



Jenna Peace
Executive Chairperson
Durham College Student's Inc.
2000 Simcoe St. N.
Oshawa, ON, L1G 0C5

John Henry
Regional Chair
The Regional Municipality of Durham
605 Rossland Road East
Whitby, ON. L1N 6A3

June 24, 2020

Dear Mr. John Henry,

Today, we are writing to you with concerns for students who relied on Durham Regions affordable Universal Bus Pass. We look forward to the resumption of the UPass as soon as it is safe to have students back on campus full time.

Students will continue to work in many of the Durham Regions essential businesses while studying from home or continuing to travel to school for labs in the Fall. We believe students are an important part of the Durham Region's economic recovery, and many will continue to need a financially feasible transit system.

Durham College Students Inc. notes the following regarding the Universal Bus Pass suspension:

- DCSI recognizes that the U-Pass Program's suspension will lead to a decrease of 6.6 million dollars from the Durham Regional Transit Budget, which amounts to approximately twenty percent of the program revenue in the transit program budget¹.
- Further, DCSI recognizes that Durham College, Ontario Tech University, and Trent – Durham students compose 27% of the total ridership of Durham Regional Transit².
- Due to the online delivery of instruction for the fall semester of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the U-Pass program has been suspended.

Durham College Students Inc. calls upon the Corporation of the Regional Municipality of Durham to do the following:

- To create a temporary semester-based transit pass for post-secondary students based on similar successful programs in Winnipeg, BC Transit, and Sault Ste. Marie and others.
- To promote continued ridership on DRT, the semester-based pass should be priced at a discounted level at the same level as the current discount level of the Durham Regional Transit *Senior Pass* (\$46.00 per month).

¹ 2020 Detailed Durham Region Approved Business Plans and Property Tax Supported Budgets, page 1188.

² 2020 Detailed Durham Region Approved Business Plans and Property Tax Supported Budgets, page 1200.

- Further, the monthly *Youth Pass* should be available for any post-secondary student in Durham Region who wishes to receive it; this includes college students above the age of 19.
- The assumption is that with the absence of the UPass, post-secondary students would purchase a monthly transit pass. To attain a viable transit system, during and post COVID-19, with the absence of the UPass, every insentive should be given to post-secondary students in the Durham Region to use transit. A deeply discounted semester based on monthly pass should continue for those who relied on this program.

Durham College Students Inc. thanks you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Jenna Peace
Executive Chairperson
Durham College Students Inc.

Cc: President of Durham College, Don Lovisa
President of Ontario Tech Student Union, Tiffany Best
President of Trent Durham Student Association, Rayna Porter