

From: Don Slater
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 5:05 PM
To: Council Agenda <councilagenda@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Transit

The federal government holds the treasury, the provinces bear the duties, and the cities carry the burdens. It is the city that comes face to face with their citizens while the other entities are often too far away to see them.

I am writing to you today with a heartfelt plea on behalf of our city's impoverished disabled residents. As someone deeply committed to advocating for the rights and well-being of disabled individuals, I have witnessed firsthand the struggles that many face daily. One of the most significant challenges is the lack of affordable and accessible transportation.

For many disabled people living in poverty, a transit pass is not a luxury; it is a lifeline. Public transportation provides them with the freedom and opportunity to participate in society in meaningful ways. It allows them to access essential services such as medical appointments, grocery stores, community centers, and social services that are vital for their survival and well-being.

Without an affordable transit pass, disabled individuals often face isolation and a diminished quality of life. They are unable to attend medical appointments regularly, which can lead to deteriorating health and increased emergency room visits. They cannot easily access food banks or affordable grocery stores, leading to food insecurity. Moreover, they miss out on social and community activities that are crucial for mental health and social integration.

It is important to recognize that many disabled people are on fixed incomes that barely cover their basic needs. The cost of a regular transit pass can be a significant burden, forcing them to choose between transportation and other essential expenses such as medication, food, or rent. This choice is not one that anyone should have to make.

Providing a subsidized or free transit pass to impoverished disabled residents is not merely an act of charity; it is an investment in our community. When disabled individuals have reliable transportation, they can better manage their health, participate in the workforce or volunteer activities, and contribute to the social and economic fabric of our city. Moreover, it promotes inclusivity and ensures that all residents, regardless of their physical abilities or financial status, have the opportunity to live with dignity and independence.

I urge you to consider the profound impact that access to affordable public transportation can have on the lives of disabled people in our city. By implementing a transit pass program specifically designed for impoverished disabled individuals, we can take a significant step towards creating a more equitable and compassionate community.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I am confident that, together, we can make a positive difference in the lives of our most vulnerable residents

Thank you

Don Slater