

From: [A Voice for Transit](#)
To: [Executive Committee](#); [Clerk](#)
Subject: [External Sender] A Voice for Transit Communication - 2023.EX7.1 - Updated Long-Term Financial Plan
Date: August 23, 2023 7:55:43 AM

Dear City of Toronto Executive Committee,

We are writing in support of 2023.EX7.1 Recommendation 5. b) on the development of a commercial parking levy with the proceeds funding the Toronto Transit Commission's operations. We are a transit advocacy group led by Toronto Metropolitan University (Formerly Ryerson University) alumni founded in 2019. We provided data-based solutions to delays, overcrowding and equitable access to transit in Toronto.

In January 2023, we supported a commercial parking levy as part of our City of Toronto Budget 2023 submission. We support a commercial parking levy as it would diversify revenue sources for the TTC and reduce its reliance on fares, which has decreased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We polled our audience on Instagram and X (Formerly Twitter) over 24 hours on August 20-21, 2023, on whether they supported this proposal. We received 76% of responses in favour of a commercial parking levy. We had a sample of 17 respondents.

As Former TTC CEO Andy Byford wrote in a February 2023 Globe and Mail editorial: "While it is reasonable to ask riders to pay their fair share, constant increases in costs...will disproportionately affect those least able to pay but who are most reliant on transit. A more sustainable, more imaginative solution needs to be found and it should include a mix of funding sources." (1)

Our group has also profiled transit innovations in Europe and Asia. One that ought to be considered by the Executive Committee as a long-term strategic funding source is the TTC getting involved in property development. This was pioneered by Hong Kong's Mass Transit Railway in the 1970s. The TTC could develop rental housing over stations, generate rental income, and have future riders. (2)

Thank you for accepting our letter. We are looking forward to watching the development of this issue.

Sincerely,

Jean-François Obregón, Executive Director
A Voice for Transit

(1) (2) <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/article-we-must-urgently-reinvent-public-transit-for-the-postpandemic-world/>