



Friday, July 24, 2020

The Executive Committee
University of Toronto Students' Union
12 Hart House Circle
Toronto, ON | M5S 3J9
executives@utsu.ca

RE: Item MM23.7

Dear members of the Toronto City Council,

As the Executive Committee of the University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU), representing over 38,000 full-time undergraduate students at the University of Toronto - St. George campus, we are writing to you today in support of Item MM23.7. This motion asks that City Council ensure that Toronto's COVID-19 recovery and resiliency plans be centered not only on the C40 Cities' COVID-19 Recovery Task Force's Statement of Principles, but also on the C40 Mayors' Agenda for Green and Just Recovery. Adapting Toronto's recovery plans would incorporate the principles of a green and just recovery: prioritize the needs of workers, strengthen the social safety net, build solidarity across social divides, uphold Indigenous rights and partnerships, and promote health and wellness for all.

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the chronic underinvestment and neglect that our communities face on a daily basis. Students have become particularly vulnerable, as many have lost summer jobs or research opportunities, or are now working reduced hours, impacting the savings they need to plan for the future. This state of financial precarity is exacerbated by the challenges of remote learning and the possibility of graduating into a recession with diminished job opportunities. Students are rightfully concerned and interested as to how their representatives are investing and planning for the future.

On July 13, the UTSU co-hosted a Green and Just Recovery Virtual Town Hall alongside Green 11 and For Our Kids, with City Councillor Mike Layton as a panelist. There, attendees and panelists discussed how levels of government can translate these principles into new investments and planning. We are thrilled to see Item MM23.7 be presented to City Council, and we want to thank Councillor Layton for putting this motion forward.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that all levels of government, including the City of Toronto, must acknowledge that there will be no return to "normal". Instead, students expect the City to commit to a new normal; one that places the principles of a green and just recovery at the heart of Toronto's recovery plans moving forward.

Yours,

The UTSU Executive | executives@utsu.ca | 416-978-4911