



300 Dufferin Avenue
P.O. Box 5035
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N6A 4L9

April 22, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

Re: item 5.1 Secondary School Student Transit Pass Pilot Project

At the 8th Meeting of the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee, we engaged in a discussion on a motion to move forward with a MOU with TVDSB, the City of London and LTC. First, we want to recognize the good work our colleagues have done along with TVDSB trustees. We truly appreciate the efforts to collaborate and support the shared goal to increase transit usage amongst youth riders. We see the merits of the pilot in principle; as it will stimulate the use of our local transit and could reduce greenhouse gas emissions aligning with our climate goals in the future. The benefits of connecting students with employment opportunities, volunteer hours and participation in extracurricular activities is important to all of us.

However, it is incumbent on us to ensure that the MOU, partnership and pilot are a success by fully allowing all partners in this discussion to have the opportunity to participate equally. During the discussion, we heard questions about LTC's role in the feasibility study and involvement in the formation of the pilot project. We discussed that their voice was missing during our discussion at SPPC.

The success of such a program will only be realised if initiated and operated from a plan that is informed by Civic Administration, Thames Valley District School Board and the London Transit Commission (LTC). During our meeting last week we heard that TVDSB had engaged with the Catholic Board as well and it would make sense to include them in future discussions. Late last week, the LTC indicated in the media that critical issues need addressing for the pilot to be successful. From the media article and discussions with LTC, it is clear that further analysis must be completed to mitigate any potential crowding concerns from current ridership along routes that were identified in the feasibility study and recommendation noted in the motion at SPPC. The identified routes at Clarke Rd SS could result in crush loads and the need for tripper buses, meaning additional costs of which LTC is not in a position to absorb.

Analysis on detailed student population numbers or area populations along routes, which are critical for proper route and capacity analysis during peak times must be completed by the LTC to measure feasibility of any free annual student bus pass. This list is not exhaustive but demonstrates the need for further consultation before defining the scope of the pilot. As this motion has went to TVDSBs Board meeting and now to Council, time must be given for LTC to receive a report to its Commission in order for Commissioners to provide their input and garner their support. In speaking with LTC, a verbal report could be provided at their April meeting and a report in May. Such steps are necessary to allow equal partnership, and identify the appropriate school for the pilot in order to get it right. As such, we are seeking your consideration and support for the following amendment:

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CANADA

A. That Civic Administration in collaboration with the London Transit Commission, Thames Valley District School Board **BE DIRECTED** to initiate the development of a Memorandum of Understanding for a multi-year pilot project to provide annual transit passes to secondary school students, including:

i. the current post-secondary student annual transit pass agreements between the City of London, Western University and Fanshawe College and the current Children Under 12 Ride Free program **BE CONSIDERED** as templates to establish the framework for this pilot program; and

B. the Civic Administration **BE DIRECTED** to report back to Council with a feasibility report including recommended routes as decided by all parties, shared goals, metrics, costing, methodology for tracking results and an appropriate secured source of financing for the pilot program;

It being noted that the City currently subsidizes youth transit passes to provide for a discount pass for all youth riders ages 13-17.

Respectfully,

David Ferreira

Corrine Rahman

City Councillor, Ward 13

City Councillor, Ward 7