POLICY PAPER

Public Transit & Transportation

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Table of Contents

Introduction 4
Design 6
Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) 11
  Harassment and Discrimination Response 11
  Routes and Scheduling 13
  Bus Shelters 16
  Communication Regarding Service Disruptions 18
  Feedback on HSR Service 20
GO Transit 22
  McMaster GO Terminal 22
  Bus 47 Scheduling 23
  GO Bus Time Extension 24
  Providing Feedback for GO Transit 25
Transit Development in Hamilton 26
  10 Year Local Transit Strategy 26
  BLAST Network 26
  Funding Transit Growth 27
Parking 30
  Availability of Parking for Undergraduate Students 30
  Affordability of Parking 31
  Safety 32
Data Collection 34
Introduction

Public transit is an essential component of any developing city. All residents rely on it, whether it be to get to work, for leisure, to direct customers to businesses, or to simply be connected. In particular, transit allows students to get to school and receive our education. Transit connects us to the city we call home for at least four years. Students value transit and want to see it grow.

For the purposes of this policy, a “commuter” student will be defined as a student who travels to campus, using any form of transportation that takes more than 20 minutes, and/or lives outside of Hamilton.

Since 1997, McMaster undergraduate students have been contributing steadily to the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) through a Universal Bus Pass (U-Pass). This was approved by a majority vote in a referendum. This U-Pass is governed by a contract between the HSR and the McMaster Students Union, and is renewed every three years. Every three years, without fail, McMaster students have approved the renewal of our U-Pass, even when fees increase. Since 2014, student voted in favour of extending the U-Pass to the summer, in addition to paying extra for increased service in West Hamilton. As of 2018, McMaster undergraduate students are contributing approximately $4.59 million to the HSR budget, or 12.05% through the use of our Presto card U-Pass system. McMaster students are the single largest rider group of the HSR.

While students value transit, this does not mean that we do not have significant concerns with its state of affairs. This policy will outline specific recommendations for the improvement of transit, both municipal and provicinial, that affects McMaster students. It will also address student transportation and parking.

This policy starts off with recommendations on campus and transit design. Students believe there should be more bike lanes in their neighbourhoods and integration of SoBi on campus. Students also want to see bus stops run through campus as the university revises its master plans. The paper then has a series of recommendations for the HSR. Students express concerns with the harassment and discrimination response, and want to see more strategic routes and scheduling. Bus shelters and their design is also addressed, while suggestions are made to modernize communication and feedback systems.

Students want to see McMaster’s GO terminal become a hub of transportation, and want to see increased and extended GO bus service on campus. The data collected from the Presto U-Pass system is also something students want to see publicly released and reported on.
Rapid transit development is also important to students, and we are concerned about the delays of the BLAST network and the 10 Year Local Transit Strategy. The paper ends with recommendations to improve parking on campus.

This policy was informed by research through focus groups, surveys, and published data regarding transit and student transportation.
## Design

| Principle: Students, and all other members of the immediate McMaster community, should have safe means of transportation whether travelling on foot, by bike, by bus or car. |
| Principle: Students with disabilities should have the same ease of convenience and safety when travelling on the HSR to and from campus as all other McMaster students. |
| Principle: All McMaster students should have access to reliable and convenient to travel to, from and on McMaster campus. |
| Principle: High service levels of transit are crucial to the McMaster student experience and student retention. |
| Concern: Hamilton streets, especially major roads and streets along bus routes, are unsafe for cyclists and do not account for the experience of cyclists. |
| Concern: Many bus stops are not accessible for McMaster students with disabilities or students who use mobility aids. |
| Concern: McMaster University is implementing a strategy to make a Vehicle-Free Core Campus which limits students of accessible, reliable and convenient transit service. |
| Concern: McMaster University is considering to not renew their contract with SoBi Hamilton, resulting in discontinued bike stations on campus. |
| Recommendation: The City of Hamilton should create more bicycle lanes in the Ainslie Wood-East neighbourhood, particularly along the 51/5A route to encourage biking and to make the commute for cyclists safer. |
| Recommendation: The City should do an audit and subsequent repairs of damaged and inaccessible sidewalks (raised concrete, holes, missing accessibility ramps). |
| Recommendation: McMaster University should not implement the strategy to make a Vehicle-Free Core Campus. |
| Recommendation: McMaster University should continue to work with SoBi Hamilton to provide bike stations on and near campus. |

The City of Hamilton should be committed to ensuring that all its residents and anyone travelling in or through the city can do so safely no matter the means of transportation. This entails traffic infrastructure ensuring students can travel safely by foot, bicycle or public transit. It also entails the HSR ensuring students are adequately sheltered when taking public transit to and from McMaster. In the Complete Streets Policy for Hamilton, submitted to Hamilton City Council General Issues Committee, the City of Hamilton is committed to “providing a comprehensive and integrated network of facilities that are safe and convenient for all users of the transportation system, including pedestrians, persons using mobility aids, cyclists,
public transit users and vehicles, and others.\(^1\) In this way, it is important that the City of Hamilton make certain that the design and infrastructure of its transit system ensures student safety.

Hamilton has shown initiative in implementing bike lanes along major streets such as Sterling, Sanders Blvd and King St. in near-McMaster neighbourhoods. However, there still remains one busy street with high traffic that does not guarantee the safety of cyclists sharing the road with vehicles- Emerson St. Along Emerson, the 51 and 5A bus routes, frequent car traffic and inconvenient double-sided parking place many student cyclists and pedestrians in harm's way. The unsafe biking infrastructure also endangers pedestrians when cyclists must travel via sidewalk or curb to dodge vehicles and traffic congestion. In 2016, Hamilton has seen close to 179 bicycle collisions which has been the highest since before amalgamation\(^2\). This is particularly important for McMaster students who rely on biking as a convenient, healthy and cost-effective mode of short-range travel. This is especially troubling considering the Amalgamated Transit Union raised concerns last year regarding large blind spots in the design of newer buses, placing pedestrians at further risk\(^3\).

The City of Hamilton, as demonstrated in the Complete Streets Policy for Hamilton, is committed to realizing “improved public health, better environmental stewardship, reduced fuel consumption and reduced lifecycle costs of motor vehicle infrastructure”. The creation of more bike lanes along busier roads such as Emerson Street make streets safe for cyclists who choose to more sustainable and healthy means of transportation. Often, cyclists are put in harm’s way along busy streets, particularly those along bus routes, where cyclists are forced to compete with vehicle traffic or pedestrians along sidewalks. By making roads more user-friendly for cyclists, students may come to rely on biking as a means of transportation which would also reduce transit congestion for the Hamilton Street Rail. According to Cycle Hamilton, bus lanes do not serve as reliable safety lanes for cyclists as the stop-start nature of buses force bus drivers to try and overtake cyclists between stops, and vice versa.

The province of Ontario is committed towards encouraging cycling in Ontario cities to improve personal and public health, bolster cycling tourism, and objectives for a cleaner environment. According to the Canadian University Survey consortium,
about 2% of McMaster students use biking as a means of transportation. Statistics suggest there is significant potential to increase the number of regular cyclists in Ontario. In Hamilton, the City can help achieve this goal by making bicycling a more reliable and safe alternative for transportation. In the McMaster Campus Master Plan, the university recognizes the need to continue cycling routes approaching the McMaster Campus with marked and consistent paths. Adequate bike lanes should be provided on campus to ensure students may safely transfer from off-campus streets to on-campus roads.

Hamilton qualifies for $3.7 million investment for new cycling infrastructure from the government of Ontario where the final list of funded projects has yet to be determined. Students believe that the City of Hamilton should invest in establishing bike lanes along roads that share bus routes to improve cyclist safety.

In general, a SoBi bike station does not take up much space. Approximately 10 bicycles can fit into one car parking space. According to SoBi Hamilton, bike share programs influence the people’s decisions regarding public transportation and driving. Students are also most likely of users of the SoBi program to rely on its services, and the City of Hamilton has a lower proportion of residents with post-secondary education than other cities. This supports a need for bike stations on campus to support a huge portion of SoBi users which are students. Without bike stations on campus, the use of the bike share program is rendered useless and ineffective for many McMaster students who rely on it to travel to and from classes on campus.

The City of Hamilton has shown commitment towards improving transit infrastructure through its Ten Year Transit Strategy and financial commitment to the HSR for improvements to security cameras on transit vehicles, upgrades and repairs to transit shelters and new sidewalks and landing pads near bus stops. Students believe that these efforts continue for near-McMaster neighbourhoods, particularly for HSR bus routes on the 51, 5A and 1 line. With increased investments in public infrastructure from the governments of Canada and Ontario, the MSU stresses the importance of ensuring that McMaster students, who make up about 15% of HSR’s

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8 Ibid.
observed passenger boardings. Students need the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Street Rail to focus investments in transit infrastructure to Ward 1 where a majority of McMaster reside. The improvement of transit stops will improve rider accessibility and safety and continue to support the growing need for better public transit for McMaster students. The HSR currently has accessibility criteria and guidelines for transit bus stops, however many bus stops near McMaster do not follow these criteria.

The MSU recommends that the HSR conduct an audit regarding accessible bus stops to ensure students, and riders, with disabilities have access to convenient, reliable and safe transit service. With the expansion of the HSR through Light Rail Transit, the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Street Rail must ensure that construction does not affect accessibility of transit bus stops and that new infrastructure considers those living with disability or require additional assistance. The Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities (ACPD) recommended to HSR that service through the LRT must be capable of serving persons with disabilities especially new McMaster. The design and infrastructure of bus stops, as well as the LRT, should accommodate these concerns to ensure all McMaster students, and community members, have fair access to the LRT.

In the Campus Master Plan Update, McMaster University is currently working to establish Pedestrian Priority Streets on campus which involves pushing current HSR bus routes from core campus to the edge of campus. In the report, the stated benefits are a safer campus, increased opportunity for alternative means of transport, and elimination of damage and associated maintenance costs. However, there is little-to-no evidence or news articles supporting the claim that accidents occur often in the core of campus. There have been two accidents on the edge of campus along Forsyth and in front of the hospital, which is where traffic would be pushed with Pedestrian Priority Streets. Students believe that having reliable bus service through campus is not only a convenience, but a necessary component to travelling to classes and other school-related activities. Redirecting traffic to College Crescent and Cootes Drive or Sterling Street, where the university proposes to build parking, will result in traffic congestion in near-McMaster streets, make transportation in those areas more unsafe and result in increased pedestrian traffic for students entering campus for classes, campus-use and other university related activities.

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10 Final Report of Hamilton Street Railway Operational Review submitted to City of Hamilton/Hamilton Street Railway by IBI Group
11 https://www.hamilton.ca/develop-property/policies-guidelines/transit-bus-stop-accessibility-criteria-guidelines
McMaster students already struggle to venture into Hamilton to enjoy and experience the opportunities, attractions and resources made available to Hamilton residents. Centralizing transit routes away from core campus makes it more difficult and inaccessible for McMaster students to travel into the City of Hamilton.

The new plan to make McMaster ‘pedestrian friendly’ does not take into consideration McMaster students, such as students with disabilities or mobility aids, that rely on public transit through campus to access the same ease of convenience as other McMaster students.
Hamilton Street Railway (HSR)
Harassment and Discrimination Response

Principle: All individuals, regardless of gender, race, religion, ability, or sexual orientation should be able to ride the HSR without experiencing harassment or discrimination.

Principle: The HSR should have appropriate measures put in place to protect riders from harassment and discrimination.

Concern: Many students feel unsafe on buses due to experiences with or the threat of harassment.

Concern: In instances of harassment, the response protocol is inadequate.

Concern: Riders have no way of indicating to the driver that they or a fellow passenger is being harassed when at the back of the bus.

Concern: The HSR policy on harassment is not publicized.

Concern: Many people are not aware of the severity of harassment on public transit and may overlook it.

Recommendation: The HSR should raise awareness on harassment and discrimination on buses, protocols, and encourage riders to report incidences.

Recommendation: The Amalgamated Transit Union should ensure all employees are given adequate sexual violence, diversity, and anti-oppressive practices training.

Recommendation: The HSR should promote a system where people can report incidents of discrimination and harassment in order to collect and publish information on the severity of the problem.

Recommendation: The HSR should develop a response protocol to harassment issues that do not involve the police.

The HSR has stated that they provide “a safe and harassment-free environment.”\(^5\) They have laid out a number of rules for being a respectful rider including “No aggressive behaviour or coarse language.”\(^6\) However, many students still face harassment, discrimination, or general feelings of unsafety while riding the HSR. These incidences are often as a result of other passengers who have verbally and physically harassed individuals or have vandalized buses with racist graffiti\(^7\). The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability among a number of other protected grounds.\(^8\) To ensure the HSR is committed to providing a safe environment that meets the standards of


\(^{16}\) Ibid


the Ontario Human Rights Code, they should increase efforts to addressing the current issues of harassment and discrimination on their buses.

At current response protocols the HSR has in place for instances of harassment and discrimination do not address the needs of users. If a passenger is being harassed by another rider the HSR encourages the harassed person to notify the operator who in turn will take the appropriate steps to resolve the issue internally on the vehicle.\textsuperscript{19} Should it require the harasser to be removed from the bus, HSR Supervision or the police would be called to take that action. When supervision arrives, they determine if police are required and call to have them respond. If the incident involves physical contact, the police are automatically called to assist.\textsuperscript{20} Due to complex relationships marginalized individuals have with the police and general distrust that matters will be handled appropriately, many individuals may choose not to report incidences where they are harassed. As a result, the HSR should revise their protocols to include options where the complaints are handled internally and do not involve the police.

It is impossible to understand how large the issue of harassment and discrimination is on the HSR due to the lack of reporting. Individuals may not know where to report these instances or if there is value in doing so. If the HSR currently does receive complaints about harassment and discrimination, they do not publicize it. This information is of value to the public as a means of keeping the HSR accountable for providing a safe environment. The HSR should implement an online reporting system specifically for instances of harassment and discrimination with an option to report the instance anonymously. On an annual basis, they should provide a report with appropriate statistics and how they will modify their practices accordingly.

In order to begin address this issue, the ATU must provide adequate training to drivers on harassment and discrimination. Currently, drivers receive the same training as other city staff members in regards to diversity, harassment, and violence in the workplace. However, this training is not specific to the common issues that occur on buses. Instead, the ATU should develop job-specific training for HSR bus drivers that helps them recognize when harassment is occurring and teach them how to respond appropriately. Doing so will ensure a safer environment for all passengers.

Finally, the HSR should raise awareness about harassment and discrimination on buses. Through a short term campaign and long-term signage, the HSR should encourage bystanders to intervene or notify HSR drivers of the issue. Additionally, it should promote how to report the incident online. Passengers should also be made aware of the consequences of harassing others, including being removed from the

\textsuperscript{19} Personal correspondence with HSR Customer Service, February 5, 2018.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
bus. This campaign can be promoted through using advertisements in buses and promoting the campaign on social media.

**Routes and Scheduling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Students should be able to effectively transfer buses in a timely manner.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle</td>
<td>Students should have reliable access to public transit at any time throughout the day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Principle</td>
<td>Students should be within 400 metres of any bus stop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Students who commute from the escarpment do not have reliable transportation.</td>
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<td>Concern</td>
<td>Students are, at times, forced to miss class and exams as a result of unreliable wait times between buses.</td>
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<td>Concern</td>
<td>Bus bunching at off-peak times are ineffective and create longer wait times for students.</td>
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<td>Concern</td>
<td>Student Safety is being put at risk as students are forced to jaywalk in order to catch their bus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>The cancellation of buses in Westdale and Ainslie Wood will result in students having to walk long distances in order to get to campus.</td>
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<td>Concern</td>
<td>The 10 Year Local Transit Strategy’s service standards set the maximum span to end at 2 a.m., which does not address students’ needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should ensure that their social media, transit apps and phone lines contain up-to-date schedules so students are aware of when their bus is leaving/arriving their stop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should increase the number of buses on weekends going to major economic centres including the Hamilton GO centre and Lime Ridge Mall.</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should expand its minimum service standards span to end at 3 a.m.</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should ensure buses at common transfer points are aligned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should increase the frequency of all bus services on weekend.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should implement more articulated buses during high frequency times along major routes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>The HSR should ensure students are within walking distance to transit stops servicing McMaster when designing LRT feeder routes.</td>
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The current bus schedule created by the HSR fails to tackle the issue of transfers between buses. Students coming from the escarpment or students who pass through the McNab terminal daily have difficulty catching the busses they need to get them to and from school. The HSR currently does not prioritize making sure busses are aligned for when individuals need to transfer from one bus to another. After examining the bus routes of the 51, 5, 25 and 26 there are multiple cases in which bus times do not match up. Not only are wait times between busses quite long, but the time in which the first bus arrives is nowhere near the time when the second bus leaves. For example, when looking to get up the mountain the 25 leaves McNab terminal at 1:05, 1:25, 1:45. For students at McMaster taking the 51 or the 5, busses arrive at the McNab terminal at 1:31pm and 1:51pm. The data shows that the busses arriving at the terminal consistently just miss the time that their transfer bus leaves the terminal. The HSR should redesign routes and design them so that students who need to take multiple busses are left waiting outside for extended amount of time.

Additionally, the HSR should extend bus service past midnight so that common transfer points are aligned. Late night bus service is an issue for many students, especially those who take multiple busses to get home at night. The last bus leaving McMaster Campus is at 2:33 am, which is the 51. This may seem beneficial, but when compared to other busses, this late service is not exhaustive. For example, the last 25 bus leaving from the McNab terminal is at 1:23am. If a student were staying late and needed to take these two busses to get home, they would need to leave at 1:00am, making it difficult for students to get home. The HSR should ensure that if they are extending the times of a bus, that common transfer busses are also slightly extended so that students do not have to leave at an earlier time to arrive at their destination.

Going further, bus bunching, at off-peak times, is a major issue for students who rely upon public transit. Bus bunching refers to the process by which multiple busses arrive at a stop at the same time. When referring to off-peak times, I mean time sin which students aren’t as frequently using the bus, which would be evenings and weekends. Attached is a copy of the daily weekday schedule for the 5C and the 51 arriving at the Emerson and Main stop. The data shows that the HSR is scheduling certain busses to arrive at stops at the same time, which isn't beneficial to anyone. This is a concern for students as the wait times between busses are quite long, when they don’t have to be. If busses were in sync and weren't scheduled to

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come so close to each other, the HSR could decrease the amount of cases in which bus bunching occurs.

In addition, Control centres attempt to alleviate bus bunching by giving drivers more time at busy stops to get back on the road. This is only beneficial to an extent as it doesn’t account for inclement weather or heavy traffic conditions. As bus-bunching isn’t an issue exclusive to Hamilton, research shows alternative methods that have been successful in decreasing the rates of bus-bunching seen on the streets. One method, created by researchers at Georgia tech, found that telling drivers to abandon their schedules was beneficial. The authors state that “without the restriction of meeting pre-specified targets, drivers instead follow the flow of traffic, and natural schedules emerge over time, resulting in a self-equalizing system.” This was a pilot program and the results showed that the time in-between busses self-corrected themselves without intense interference from the control centre or pressure on drivers.

According to the 10-year Local Transit Strategy, the HSR compares the B-line to the routes of 1 King, 5 Delaware and the 51 University. The HSR believes these routes are very similar to the B-line and in turn, students are concerned that the HSR will amalgamate these three routes to solely be the B-line. If the pre-existing routes are dismantled, students will be forced to find alternative means to reach their destination as the B-line does not access a wide geographical area. Though students are in favour of the BLAST network, the B-line is not exhaustive and would not effectively replace the routes currently in place. For example, the B-Line currently stops at Main/Emerson and then Main/Longwood; For reference, these two stops are 1.4 km away. The distance between these two stops are not accessible to students and are too far from each to each other.

Additionally, the HSR should be working towards increasing the number of busses accessible to students during the weekend. On Saturdays, busses going through Westdale and Ainslie wood are reduced, meaning that students have longer wait times than they normally would during the week. On Sundays, the schedule becomes increasingly difficult as the only bus that goes through Westdale and Ainslie wood is the 5A which circulates every 35-40 minutes, which can be seen in a copy of the HSR schedule below. Students who are travelling on weekends to go home, get to school or go to work are limited and as a result are usually forced to find alternate and more expensive means to get to their destinations.


examining the schedule, there are the Delaware busses that go across main, but these are still not sufficient for student use. The first reason being that they too are low in frequency so wait times for students are still longer than they should be. Additionally, for students with physical barriers, walking to main to catch a bus isn’t realistic. The HSR should increase the frequency of busses cycling through Ainslie Wood and Westdale on weekends to ensure student can complete daily tasks.

**Bus Shelters**

| Principle: While waiting for busses, students should have shelters to prevent them from inclement weather conditions. |
| Principle: Bus stops should feel safe at any given time. |
| Concern: With wait times being unreliable and off-hour designed to be sparse, students are left standing in inclement weather conditions without adequate shelter for those extended amount of time. |
| Concern: Stops are often not equipped with adequate shelter and poorly designed for safety. |
| Recommendation: The HSR should increase the number of shelters on a bus route, aiming to have a shelter at the most popular stops. |
| Recommendation: The HSR should install heated bus shelters in high traffic areas, including Main at Emerson, Holmes at Emerson, King at Paisley, Main at Haddon, and all McMaster Campus bus stops. |
| Recommendation: The HSR should install protected shelters on bus stops without any protection from inclement weather. |
| Recommendation: Metrolinx should install heated bus shelters on the campus GO bus stop and on Main St. West at Haddon Ave South. |
| Recommendation: MacNab Terminal should remain open until all busses stop running, for the entirety of the year. |
| Recommendation: The City of Hamilton should invest in lighting at all bus shelters, and particularly Main at Emerson, Holmes at Emerson, King at Paisley, King at MacNab, Main at Haddon, Main St. West at Haddon Ave South, Osler at Grant, Osler at University Plaza, and All McMaster Campus bus stops |
| Recommendation: McMaster University should install an integrated emergency line to Campus Security at on-campus bus stops. |

Bus shelters in Hamilton are not designed to ensure the safety of transit users both during late hours and during poor weather conditions. Along the 51, 1 and 5A line, there are very few full bus shelters that are equipped to withstand large
amounts of riders. This is particularly problematic for service provided in near-campus neighbourhoods where McMaster students make up a majority of the HSR users in these areas. Due to insufficient lighting in many neighbourhoods and side roads in Ward 1, bus shelters are often unlit or insufficiently lit, creating an unsafe environment for McMaster students travelling to and from campus during late hours.

Throughout the year, especially during the winter months, bus shelters do not serve as reliable protection for pedestrians and transit users from inclement weather such as sleet, snow, hail, and heavy rain. Many bus shelters are designed too small to accommodate the volume of users near campus or bus shelters are designed to be open-faced, leaving riders exposed to the weather. Some bus stops do not have any bus shelter built, despite being along busy routes.

Bus shelters should be able to provide comfort and ease for riders waiting for their bus, in all seasons at all times. This past December 28th, 2017 was a record-breaking day for being one of the coldest temperature days within Ontario.\(^{27}\) With that in mind, creating heated shelters that provide warmth on these extreme cold days would go a long way and support ridership. With making peoples’ commute to work being warmer and physically more comfortable, they are more likely to use the bus and less likely to loiter in front of businesses. Regina, Saskatchewan has installed heated shelters in 4 of their bus stops in 2015 with positive reaction from both riders and the businesses outside of the bus stops.\(^{28}\) With heated bus shelters, Regina’s business saw less loitering immediately. Mayor Michael Fougere was quoted saying that this is not only about getting people out of businesses’ entrance ways but also making people warm and happy. Regina’s success was from adding a simple, push-button based system where the heat lamp is button activated taking approximately five minutes to heat up and will maintain heat for five minutes. This means that it would be not be constantly running and costing electricity since it would only be running when used. Additionally, this means that you can then block during the summer to ensure no electricity operational cost. MacNab Transit Terminal is an essential part of keeping riders warm during cold days and late in the evening, since it is connected to so many routes. Having MacNab terminal open during December 1st through March 31st is a step in the right direction but needs to be throughout the entire year for the safety, warmth, and information accessible to all riders.

When bus shelters and stops are placed without accounting for social safety and traffic safety, riders often decide not to get onto the bus. Or if they have to ride the bus, they will make a conscious choice of which bus stop they will get on.

According to the National Association of City Transportation Office, when cities and


bus services account for prioritizing walking access to transit stops, low-delay pedestrian crossings they achieve traffic safety. When bus stops are placed in proximity to all-hours activity, human-scale lighting, and shelters, riders feel secure.29

With buses often being schedule scarcely or cancellations occurring, riders often have to wait for a bus that is not coming at all. Without proper shelters, riders often feel cold and unsafe. Leading to feeling disenfranchised and not riding the HSR. When ridership decreases, students are less like to spend money in Hamilton businesses, explore the thriving arts and culture experiences, and are less likely to be retained after graduation.

In order to support riders and students, HSR and the City of Hamilton should support the current infrastructure existing for people wanting to participate in this city through this key transit service at all points in the process. To better the bus shelters, effort should be made to improve temperatures and resisting against inclement weather during winter months. Waiting in bus shelters during winter often leaves riders in extreme temperatures. often lead people stranded, cold, and concern about their physical wellbeing.

**Communication Regarding Service Disruptions**

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<tr>
<th>Principle: Riders should receive communication from an accurate tracking system, showing real time data through easily communicated and already adopted channels.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Principle: All riders should be given notice of what busses are cancelled, as well as how long they will be out of commission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern: Inclement weather provides geographical challenges to buses and their routes, which is not often well-communicated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The HSR should better promote their twitter page and other tools related to information to ensure students are updated regarding transit service disruptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The HSR should implement real-time postage about next bus arrival and other delays at popular bus stops.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The HSR should implement geo-targeted sponsored tweets based off of local postal codes to reach even more riders for major buses and cancellations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: HSR should provide real-time data to Google Maps and other third party transit apps regarding cancellations, detours, and rerouting about any changes.</td>
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Using real-time data and empowering riders through Google Map integration, you can allow riders to make the choices necessary to travel. Being proactive in

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communicating cancellations can allow riders to manage their daily travel routine, allowing themselves to still meet their obligations whether that would be through an alternative transportation method. It is critical that real-time data is provided to applications such as Google Maps and the Transit app, which students are relying on increasingly. Students have reported that the live bus times these apps communicate often change unpredictably, suggesting the real-time data is not being communicated routinely. The HSR should ensure that this data is communicated for as many routes as possible.

TTC developed their external reach to riders through integrating cancellations and reroutes to their services on Google Maps.30 They directly attribute it to one of the reasons they won the 2017 APTA Transit System of the Year.

Twitter has been a great step in the right direction for the HSR to send quick information, however physical and mixed communication need to happen for both Twitter users and non-Twitter users. When it comes to communicating and reaching out to students, the MSU can be a partner to help advise and consult the HSR on how to reach out to students, when peak events where HSR can effectively target and increase their reach to students and being a voice in the conversation on campus.

Sponsoring tweets on service usage is a way to provide value and on-time information to users while also growing your tweets reach and increasing the number of followers. Twitter Canada says that sponsor ads can reach specific postal codes which can be used to reach twitter users for when major buses are delayed, detoured, or cancelled.32 London’s (Transport for London) while understanding the impact Twitter had on Bus Riders, they found that 83% of followers checked it at least once a day with 68% checking more than once a day.33 Followers tended to check when checking Twitter in general (84%), and will significantly more likely to check if there’s a problem on their journey (58%), a journey is disturbed (50%), or during a normal ride (28%).34 They found that 55% of Twitter followers find the Bus Twitter feeds to be accurate and reliable most of the time with a further 35% of Twitter followers finding the Bus Twitter feed to be accurate and reliable all the time.35 Being not only responsive, but being an active part of the community of riders who use it and being a part of their daily routine when checking Twitter can allow HSR to effectively communicate to a massive amount of riders on a daily basis to provide the best service possible. With creating a reliable, well promoted, and

34Ibid.
35Ibid.
information based approach to their twitter, you can create an effective Twitter feed that leaves riders to be happier. London found a net positive of 18% of people happy with the service they have received and that followers felt they have received good, accurate information.\textsuperscript{36}

**Feedback on HSR Service**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Riders and students should have access to the resources needed to mention their issues regarding transit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle: As a major ridership demographic, student priorities should be considered when large decisions are made about Hamilton transit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principle: Students should have a platform to express their opinions and concerns about the operations of the HSR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Any concern students or riders have about transit are not being heard as there is no accessible complaint system in place for students to advocate on their own behalves about issues they face.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: There is currently no official platform for students to express their concerns or provide input to the HSR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Students are not regularly consulted by the HSR when planning the future of the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: HSR should implement an anonymous, online feedback system to share their experiences on the HSR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The HSR should implement a feedback system in MacNab Terminal transit centre to ensure access to all people, regardless of access to internet, to share their experiences on the HSR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The City of Hamilton should create a committee for student riders that they consult regularly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2017, the McMaster Student Union contributed $4.59 million\textsuperscript{37} to the HSR, or 12% of the HSR’s overall revenue.\textsuperscript{38} This amount will increase over the next two years as per the MSU’s contract with the HSR, which will increase our contribution to $5.05 million in 2018 and $5.52 million in 2019.\textsuperscript{39} As a demographic, McMaster students are the single largest contributor to the transit system. Thus, as a major stakeholder, students should have the ability to advise the HSR.

Currently, the HSR does not regularly consult students about their opinions of the current system’s operations. This has lead to decisions that provide students with less than adequate service, such as cancelling the 51-University bus more frequently.

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{37} 24,473 full time undergraduate students X $187.67 buss pass fee
\textsuperscript{38} Calculated using transit revenue from 2017 budget
\textsuperscript{39} 24,473 full time undergraduate students X $ 206.17 and $ 225.55 respectively
than any other bus route, despite McMaster students’ additional funding for its service.\(^{40}\) While the HSR is receptive of the MSU’s concerns when they are brought forward, the City of Hamilton should create a transit riders subcommittee where riders provide input regularly. This would be similar to the LRT subcommittee, which “provides input and guidance to the project team on significant issues and decisions” and “engages the broader community on a regular basis throughout the design, planning and construction process of the LRT”\(^{41}\). The MSU should have voting seats on this committee in order to have the ability to not only advise but to direct the HSR. The HSR should be mandated to receive recommendations from such a committee and commit to considering.

Communication is essential in many roles and organization, often communication between customers and top decision-makers can be lacking. This creates an issue where gaps between what the service is planned on and the actual execution of those plans are created. Therefore rigorous systems of feedback should be implemented, which can change the planned approach to a higher standard. Additionally, this allows HSR supervisors and management a chance to enforce and uphold planned actions that HSR should follow through one. With HSR being a governmental, public service, constant feedback systems are cheap, create a better experience for riders, and gives management a chance to learn about what riders value in transit.

This communication channel, in addition to having students having a voice at the table, will mean a larger and more accountable way for both students and riders to implement changes that will improve services overall. This will ensure that feedback collected through anonymous, online and MacNab posted feedback to have a voice to understand them and implement them. Creating a long-term, adjustable framework for services to constantly improve. Real data is important for any decision making and the student riders committee can help shelter it and ensure actual usage of said data.

\(^{40}\) In-person communication with HSR official Nancy Purser on Nov 23, 2017.

GO Transit
McMaster GO Terminal

Principle: Students interregional mobility is facilitated by a robust, well-connected McMaster GO Terminal.

Concern: GO transit accessibility for commuter students to certain GTA areas is a barrier due to the lack of available stops for certain routes.

Concern: GO transit offers higher frequencies mostly within high populated areas within the GTA but does not offer more routes in the South-West Ontario Region (Guelph-Kitchener, Waterloo, London).

Recommendation: Metrolinx should invest in more routes that are heavily trafficked by student commuters.

Recommendation: Metrolinx should reorient bus lines that are heavily used by students and make additional stops to McMaster University GO Transit Terminal when returning to Hamilton.

Recommendation: Metrolinx should make McMaster University GO Transit Terminal a transit hub for Southwestern Ontario interregional routes.

Commuter students often face the challenges of finding accessible and affordable transit that connects interprovincially. Recommending that GO transit routes with already heavily-trafficked student routes should be rerouted and add the McMaster University GO Transit Terminal as a transit hub to allow more students to access McMaster without transferring. A popular route among commuter and international students is the 40 Hamilton / Richmond Hill Pearson Express which bypasses McMaster University and turns east towards Hamilton GO Centre.\(^\text{42}\)

Many McMaster students need to transfer to the HSR in the downtown core or walk to Dundurn at King or Paisley at Main to take GO routes to Pearson Airport or to other GTA destinations. Making the small adjustment and making the stop to McMaster GO Transit Terminal can make it more accommodating to students travelling abroad, international students, and cuts down on commute time. It approximately takes 3 minutes to get to McMaster University GO Bus Terminal and 3 minutes back to Main at Paisley (approximation 6 minutes total, 10 minutes at peak times)\(^\text{43}\). This in turn will increase ridership for Route 40 and offer more flexible and accessible routes for commuter and internal students to and from McMaster University, Pearson International Airport, and Richmond Hill Centre.


\(^{43}\) Google Maps (2018). 403 Exit Ramp to McMaster GO Transit Terminal. Retrieved from Google Maps: [https://www.google.ca/maps/dir/43.2563438,-79.9070448/McMaster+University+GO+Bus+Terminal,+Hamilton,+ON+L8S+4E8/@43.2563438,-79.9070448,16.8z/data=!4m9!4m8!1m0!1m5!1ms0x882c849da9e66b3d:0x22002507d649ecc2!2m2!3d-79.9227894!2d43.2616605!3e0]
Additionally, creating and expanding new GO Transit routes West of Hamilton is greatly needed\textsuperscript{44} to serve students commuting from the Southwestern region of Ontario such as (Guelph-Kitchener, Waterloo, London). Making the McMaster University GO Transit Terminal a transit hub offers students larger flexibility in terms of more destinations and mobility for work, school, or residence. Not only will it benefit McMaster students, but other post secondary institutions in the region which in turn can encourage investments and higher use of public transit in the region.

**Bus 47 Scheduling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Students should have access to GO Transit that takes into account McMaster class times.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Popular commuter routes for GO Transit do not accommodate for the time needed to reach the bus terminal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The 47 Bus departure should depart at the 05 and 35 minute mark to allow for students to have enough time to reach the terminal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although there are a lot of students that depend only on local transportation to commute to McMaster, other modes should be considered, specifically GO Transit. If a McMaster student has class 5 days and commutes from the surrounding cities of Hamilton, the monthly cost that they are paying to Metrolinx would be around $268.40.\textsuperscript{45} With a high monthly cost, McMaster students have the right to access GO Transit services when they are needed. Unfortunately, this is not the case, due to the current way that the buses are scheduled, specifically bus route 47.

On weekdays, the 47 bus departs from McMaster University at varying times, that range from the quarter hour, and some buses leaving at the 20, 50, and 55 mark.\textsuperscript{46} With all of these times, there are none that fully sync with students schedules. Since classes at McMaster usually end at the 20 minute mark for day classes, This means that students have at minimum 10 minutes to reach the Terminal, or they will have to wait for at least 25 minutes for the next bus. Both of these options do not put students need first. It takes on average 11 minutes to reach the McMaster GO terminal from the farthest building with classes on campus, which means that the students would not have enough time to reach the most convenient bus, and would have to wait for at least 14 minutes at the terminal for the next bus.

At the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and Durham College, GO

\textsuperscript{45} http://www.gotransit.com/publicinfo/metro/metscheduler.aspx
\textsuperscript{46} http://www.gotransit.com/timetables/en/PDF/QuickTables/1217041B/Stim/NCU2.pdf
Transit gives students minimum 10 minutes to reach the bus terminal before the bus departs. Since it takes about 6 minutes to reach the bus terminal from the farthest building on Campus, it gives students enough time to reach the terminal while allowing them to have enough time to perform small tasks before reaching the terminal. Based on the size of the campus, GO Transit should consider moving their bus times to 15 minutes after classes end to allow students to have enough time to reach the terminal. This will allow students the access to GO Transit when it is the most optimal for them. This also gives more time for students with accessibility needs to access the bus.

### GO Bus Time Extension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: McMaster Com­muter students have the right to have as similar university experience as students that live close to campus.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Popular commuter routes for GO Transit end earlier in the night, which acts as a barrier for commuter students in school activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The last GO bus departure from McMaster should be extended to a later time (11:40pm) to allow students to have the same University experience as others living close to campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The stops offered by the last bus should be by request along a familiar line, to ensure that students can get to their stop promptly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On weekdays, the last bus to depart from the McMaster GO Terminal is at 22:40. This does not allow students who depend on GO Transit to participate in events that may be occurring after the time. This can range from studying with a group of friends, to enjoying the night events that McMaster offers. This early time also limits the time that students can study on campus. This can cause problems with collaboration with students that live closer to it. It was previously mentioned the average monthly cost of GO Transit for the average commuter, and students believe that the services provided should cater to the customers that are paying for it - in this case, MSU students.

For Toronto Users, GO Transit offers a Bus at 1:00 that stops at the riders’ request along the Lakeshore East and West Line that caters to Cities that do not have the TTC. This allows commuters to enjoy what Toronto has to offer, without the worry of the means of returning back home. This system also drops off the travelers at the stops that they request, so that they can reach their stop promptly. Another example of this is used by Durham Region Transit. After midnight, most

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that the last 47 bus Arriving at McMaster should operate in a similar manner, so that students that are around McMaster can arrive back at their stops in a prompt manner.

**Providing Feedback for GO Transit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Students have the right to provide input for services that they pay for.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern: GO Transit does not provide accessible forms for university Students to provide feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: When considering service changes to the lines that McMaster Students use, Metrolinx should actively consult with McMaster students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Currently, the only way to provide your input to GO Transit is by registering for their online advisory panel. This online service then periodically develops surveys to gauge specific facets of the service, while incentivizing completing the survey.\(^{48}\) This feedback does not allow for recommendations for bus routes that pertain to routes used by McMaster University Students. When service changes that will affect the McMaster Community are considered, MSU students should have the ability to express their suggestions and concerns for the proposed changes. This would be best done by Metrolinx consulting the McMaster Students Union only when changes would affect the routes used by McMaster Students. This would allow Metrolinx to only have to communicate when necessary, and will ensure that no time is lost talking about routes that do not pertain to the McMaster community.

Transit Development in Hamilton
10 Year Local Transit Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Growing cities such as Hamilton should be investing in and expanding their transit operations in a timely fashion.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern: System deficiencies and a lack of service standards in the HSR deter ridership and prevent system expansion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: City council deferred “Year 3” of the 10 Year Local Transit Strategy in 2017 by one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Inadequate funding for the HSR in the present will create barriers for future expansion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: The City of Hamilton should invest in the 10 Year Local Transit Strategy every year until it is complete.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order for Hamilton to keep up with its growing student and general resident population, more robust, rapid, and expansive transit needs to be implemented. This is a priority for the HSR, however short-term deficiencies in the system need to be addressed before expansion can occur. In 2015, the HSR defined minimum service standards required to increase ridership and provide a baseline level of service in order to increase reliability. For most routes, these service standards are that 90% of residents in the Urban Transit Area should be within 400m of a transit stop. It also specifies weekday minimums for span, frequency, productivity, and loading. While students believe the span should be expanded to 3am, these service standards should otherwise be met.

The 10 Year Local Transit Strategy is also intended to prepare Hamilton for the future BLAST network and the development of rapid transit across the city. This includes the creation of express routes across the city, such as the B-Line bus. Many students rely on the B-Line express bus, and students applaud the incremental development of rapid transit in the city through the creation of these express routes. Funding the 10 Year Local Transit Strategy will ensure these routes continue to develop and increase ridership.

While this strategy is the priority of the City’s transit department, its execution is subject to annual investments by City Council. This does not ensure this strategy will be executed on time. In fact, because of a delay in a federal government transfer in 2017, Hamilton City Council voted to delay the strategy by one year - effectively turning it into an “11 Year” Strategy. In order for transit to be expanded, these identified short term deficiencies must be addressed and prioritized by the city.

**BLAST Network**

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Principle: All residents of Hamilton, including students, should have access to rapid, accessible, sustainable transit.

Principle: All residents of Hamilton should be able to access all parts of the city in a timely, coordinated fashion.

Concern: The BLAST Network's scheduled completion is in 2041, which is too late to keep up with growth and incentivize ridership.

Recommendation: The provincial government should increase the funding allocated to the HSR in order to shorten the development timeline for the BLAST network.

The BLAST Network is Hamilton’s Long Term Rapid Transit System across the City of Hamilton, increasing service along major corridors in the city. This network provides individuals access to all areas of the city, benefiting students who rely on transit to access their homes, places of employment, and districts of entertainment. However, the BLAST Network is set to be completed by 2041. At this point in time, the city will have increased in population size and density. With the BLAST Network being completed at a slower rate compared to the population growth, the demand for transit will drastically outpace the supply. This is already demonstrated with the B-line; students have needed better services along this route for several years, but the LRT project will not be completed until 2025 at the earliest. The length of time for students who live in other areas of the city will be even longer for fast and reliable service. As a result, several cohorts of students will not benefit from the HSR’s long term plan.

In order to decrease the amount of time to complete the BLAST network, the provincial government should allocate funding to the HSR. The provincial government dedicated $1 billion to the creation of the LRT in Hamilton, which was placed along the B-Line. The provincial government should create other transit funding opportunities to create rapid transit, as a means to increase growth in mid-sized cities. With these opportunities, Hamilton will have the means to implement rapid-transit routes in a more timely fashion.

Funding Transit Growth

Principle: In line with cost sharing, all residents of a city should be contributing to funding city services.

Concern: Due to area rating, suburban and rural areas of Hamilton do not contribute tax dollars to transit.

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Concern: Due to area rating, urban areas of Hamilton, especially student-populated areas, pay more than their fair share of tax dollars to transit.

Recommendation: The City of Hamilton should eliminate area rating for transit and ensure every property owner in the city is contributing tax dollars to transit.

Recommendation: Bus service should be increased in suburban and rural areas to correspond to this increased financial contribution.

Transit is a public service that all residents should benefit from. However, due to current funding structures, not everybody pays for it equally, if it all. Due to area rating, residents of different wards pay different amounts for transit through their property taxes. The pattern of this differentiation follows the pre-amalgamation city boundaries, as well as the rural and urban boundaries. As a result, the wards inside the old City of Hamilton pay more than their fair share of transit, while those in the suburban areas pay less than their fair share. It is important to note that this is not common practise in Ontario.\(^5\) While this pay scale corresponds to increased service in different areas, there are many exceptions to this rule. For example, a Stoney Creek resident might have a bus stop right outside their home, and have access to the B-Line express bus to get downtown; but, they still pay less than an East Mountain resident who does not have an express bus downtown, and would have to take several transfers. These differing amounts are outlined in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Area Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stoney Creek (Urban)</td>
<td>0.027%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoney Creek (Rural)</td>
<td>0.000%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanbrook (Urban)</td>
<td>0.041%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glanbrook (Rural)</td>
<td>0.000%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancaster (Urban)</td>
<td>0.028%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancaster (Rural)</td>
<td>0.000%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>0.090%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundas (Urban)</td>
<td>0.024%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundas (Rural)</td>
<td>0.000%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamborough (Urban)</td>
<td>0.014%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamborough (Rural)</td>
<td>0.000%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Area rate as a percentage of overall tax rate.\(^5\)

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Eliminating area rating and allowing suburban residents to pay their fair share of transit would provide a lot more funding for the HSR, allowing it to expand service to those areas and better serve all residents of the city. Suburban residents in particular should have their area rate phased out along with their transit service increased. Though not everyone benefits from transit in the same ways, the principle of cost sharing underlies taxation in general. This is the principle behind the MSU’s U-Pass, where all undergraduate students contribute to the U-Pass, regardless if they are able to use it to commute to campus. In this same spirit, all residents should be contributing to transit to enable its growth and provide it necessary resources.
Parking
Availability of Parking for Undergraduate Students

| Principle: All students who require parking when commuting to campus, should be able to easily locate spots. |
| Principle: If students purchase a parking transponder, they should be able to find adequate parking every day. |
| Principle: Students should be able to purchase parking passes for more convenient areas of campus. |
| Concern: There are not enough parking spots to meet the demand of students, guests, and staff. |
| Concern: Undergraduate students are unable to apply for main campus lots. |
| Concern: Transponder holders in Lot M share the lot with parking overflow and visitors, making it difficult to find parking spots. |
| Recommendation: Parking Services should open up some monthly passes for main campus lots to undergraduate students |
| Recommendation: Facility Services should invest in the creation of more parking spots on campus. |
| Recommendation: Lot M should have a similar system as other parking lots installed that reserves a specific amount spots for transponder holders. |

For students who drive to campus, they rely on McMaster Parking Services to provide them with convenient access to parking. Many students purchase parking permits to guarantee they will have a spot every day they arrive at campus. However, students are forced to park in the most inconvenient lots offered, which are shared with not only other students but staff and guests. The number of permits available to students has been recently reduced, creating a greater unmet demand. Parking services should work to reducing these issues by allowing students to purchase permits on the main campus and increasing the total number of spots available.

Students are only able to purchase parking passes for Lot M and Ward Ave. Both are a significant distance from the main campus that requires a shuttle bus to transport them there. This can be a great inconvenience for many students, especially those who may have to frequently stay on campus later than the shuttle buses run. If students have the means to purchase parking passes closer to campus, they should be able to do so. Parking Service should dedicate a small portion of main campus parking permits to undergraduate students.

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https://parking.mcmaster.ca/Online_Permit_Sales.html
Lot M passes are typically sold out before September. Students then are put on long waitlists. This clearly demonstrates that there is a demand that parking services in unable to fill. Over the past few years, parking services has decreased the number of spots available to students and increasing those available to faculty. Parking Services recently decreased the size of Lot M, the one of two lots where students are able to buy a parking permit. Parking Services increased the number of spots available through the new underground parking in LR Wilson and the expansion of Lot H. However, permits for these lots are reserved for faculty members only. This is detrimental for students who commute to campus from areas with inadequate to no public transit service that may not be able to find any other parking in the areas surrounding McMaster. Parking Services should work towards increasing the number of parking spots available on campus and ensure that a portion of these spaces are dedicated to students.

**Affordability of Parking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Students should have the option to pay per term (4 months) for parking space on the Main Campus.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle: Transponders should be more affordable for students commuting by personal vehicle to campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: The cost of parking on campus increases students’ commute time due to lack of affordable parking spaces on McMaster parking lots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Current prices for monthly parking passes for students seemed to be inflated based on demand and location rather than on a cost-recovery basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: High on-campus parking costs encourages students to park in on-street parking for lower cost alternatives and often ticketed due to exceeding on-street parking limits or parking infractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: Parking passes should be offered at discounted per-term rates for the Main Campus for students only, similarly to the parking passes at the Ron Joyce Centre for 1 term (4 months) intervals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: Transponders fee should also include a return deposit where 50% of original cost would be refunded to students when returning the transponder undamaged and in working condition for reuse.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affordable parking at McMaster has been an ongoing problem and implementing a simple solution can remedy a considerable portion of commuter students’ academic experiences. First key is the current option for parking passes on the Main Campus, where only monthly rates are available. At the Ron Joyce Centre, parking passes can be purchased on a per term basis (4 months) or a full academic
year (8 months, September – April)\textsuperscript{54} and this should be implemented on the Main Campus to offer students flexibility and secured parking spaces. By implementing this option, Parking Services will have sufficient data to plan for parking allocation on Main Campus parking lots and can be way to increase parking revenues by securing long-term commuters.

Having term parking passes means costs are lowered, which in turn can used to lower prices for parking passes. The new option should be structured at $160 per term (4 months, $40/month) for Lot M, N, P, and evenings. Offering parking passes on cost-recovery pricing rather than demand pricing\textsuperscript{55} for students can increase the number of students utilizing McMaster parking lots as a means of affordable parking and increase ability to pay down the massive debt acquired from new equipment and renovations, debt and financing charges, and the unknown “all other expenses” which resulted in a needless projected deficit of $211,000 for the operating year of 2016/2017\textsuperscript{56}. It not only benefits the University’s revenue base but alleviate students’ financial commute costs and decrease commuting time for commuter students.

Secondly, the new transponder fee which requires a purchase of a new transponder must be restructured to accommodate students no longer using their transponders\textsuperscript{57}. The fee should include return provision which includes a return deposit of 50% for the original cost of the transponder. The deposit will be refunded back to students when returning the transponder undamaged and in working condition for recirculation.

\textbf{Safety}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: Students should feel safe walking to and from the parking lots on campus.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Student feel unsafe walking to and in Lot M at night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Interzone hours prevent students from being able to park closer to their classes when they are attending night classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: Parking services should change their interzone hours for M and NP permit holders to allow them to access to Main Campus lots B, C, D, K after 6:30PM instead of 7:30PM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ensuring that students feel safe on campus is imperative to creating a valuable learning environment. It then follows strongly that students should feel safe walking


\textsuperscript{56} Ibid

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid
to and from the parking lots on campus. Without being comfortable entering and leaving campus, students must experience and associate certain aspects of McMaster campus with stress and anxiety.

Currently, students do feel unsafe walking to and in Lot M at night, and interzone hours prevent students from being able to park closer to their classes when they are attending night classes.

To remedy this issue, Parking Services should change their interzone hours for M and NP permit holders to allow them to access to Main Campus lots B, C, D, K after 6:30PM instead of 7:30PM. This should accommodate for students with night classes, where safety is most of a concern due to the late hour.
**Data Collection & Reporting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle: When data on public transit is collected, it should be made public and easily accessible for the general population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle: Students should have access to data about their movement patterns and transit usage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: Metrolinx does not publicly publish data on their service usage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern: There is little publicly available data on students’ public transit usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation: Metrolinx, in conjunction with the HSR, should provide an annual data report on students’ usage of their U-Pass on the HSR and GO Transit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to provide high-quality service, Metrolinx and HSR collect data on the number of passengers who use their services. They do so through a number of means, including Presto card data. Since 2017/2018, the U-Pass has been administered through Presto. Metrolinx and the HSR are thus able to identify Presto cards that have U-Passes and track the travel patterns of students.

At the current time, this data is not available to the public, despite these being government funded services. Data on students is of particular importance to McMaster and the MSU to ensure that they are providing the best supports to their commuter students. To increase transparency, Metrolinx in partnership with the HSR should publish an annual data report with data on student usage of their services. These reports should include the frequency of rides, popular routes, where students both begin and end their trips, the number of unique riders, ... It is important that this data takes into consideration the privacy of riders, especially those who access the HSR from remote stops. To protect their privacy, the HSR should report locations by general areas if they are unpopular with students. Additionally, they can report using percentages rather than numbers.
Policy Statement

Whereas: Students, and all other members of the immediate McMaster community, should have safe means of transportation whether travelling on foot, by bike, by bus or car.

And Whereas: Students with disabilities should have the same ease of convenience and safety when travelling on the HSR to and from campus as all other McMaster students.

And Whereas: All McMaster students should have access to reliable and convenient to travel to, from and on McMaster campus.

And Whereas: High service levels of transit are crucial to the McMaster student experience and student retention.

And Whereas: All individuals, regardless of gender, race, religion, ability, or sexual orientation should be able to ride the HSR without experiencing harassment or discrimination.

And Whereas: The HSR should have appropriate measures put in place to protect riders from harassment and discrimination.

And Whereas: Students should be able to effectively transfer busses in a timely manner.

And Whereas: Students should have reliable access to public transit at any time throughout the day.

And Whereas: Students should be within 400 metres of any bus stop.

And Whereas: While waiting for busses, students should have shelters to prevent them from inclement weather conditions.

And Whereas: Bus stops should feel safe at any given time.

And Whereas: Riders should receive communication from an accurate tracking system, showing real time data through easily communicated and already adopted channels.

And Whereas: All riders should be given notice of what busses are cancelled, as well as how long they will be out of commission.

And Whereas: Riders and students should have access to the resources needed to mention their issues regarding transit.
And Whereas: As a major ridership demographic, student priorities should be considered when large decisions are made about Hamilton transit.
And Whereas: Students should have a platform to express their opinions and concerns about the operations of the HSR.

And Whereas: Students interregional mobility is facilitated by a robust, well-connected McMaster GO Terminal.

And Whereas: Students should have access to GO Transit that takes into account McMaster class times.

And Whereas: McMaster Commuter students have the right to have as similar university experience as students that live close to campus.

And Whereas: Students have the right to provide input for services that they pay for.

And Whereas: Growing cities such as Hamilton should be investing in and expanding their transit operations in a timely fashion.

And Whereas: All residents of Hamilton, including students, should have access to rapid, accessible, sustainable transit.

And Whereas: All residents of Hamilton should be able to access all parts of the city in a timely, coordinated fashion.

And Whereas: In line with cost sharing, all residents of a city should be contributing to funding city services.

And Whereas: All students who require parking when commuting to campus, should be able to easily locate spots.

And Whereas: If students purchase a parking transponder, they should be able to find adequate parking every day.

And Whereas: Students should be able to purchase parking passes for more convenient areas of campus.

And Whereas: Students should have the option to pay per term (4 months) for parking space on the Main Campus.

And Whereas: Transponders should be more affordable for students commuting by personal vehicle to campus.

And Whereas: Students should feel safe walking to and from the parking lots on campus.
And Whereas: When data on public transit is collected, it should be made public and easily accessible for the general population.

Be It Resolved That: The City of Hamilton should create more bicycle lanes in the Ainslie Wood-East neighbourhood, particularly along the 51/5A route to encourage biking and to make the commute for cyclists safer.

Be It Further Resolved That (BIFRT): The City should do an audit and subsequent repairs of damaged and inaccessible sidewalks (raised concrete, holes, missing accessibility ramps).

BIFRT: McMaster University should not implement the strategy to make a Vehicle-Free Core Campus.

BIFRT: McMaster University should continue to work with SoBi Hamilton to provide bike stations on and near campus.

BIFRT: The HSR should raise awareness on harassment and discrimination on buses, protocols, and encourage riders to report incidences.

BIFRT: The Amalgamated Transit Union should ensure all employees are given adequate sexual violence, diversity, and anti-oppressive practices training.

BIFRT: The HSR should promote a system where people can report incidents of discrimination and harassment in order to collect and publish information on the severity of the problem.

BIFRT: The HSR should develop a response protocol to harassment issues that do not involve the police.

BIFRT: The HSR should ensure that their social media, transit apps and phone lines contain up-to-date schedules so students are aware of when their bus is leaving/arriving their stop.

BIFRT: The HSR should increase the number of busses on weekends going to major economic centres including the Hamilton GO centre and Lime Ridge Mall.

BIFRT: The HSR should expand its minimum service standards span to end at 3 a.m. .

BIFRT: The HSR should ensure buses at common transfer points are aligned.

BIFRT: The HSR should increase the frequency of all bus services on weekend.

BIFRT: The HSR should implement more articulated busses during high frequency times along major routes.
BIFRT: The HSR should ensure students are within walking distance to transit stops servicing McMaster when designing LRT feeder routes.

BIFRT: The HSR should increase the number of shelters on a bus route, aiming to have a shelter at the most popular stops.

BIFRT: The HSR should install heated bus shelters in high traffic areas, including Main at Emerson, Holmes at Emerson, King at Paisley, Main at Haddon, and all McMaster Campus bus stops.

BIFRT: The HSR should install protected shelters on bus stops without any protection from inclement weather.

BIFRT: Metrolinx should install heated bus shelters on the campus GO bus stop and on Main St. West at Haddon Ave South.

BIFRT: MacNab Terminal should remain open until all busses stop running, for the entirety of the year.

BIFRT: The City of Hamilton should invest in lighting at all bus shelters, and particularly Main at Emerson, Holmes at Emerson, King at Paisley, King at MacNab, Main at Haddon, Main St. West at Haddon Ave South, Osler at Grant, Osler at University Plaza, and All McMaster Campus bus stops.

BIFRT: McMaster University should install an integrated emergency line to Campus Security at on-campus bus stops.

BIFRT: The HSR should better promote their twitter page and other tools related to information to ensure students are updated regarding transit service disruptions.

BIFRT: The HSR should implement real-time postage about next bus arrival and other delays at popular bus stops.

BIFRT: The HSR should implement geo-targeted sponsored tweets based off of local postal codes to reach even more riders for major buses and cancellations.

BIFRT: HSR should provide real-time data to Google Maps and other third party transit apps regarding cancellations, detours, and rerouting about any changes.

BIFRT: HSR should implement an anonymous, online feedback system to share their experiences on the HSR.

BIFRT: The HSR should implement a feedback system in MacNab Terminal transit centre to ensure access to all people, regardless of access to internet, to share their experiences on the HSR.
BIFRT: The City of Hamilton should create a committee for student riders that they consult regularly.

BIFRT: Metrolinx should invest in more routes that are heavily trafficked by student commuters.

BIFRT: Metrolinx should reorient bus lines that are heavily used by students and make additional stops to McMaster University GO Transit Terminal when returning to Hamilton.

BIFRT: Metrolinx should make McMaster University GO Transit Terminal a transit hub for Southwestern Ontario interregional routes.

BIFRT: The 47 Bus departure should depart at the 05 and 35 minute mark to allow for students to have enough time to reach the terminal.

BIFRT: The last GO bus departure from McMaster should be extended to a later time (11:40pm) to allow students to have the same University experience as others living close to campus.

BIFRT: The stops offered by the last bus should be by request along a familiar line, to ensure that students can get to their stop promptly.

BIFRT: When considering service changes to the lines that McMaster Students use, Metrolinx should actively consult with McMaster students.

BIFRT: The City of Hamilton should invest in the 10 Year Local Transit Strategy every year until it is complete.

BIFRT: The provincial government should increase the funding allocated to the HSR in order to shorten the development timeline for the BLAST network.

BIFRT: The City of Hamilton should eliminate area rating for transit and ensure every property owner in the city is contributing tax dollars to transit.

BIFRT: Bus service should be increased in suburban and rural areas to correspond to this increased financial contribution.

BIFRT: Parking Services should open up some monthly passes for main campus lots to undergraduate students

BIFRT: Facility Services should invest in the creation of more parking spots on campus.

BIFRT: Lot M should have a similar system as other parking lots installed that reserves a specific amount spots for transponder holders.
BIFRT: Parking passes should be offered at discounted per-term rates for the Main Campus for students only, similarly to the parking passes at the Ron Joyce Centre for 1 term (4 months) intervals.

BIFRT: Transponders fee should also include a return deposit where 50% of original cost would be refunded to students when returning the transponder undamaged and in working condition for reuse.

BIFRT: Parking services should change their interzone hours for M and NP permit holders to allow them to access to Main Campus lots B, C, D, K after 6:30PM instead of 7:30PM.

BIFRT: Metrolinx, in conjunction with the HSR, should provide an annual data report on students' usage of their U-Pass on the HSR and GO Transit.