



# Stronger City, Stronger Campus

## OUR PROMISE:

*to serve and represent*

The University of Calgary Students' Union calls on all Councillors to prioritize and invest in accessible, inclusive, and innovative strategies to support post-secondary students in Calgary throughout their education.

## THE SU RECOMMENDS:

- » Implement an electronic transit fare system for all Calgarians.
- » Increase transparency of Calgary Transit by creating and implementing an administrative process for bylaw offences such as transit tickets.
- » Ensure that all students at publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Calgary have long term access to municipal voting on campus.
- » Explore the creation of a consultative body made up of representatives from the City of Calgary, all public institutions and their corresponding students' associations to explore the future of post-secondary in the city.

## Reforming the Transit Fare System

Over 90.0% of University of Calgary students live off campus and most students take transit to campus. The current transit fare system in Calgary, including the UPass sticker program, is entirely outdated. Calgary Transit's own Strategic Plan – The Route Ahead – indicates that Calgary Transit and City Council must address making payment more convenient for riders. Furthermore, it notes that “Electronic fare collection will offer customers a more convenient way to pay fares. These new technologies will generate large amounts of data that will be used to improve schedule adherence and connections.”<sup>7</sup>

Improving the way that Calgary Transit users interact with the fare system will increase accountability and transparency as well as significantly increase the information that Calgary Transit is able to gather about ridership.

While the system would have a significant upfront cost, over time the cost would be justified through to increased compliance as well as the potential for increased ridership. This is because of ease of service and the creation of routes designed based on actual daily ridership.

**The SU calls on the City of Calgary to fast track plans for an electronic fare system that is responsive to the changing needs of Calgary Transit users.**

## ABOUT THE SU

The University of Calgary Students' Union (SU) is in its 76th year. The SU advocates on behalf of all undergraduate students at the University of Calgary. The Students' Legislative Council (SLC), the SU's governing body, is made up of five executives - the president and four vice presidents - and 19 faculty representatives, elected annually to represent student interests. The SU's operations are supported by a team of professional staff and hundreds of student staff and volunteers.

## QUICK FACTS ABOUT U OF C STUDENTS

- » Number of undergraduate students<sup>1</sup>: 26,284
- » Average age<sup>2</sup>: 22
- » 83.6% from Alberta, 10.6% from other provinces, 5.6% international students<sup>3</sup>
- » 3.2% live with their parents, 23.3% rent, 9.0% live in residence, 4.0% own their homes<sup>4</sup>
- » 67.4% of students take transit to campus, 31% drive, 4.9% bike and 19.7% walk<sup>5</sup>
- » 48.6% of students currently have school-related debt, and over one third expect to accumulate more debt before they graduate<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://oia.ucalgary.ca/files/oia/2017-18fb-2-1-summary.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://oia.ucalgary.ca/files/oia/2017-18fb-3-14-age.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://oia.ucalgary.ca/files/oia/2016-17fb-3-15-address-ug-ft-faculty.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/2018-SU-Survey-Report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/2018-SU-Survey-Report.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/2018-SU-Survey-Report.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> The Route Ahead: A Strategic Plan for Transit in Calgary

## Revising the Process for Appealing Transit Tickets

Municipal tickets are currently enforced through the overburdened provincial court system, which is plagued by long delays and complex, overly rigid processes. This results in expensive, ineffective, and difficult outcomes for students and all Calgarians who enter the system.

The SU recommends the addition of an administrative tribunal system for bylaw offences such as transit tickets to the newly proposed City Charter. This administrative tribunal would allow all citizens to dispute tickets issued for fare violations when they can prove they have paid for transit fare. Major cities such as Vancouver and Toronto have already successfully implemented processes like this and they have increased citizens' trust that the transit system is fair and transparent.

**The SU calls upon City Council to support the creation and implementation of an administrative tribunal system for bylaw offences, such as transit fare violations, to allow citizens to appeal their tickets in a place other than the provincial courts.**

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## Increase Consultation with the City of Calgary, Post-Secondary Institutions and Students' Associations

During the 2017 municipal election the SU heard from candidates about the need for increased collaboration between the City of Calgary, post-secondary institutions and students' associations.

In 2014, six publicly funded education institutions in Edmonton created a coalition to address barriers that prevent residents from accessing post-secondary education, marketing Edmonton as an international destination and developing community infrastructure to support lifelong learning and economic diversification<sup>9</sup>. The Edmonton Coalition meets monthly. One of its goals is to create a 30-year plan for post-secondary education in Edmonton.

A similar collaboration between the City of Calgary, publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Calgary and students' associations should be formed to diversify the Calgary economy and increase interdisciplinary opportunities for students.

A coalition of this type would mean that as Calgary emerges from the economic downturn, the institutions, students' associations and the City of Calgary are able to work together to diversify the economy, increase economic growth and in turn increase student opportunities within the new, diversified economy.

**The SU calls on the City of Calgary to explore the creation of a consultative body made up of representatives from all public institutions and their corresponding students' associations to explore the future of post-secondary education and its connection to economic growth in the city.**

## Increase Access to Civic Election Voting

Post-secondary students in Calgary make up a large portion of eligible voters and are increasingly turning out to vote. In the 2015 federal election, voter turnout in the Calgary Confederation riding, which includes the University of Calgary, was 75.2%, the highest in the city<sup>8</sup>. In the SU "Get Out the Vote" campaign for that same election, more than 8,500 students signed up to vote.

Elections provide students with an important opportunity to get involved in the democratic process and to have their voices heard in shaping the future of the city. On-campus voting is a relatively new initiative but has led to increased voter turnout among young people. It is important that the momentum established during the 2015 federal election and the 2017 municipal election be sustained.

Giving students at all publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Calgary access to multi-ward, advanced voting is an important step to ensuring that they vote in future elections. Hosting these advanced voting stations on campus, where students live, work, and socialize, is an important step to ensuring that students are engaged in the municipal election process and their city.

**The SU calls on City Council to commit to creating a bylaw that would make it mandatory for the City of Calgary to host multi-ward, advanced polling stations at all publicly funded post-secondary institutions in Calgary.**

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/university-calgary-students-especially-engaged-this-election-1.3281620>

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/83e15f5e-ddd4-49a7-a72d-23b47dcbdb78149\\_CityOfLearners\\_BR.pdf](https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/83e15f5e-ddd4-49a7-a72d-23b47dcbdb78149_CityOfLearners_BR.pdf)