre pandemic operational levels, the number of buses on the roads will increase, and so will their carbon footprints.²² The transportation sector accounts for 25% of all carbon emissions in Canada. While the majority of this can be attributed to personal vehicles, public transit still actively contributes to air pollution. Additionally, when buses run with little to no passengers there is an even greater cost. Optimizing public transit is necessary to spur grand scale change in the transportation sector, and this can be done through zero-emission buses in London. While the switch can be costly, the Canadian Urban Transit Association’s analysis shows that with every \$250 million invested, the carbon emission reductions could be equivalent to removing 57,000 - 120,000 cars off of the roads.²³ The City of London must do its part to contribute to the country-wide initiative to reduce carbon emissions through public transit.²⁴ Since the City of London declared a climate emergency in 2019, the USC strongly believes that the LTC should continue to accelerate the process of their initiative to phase all LTC buses to zero-emission electric buses.²⁵ This not only aligns with the USC’s sustainability principles, but also London’s Climate Change Action Plan, to drastically reduce London’s carbon footprint. This is an issue that many students are passionate about and their public transportation options should align with their beliefs.

In addition to regular transit, rapid transit should be made accessible to Western students. The voting down of the rapid transit corridors in the North and West is disadvantageous to students, specifically as many students reside in those areas. Many

22 https://cutaactu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/issue_paper_52_-_the_ghg_reduction_impact_of_public_transit.pdf

23 Ibid.

24 Infrastructure Canada, “Government of Canada Targets Zero Emission Bus Transportation with Launch of New Fund,” Government of Canada, 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/office-infrastructure/news/2021/08/government-of-canada-targets-zero-emission-bus-transportation-with-launch-of-new-fund.html>.

25 Living in London, “London’s Climate Emergency”, City of London, <https://london.ca/living-london/water-environment/londons-climate-emergency-declaration>.



students would benefit from rapid transit to connect campus, the North and West of London to the rest of the city so that they can travel in a safe and timely manner as they explore the London community. As the City is continuing the expansion of the rapid transit networks in London, Western should be included. The City of London should place hubs of rapid transit on the peripherals of campus to ensure minimal traffic congestion on campus and maximize accessibility for students. The planning of rapid transit routes should also include higher frequency at peak times, to further mitigate the amount of students waiting for public transit after their classes are done.



CYCLING IN THE CITY

Principle: Students should be able to navigate their campuses and communities in ways that are healthy, safe, secure, and sustainable.

Principle: Sustainable transportation mechanisms should be accessible to students.

Concern: The City of London and Western do not adequately work together to encourage active transportation and bus ridership.

Concern: There is a lack of safety measures for cyclists in the city.

Recommendation: Western should work with the City of London to ensure that adequate cycling infrastructure is available on campus as the city invests in improved cycling and walking infrastructure.

Recommendation: Western should work with city staff to ensure that the provincial government's e-scooter pilot program is accessible and available on Western's campus.

Recommendation: Western, through funding, should increase bike storage infrastructure on campus and subsidize it for student use.

Recommendation: The City of London should implement protected bike lanes along Richmond Rd and Western Rd.

Recommendation: The City of London should prioritize snow removal on bike lanes in and around campus to ensure that students are able to continue biking to campus.



Cycling is a sustainable, healthy, and cost effective transportation option. The USC strongly believes that cycling aligns with our sustainability goals and supports the Western community in choosing cycling as their primary mode of transportation. However, there are areas of improvement that would make cycling more accessible and encourage more students to cycle throughout the city and on campus.

Furthermore, Western University and the City of London should collaborate in order to integrate their active ridership networks. This would help to streamline sustainability goals as well as increase accessibility to sustainable transportation options for all community members. Sustainability has been a priority for both the USC and the City of London in the last few years. It is clear that cycling is a viable and sustainable transportation option for many people in the London community. In order to promote cycling throughout the city and as a primary mode of transportation, there needs to be a greater integration of cycling networks. This is especially important for the networks that connect campus to the rest of the city. The easier it is for students to bike to campus from home, the more often they will do it.

The first major cause for concern is a lack of adequate infrastructure for cyclists on campus. There are not enough safe and cost effective storage options on campus. Currently, Western has a bike shelter that can hold 60 bikes, located at the Alumni Thompson parking lot that costs \$50 for the academic year.²⁶ There are also bike lockers located at UCC Concrete Beach, the Health Sciences Building and behind the Support Services Building. Bike locker rentals cost \$80 for the academic year.²⁷ This does not provide students enough storage options at the peripherals of campus and requires students to bike to a separate location and then walk to their classes. Ideally, storage options should be available throughout all areas of campus so that students can bike directly, or in close proximity to, their classes. Western should commit to funding more bike storage infrastructure on campus, that they would then further subsidize for student use. Subsidizing the entire cost of bike storage would help to reduce living and transportation costs for students and encourage

26 Parking, "Bike Shelter and Lockers", Western University, https://www.uwo.ca/parking/services/bike_locker.html.

27 Ibid.



more students to bike to campus. The City of London is increasing their funding in the development of cycling infrastructure around the city, including more bike storage options and interconnected pathways, and Western should follow suit to ensure that students can cycle to and from campus with ease.²⁸

Additionally, Western should collaborate with the City of London to ensure that the e-scooter provincial program is accessible to students on campus to further increase sustainable transportation options for students. In 2019, the provincial government launched an e-scooter pilot program to help increase opportunities for sustainable transportation in major cities, as well as economic development.²⁹ The program allows cities to implement e-scooter infrastructure as they see fit to help assess the use of e-scooters and promote active transportation. Currently, the City of London has implemented the program and is considering rideshare program options in certain areas of the city but does not have any plans to include campus in the program.³⁰ The rideshare program would emulate Toronto's Bike Share program, wherein individuals can borrow e-scooters from designated stations, use them to travel and return them at another scooter station.³¹ Western should advocate for the program to be implemented in areas that are accessible to students and at a subsidized rate to further encourage student use.

Secondly, there is a lack of cycling safety measures in certain high traffic areas in and around campus. Western and Richmond Road currently have bike lanes, but they are unprotected. Many students bike along both roads as they connect campus to many areas of student housing. Both roads are busy, especially at peak hours, which renders their bike lanes potentially dangerous and intimidating for cyclists. The City of London should upgrade these bike lanes to protected bike lanes to maximize safety and reduce the risk for future accidents and fatalities. Protected

28 Living in London, "Core Cycling Projects", City of London, <https://london.ca/living-london/roads-side-walks-transportation/cycling-active-green-transportation/biking/core>

29 "E-Scooter Initiative." Ontario newsroom. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/54754/ontario-announces-e-scooter-pilot-to-help-grow-ontarios-economy>.

30 Get Involved London, "E-scooters," Get Involved London, 2021, <https://getinvolved.london.ca/e-scooter>.

31 "Convenient, Affordable & Fun Transportation." Bike Share Toronto, April 20, 2022. <https://bikesharetoronto.com/>.



bike lanes have physical barriers that protect cyclists from vehicle collisions. They can be in the form of rails or concrete islands. Additionally, the City of London should start to prioritize snow removal on all bike lanes to ensure that they remain accessible at all times of the year. Snow removal on bike lanes is currently not a priority for the city.³² Bike lanes do not need to surpass roads or sidewalks in the snow clearing priority efforts, but they should be included as a priority overall. It would greatly help to encourage active ridership throughout the city all year round. This is especially important due to both the city and Western University's increased sustainability initiatives in the community. By ensuring that bike lanes are as accessible as possible in the winter, more students will bike to and from campus.

32 Living in London, "Winter Maintenance." City of London. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://london.ca/living-london/roads-sidewalks-transportation/maintenance-reporting/winter-maintenance>.



INTERCITY TRANSIT

Principle: All students should have equitable access to affordable transportation options between cities.

Concern: The lack of a High Frequency Rail System in southwestern Ontario limits students' inter-city transportation options, and makes VIA Rail transportation inconvenient.

Concern: Intercity bus routes do not offer many pickup or dropoff stops on campus rendering them less accessible to students

Recommendation: The federal government should fulfill its commitment to High Frequency Rail in Southwestern Ontario.

Recommendation: The Ministry of Transportation should, through student consultations, consider periods of high and low demand from students as they develop service times in the Toronto to Quebec City HFR development and the Southwestern, Ontario expansion.

Recommendation: To ensure predictability and timeliness of the High Frequency Rail service, dedicated tracks should be built from London to Toronto.

Recommendation: The Ministry of Transportation should use the current Via Rail ticket fares as a benchmark for High Frequency Rail ticket fares. Consequently, the ticket fares of the existing service should be reduced.

Recommendation: The Ministry of Transportation should maintain the youth pass fare for travelers ages 12-25 in the development of the High Frequency Rail service.



Recommendation: Western should negotiate and work with intercity bus companies to implement bus stops that are closer to campus and at numerous residence buildings.

Recommendation: Western should collaborate with the USC to implement a shuttle service to connect students to Pearson airport during peak times such as Reading Weeks, winter break and the end of term.

Intercity transit provides students with the opportunity to move between communities. As a large percentage of Western’s student body is from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), efficient, reliable, and affordable transportation options to and from London is a necessity for students. During the 2020-2021 school year, 30 percent of in-province students were London natives and almost 50 percent of students were from the GTA.³³ This doesn’t include our high percentage of out-of-province students who rely on transportation to Toronto Pearson Airport in order to return home.

One major avenue to be taken into consideration to improve inter-city mobility is High Frequency Rail. High Frequency Rail calls for faster, more frequent, more accessible and more sustainable rail service among the major centres of Quebec City, Montreal, Peterborough, and Toronto.³⁴ In July 2021, the Federal Government announced the exploration of opportunities to enhance High Frequency Rail in Southwestern Ontario.³⁵ Furthermore, the USC recommends that the Federal Government fulfill this commitment and do so through student consultations and involvement when determining a number of factors such as rail schedules and operations.

Firstly, in considering the efficiency of High Frequency Rail, the USC recommends

33 “2021 Student Data.” Western University. Accessed April 23, 2022.

34 “Area Speed Limits.” City of London. Accessed April 21, 2022. <https://london.ca/living-london/roads-side-walks-transportation/road-safety/area-speed-limits>.

35 Canada, Transport. “Government of Canada to Explore Opportunities to Enhance Passenger Rail Services in Southwestern Ontario.” Canada.ca. Government of Canada, July 22, 2021. <https://www.canada.ca/en/transport-canada/news/2021/07/government-canada-explore-opportunities-enhance-passenger-rail-services-southwestern-ontario.html>.



the development of a dedicated track from London to Toronto. At the moment, the Transcontinental (CN) railway, the Canadian Pacific (CP) railway, and the Via Railway are on shared tracks, with the CN and CP freight trains taking priority over Via Rail.³⁶ This leads to delayed, and unreliable, trains. Unless students are able to depend on the timeliness and predictability of High Frequency Rail, they will not take full advantage of this service. As the current expansion proposal from Toronto to Quebec City includes dedicated tracks from Toronto to Ottawa and Montreal to Quebec City, the expanded service to Southwestern Ontario should include dedicated tracks from London to Toronto.

In consideration of timeliness, the London, Ontario Via Rail station currently services 3-4 departure and arrival trains a day. This places limits on students as they leave, or return to, London throughout the week and during holidays. Such inflexibility prevents students from taking full advantage of Via Rail and provides difficulty during major holidays, like Christmas break, when students are restricted due to final examination schedules. Therefore, with the possible expansion of HFR, students must be consulted as service times are developed.

Affordability is another concern that must be prioritized as the HFR service is developed. Currently, a one-way Via Rail ticket from London to Toronto Union Station ranges from \$37- \$47 while a one-way ticket from London to Ottawa ranges from \$127-\$137, when purchased a few weeks in advance. HFR ticket fares must be comparable in price to the existing Via Rail Service and other transportation services in order for this to be an affordable option for students. Furthermore, the current Via Rail fares should serve as a benchmark for the HFR ticket fare in order to maintain affordability and accessibility for student travelers. Additionally, Via Rail currently provides a youth pass for travelers ages 15-25 which provides them with 6 low-cost, one-way trips along the Quebec City- Windsor Corridor. These youth passes should also be made available with the High Frequency Rail service in order to maintain an affordable option for students.

36 “Liberals Announce Plans for New ‘High Frequency’ Rail Lines from Toronto to Quebec City | CBC News.” CBCnews. CBC/Radio Canada, July 6, 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/high-frequency-rail-project-1.6090930>.



Lastly, for students who choose to utilize bus services to move between cities, such options should be made as accessible as possible. Following the closing of Greyhound last year, many bus companies have filled this gap as they service students to and from London. However, there is currently only one pick-up location on the outskirts of campus at Elgin residence. This can pose an accessibility concern for students who are located in many other areas of campus. In noting that Western has provided the Elgin stop as a service station for these buses, Western should continue to work with bus service providers to provide more stops in and around campus in order to enhance the accessibility of this service.

Lastly in a consultation with students, a major highlighted concern is the accessibility of the airport for out of province or international students. In order to reach the airport from campus areas, students must take about 2-3 buses or call a 20-30 minute Uber ride. This poses problems for students who may not know the London area well, or those who choose not to utilize Uber due to affordability concerns. To mitigate these concerns and provide support for students, Western University should collaborate with the USC on the development of a shuttle service to transport students to and from the airport during holiday seasons such as Reading Weeks and Christmas Break. This will take off the burden on students as they determine how to access the airport affordably and safely.





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info@westernusc.ca

