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Ward 9 Councillor- Anna Hopkins
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RE: Implications of the 2024 Budget on LTC Service Expansion

After reviewing the Multi-Year Budget for the City of London for 2024-2027, we have noted that there is no mention of the intention to expand bussing services to communities that are not only growing and supporting service industries, but also supporting the city's strategies to reduce London's 5.7% unemployment rate. We are writing to you to ask that you reconsider the expansion of bus services to the West 5, Warbler Woods and Riverbend areas of London.

As noted by the London Transit Commission, the increase of 18,000 service hours per year cannot address a new route operating at a 30-minute frequency, as this would require approximately 20,300 hours. As stated by Councillor Sam Trosow in the recent CBC article regarding more transit funding, "if we cannot allow this very reasonable service upgrade, we are turning our backs on everything we purport to be saying about our desire as a city to get people out of our cars". This statement also pertains to the lack of transportation expansion throughout London. With the importance of green transportation drastically increasing, and an anticipation of 33 million riders in 2024, addressing the vital need of more stops particularly in the rapidly growing Riverbend, Warbler Woods and West 5 area is extremely necessary.

The West 5 development by Sifton Properties Limited is federally commended and supported for being the province's first sustainable, net-zero community. Saving the equivalent of 2,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions in 3 years, it has been noted that West 5 sets energy precedents that can help open doors for other green-conscious developments. As of 2024, West 5 alone is a community of approximately 680 homes, and 30 businesses, with plans of growing



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to 2000 homes and doubling the number of businesses. Warbler Woods has upwards of 650 homes, and 15 businesses and Riverbend has upwards of 800 homes -- all with very minimal access to the City of London's bussing system.

Specifically, in the Riverbend and West 5 communities, Riverbend Golf Community and Riverstone Retirement have a total of nearly 200 staff, some working overnight, 7 days per week. Among these staff members, a vast majority are part of the care and food service industries, many of whom attend Fanshawe College, relying on busses to transport them to and from their occupations regularly. To be specific, approximately 25% of staff hired at these locations take the bus. Among those employees, we have found about a quarter of that number left for another position within the first 3 months due to lack of bussing reliability. Note that the 17A Byron bus route is approximately a 30-minute walk to the Riverbend Golf Community and West 5, and the 17B to Riverbend only operates between 6AM and 6PM, Monday to Friday, excluding holidays. Outside of these hours, when an employee or community member would like to travel throughout London, they must source an alternative form of transportation. As you can envision, this creates hiring and staffing unpredictability throughout the entire community.

In such a rapidly growing community providing opportunities in the workforce, experiencing the lack of transportation to the West 5, Riverbend and Warbler Woods community is, to say the least, discouraging. The implementation of more bus routes in these areas will prove to have a greater impact on the City of London and will assist the workforce shortages and unpredictability currently being experienced. We appreciate your reconsideration, and look forward to working with the City of London to continue towards a common goal of supporting the workforce.

Sylvie Lucas

*Vice President, People and Lifestyle Communities
Sifton Properties Limited*