



**Borough Mayor and  
City Councillors' office**  
5160 Décarie, Suite 710  
Montréal (Québec) H3X 2H9

[mrotrand@ville.montreal.qc.ca](mailto:mrotrand@ville.montreal.qc.ca)

BY E-MAIL / BY MAIL

August 2, 2019

Lisa Helps  
Mayor - City of Victoria  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1P6

Dear Mayor Helps,

Earlier today I tabled a motion for the upcoming Montreal City Council meeting which urges Canada's federal political parties to add a promise to their 2019 electoral platforms which would provide funding for transit operations.

I wonder if you would consider bringing forward a similar motion to Victoria City Council.

In 2015 the work of municipalities from coast to coast helped convince the parties to commit to substantial new transit infrastructure funding. As a consequence the Liberal Party of Canada pledged to reinvest in infrastructure with a large portion aimed at assuring Canadians of a fast, efficient and comfortable sustainable transport future.

However it was not only a Liberal priority: the demand for building new transport infrastructure had resonance with all four major parties, with the Conservatives, NDP and Greens also committing to funding. The consensus that Canada needed a modern high capacity public transit network has aided the Government of Canada to live up to the promises made.

As Canadians begin to focus on the October 21, 2019 election, I am hopeful that a concerted effort by municipalities will attract the parties' attention to the fact that successful renewal of transit also needs increased funding for transporters to operate their networks.

Substantial new investment has indeed spurred the construction of new lines and allowed transporters to augment the size of their fleets. However the launch of new lines and the implementing of more frequent service has and is adding to the operational costs of local transporters.

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In most cases no identifiable source of funding exists to boost the transit offer other than raising transit fares and boosting local taxation. Municipalities and local authorities have limited means to finance the additional services that new lines and new vehicles can offer. Raising fares to allow better service is a losing proposition and hiking municipal taxes to pay for more transit is an equally poor choice.

Recently newspapers across Canada carried an op-ed by Marco D'Angelo, President of the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) pointing out the gains made through the funding poured into infrastructure and warning of the coming cash crunch in transporters' operational budgets.

My motion reflects CUTA's stand for a commitment from the parties to take the next step and find a way for the Government of Canada to subsidize the operational cost of transit.

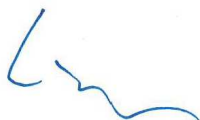
Last week the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, noting that the Gas Tax Fund (GTF) for 2019-2020 has been doubled to a total of \$4.4 billion, invited the next Government of Canada to consider making that level of funding in this program permanent.

The specifics of whether funds from the GTF could be allocated to transit operations or whether that should come from a separate fund are less important than winning all parties' support for federal money to aid transit operations which is why I am hopeful that a series of municipal motions will have an impact on the 2019 election campaign.

Attached please find a template of the motion that is being circulated across the country. It is my hope that a consensus of municipalities behind this request will win the support of the federal parties and come to fruition in time to facilitate the entry into service of new lines and additional vehicles.

Please feel free to contact me at 514 774 1073 should you have need of any clarifications. Please be so kind as to forward me a copy of any motion that your Council might adopt.

Best regards,



Marvin Rotrand  
City Councillor - Snowdon  
City of Montreal

Encl.