

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor & Members of City Council  
Chambers of Commerce  
Media

**Date:** June 26, 2020

**Subject:** COVID-19 – Update

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### SUMMARY

This week, we've provided updates on the Canada Student Services Grant, made crucial investments in Niagara Transit and STEM, as well as announced new NRESC Discovery Grants. Please also note that the expansion of the CEBA has been delayed because of security concerns.

### UPDATES

#### Canada Student Services Grant:

Students and youth are playing a key role in ensuring Canada emerges from COVID-19 stronger than ever. Students are facing serious challenges due to the pandemic with interruptions to their studies, reduced employment opportunities, and disruptions in originally planned co-ops, internships, or community service placements. At the same time, not-for-profits are grappling to find volunteers at a time when the need for their services has increased in communities across Canada. That's why we're launching the new Canada Student Service Grant (CSSG) program, to help post-secondary students and recent graduates gain valuable experience as they volunteer to serve in their communities' COVID-19 response. The CSSG will provide these volunteers with a one-time payment of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 based on the number of hours they serve, to help with their tuition and related expenses.

To find not-for-profit organizations looking for help during the pandemic, students can use the new I Want to Help platform. To find not-for-profit organizations looking for help during the pandemic, post-secondary students and recent graduates can use the new I Want to Help platform to search and apply for available volunteer placements. Not-for-profit organization and charities who are able to provide volunteer opportunities that help with the COVID-19 response, can have their placements uploaded to the platform. This initiative is part of the nearly \$9 billion in supports for students and youth, previously announced on April 22, 2020.



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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
CANADA

Canada and Ontario invest in public transit and active transportation infrastructure for residents of the Niagara Region:

Joint federal, provincial, and municipal funding through the *Investing in Canada* infrastructure plan will support 31 public transit projects in the Niagara Region. These investments will support better connected and more sustainable communities.

The Government of Canada is investing over \$31 million in these projects through the Public Transit Infrastructure Stream (PTIS). The Government of Ontario is contributing more than \$26 million, while the municipalities are contributing over \$21 million.

*Project Information:*

Community	Project Name	Project Details	Federal Funding	Provincial Funding	Municipal / Other Funding
Fort Erie	Farebox Technology Integration	New farebox technology will allow riders to use one method of payment to access all of the transit systems in the Niagara Region, improving the quality of the public transit system.	\$154,000	\$128,321	\$115,930
Niagara Falls	Bridge Street Multi-Modal Hub	Construction of a multi-modal hub that will increase access to local transit and transportation alternatives for visitors and commuters using the GO regional transit system to get to and from Niagara Falls. This project will create a gateway entrance for commuters and visitors, keeping pedestrians safe in a traffic-centric location.	\$1,760,000	\$1,466,520	\$1,173,480

Niagara Falls	Extension of Parking and Storage Facilities	Expansion of the bus fleet parking facility will create additional indoor parking spaces for buses, increasing their longevity by reducing their exposure to the elements.	\$1,540,000	\$1,283,205	\$1,026,795
Niagara Falls	Fuel System Upgrade	The installation of a new fuel and fluid tracking system, as well as various repairs to public transit vehicle equipment will facilitate fleet expansion and improve the efficiency of fueling procedures, allowing for passengers to enjoy a higher quality experience.	\$88,000	\$73,326	\$58,674
Niagara Falls	Implementation of New Farebox System	Purchase of a new farebox system will allow customers to use one method of contactless payment to access all of the transit systems in the Niagara Region, enhancing customer experience and improving the overall quality of the transit system.	\$440,000	\$366,630	\$293,370
Niagara Falls	In-Ground 3 Post Hoist	Purchase and installation of an in-ground hoist for bus repair, which will increase the efficiency and productivity of vehicle maintenance, resulting in a better experience for transit users.	\$198,000	\$164,984	\$132,017

Niagara Falls	Layby Construction on Morrison St.	Construction of new bus parking/holding facilities will alleviate capacity pressure on the existing transit hub facility and improve the overall quality of the transit service.	\$220,000	\$183,315	\$146,685
Niagara Falls	Purchase of an Automotive Lift	Purchase of an automotive lift for buses will maintain the useful life of the vehicles while enhancing safety and productivity, increasing the efficiency and quality of the public transit system.	\$17,600	\$14,665	\$11,735
Niagara Falls	Radio Communications and Vehicle Location Systems Upgrade	Upgrading the transit fleet's radio communications and location systems will improve communication protocols, bettering the quality of service for passengers.	\$352,000	\$293,304	\$234,696
Niagara Falls	Refurbishment of Four Conventional Transit Buses	Refurbishment of four transit buses will extend their useful life, reduce emissions, and improve the reliability of the transit system.	\$330,000	\$219,978	\$110,022
Niagara Falls	Refurbishment of Six Conventional Transit Buses	Replacement of six bus transmissions which will improve fuel economy and transit reliability by lowering the need for maintenance.	\$34,100	\$22,731	\$11,369
Niagara Falls	Replacement of Six Conventional Transit Buses	Replacement of six aging diesel buses with newer and better equipped buses, reducing the need for maintenance and resulting in better accessibility for riders.	\$1,870,000	\$1,558,178	\$1,246,822

Niagara Falls	Supervisor Vehicle	An additional supervisor support vehicle will improve access to health and safety services, and reduce equipment repair wait times, leading to better service standards for passengers.	\$30,800	\$25,664	\$20,536
Niagara Falls	Transit Bus High-Definition (HD) Video Camera Systems	Installation of video surveillance equipment on public transit buses will improve the safety and security of operators and passengers.	\$396,000	\$329,967	\$264,033
Niagara Falls	Video Surveillance Equipment (Regional/Local Hubs)	Installation of video surveillance equipment at the Morrison/ Dorchester transit hub will improve the safety and security of transit customers and employees.	\$22,000	\$18,332	\$14,669
Port Colborne	City of Port Colborne Nickel Beach Bike Lane Project	A newly constructed bike lane will enhance the safety of cyclists and improve connections to bus stops, leading to increased capacity and a higher quality service for users of the public transit system.	\$195,168	\$162,624	\$468,628
Regional Municipality of Niagara	Fare Payment Technology	Installation of new fareboxes on buses will enable riders to use one method of payment to access all of the transit systems across the Niagara Region, increasing the quality and convenience of the transit system.	\$542,300	\$451,871	\$361,579

Regional Municipality of Niagara	Purchase of Two Expansion Buses	Purchasing two new buses with updated technology will enhance service frequency, and improve the capacity and quality of the transit system.	\$660,000	\$549,945	\$440,055
Regional Municipality of Niagara	Technology Upgrades	Upgrade of 29 buses with new technology, including radio communication systems and security cameras will improve the quality and safety of the public transit system.	\$313,490	\$261,216	\$209,019
St. Catharines	Downtown Terminal Renovations	Renovating the downtown public transit terminal will provide improved facilities for increased workforce, as well as better capacity and quality service for passengers.	\$230,000	\$191,648	\$153,353
St. Catharines	Expansion of Conventional Bus Fleet	Addition of 10 new buses which will increase the capacity of the St. Catharines transit system to offer expanded hours of service for high demand routes. All of the new buses in the expansion fleet will be fully accessible, equipped with new farebox technology, surveillance cameras for increased safety, and location tracking technology for transit users to track the arrival of their buses in real-time.	\$3,570,000	\$2,974,703	\$2,380,298

St. Catharines	Facility Expansion	Expansion of the existing operations facility to accommodate the growing transit system. An expanded maintenance and bus storage facility will accommodate the growing fleet. An expanded office will make room for future regional transit headquarters as transit operations in Niagara become fully integrated.	\$3,933,000	\$3,277,172	\$2,622,328
St. Catharines	Improvements to Bus Stops and Shelters	Renovation of 100 bus stop shelters. The improvements will include new scheduling information, signage, and seating.	\$840,000	\$699,930	\$560,070
St. Catharines	New Fare Payment Technology	New farebox technology system will allow customers to pay for their trip using contactless payment on the 89-vehicle bus fleet. The new technology will also be compatible with the regional fare system enabling riders to use one method of payment to access all of the transit systems across the Niagara Region, making it easier for them to get to their destinations.	\$1,596,000	\$1,329,867	\$1,064,133
St. Catharines	Rehabilitation of Hybrid Buses	Replacement of the battery and the dual Power Inverter Module (DPIM) on four hybrid buses to extend their service life. These improvements will ensure the continued reliability of the City's low-emission Hybrid bus fleet.	\$345,000	\$229,977	\$115,023

St. Catharines	Replacement of Conventional 12 metre Buses	Replacement of 11 buses in 2020 and 2021, improving service reliability. The new buses will help reduce maintenance costs and increase the performance of the transit system. All of the new buses in the expansion fleet will be fully accessible, equipped with new farebox technology, surveillance cameras for increased safety, and location tracking technology for transit users to track the arrival of their buses.	\$3,528,000	\$2,939,706	\$2,352,294
St. Catharines	Replacement of Paratransit Vehicles	Replacement of four paratransit buses and one paravan, providing a more reliable and safer service. The replacement buses will reduce maintenance costs and increase the paratransit system performance. All vehicles will meet and exceed the highest accessibility standards, be equipped with new farebox technology, surveillance cameras for increased safety, and location tracking technology for transit users to track the arrival of their buses.	\$491,400	\$409,459	\$327,641
St. Catharines	Replacement of Service Vehicles	Replacement of 11 old service vehicles will provide residents with better on-road maintenance and offer more efficient transit services.	\$191,100	\$159,234	\$127,416

St. Catharines	Replacement of Vehicle Hoists	Purchase of permanent and portable hoists for a bus maintenance facility will mean improved bus maintenance and better, more reliable service.	\$802,200	\$668,433	\$534,867
St. Catharines	Technology Upgrade	Installation of a new radio system and video surveillance system on 89 vehicles. An additional 30 radios will be used in other locations including terminal hubs, transportation offices, and supervisor, maintenance, and shuttle vehicles.	\$1,029,000	\$857,414	\$686,086
Welland	Construction of Transit Operations Facility	Construction of a new transit operations facility will meet the needs of a growing public transit network. The new facility will provide space for maintaining and managing all conventional and specialized buses and staff training.	\$6,000,000	\$4,999,500	\$4,000,500

### STEM Investments:

A few weeks ago, the federal government announced a \$9-billion plan to help students and recent grads get through the crisis. Yesterday, the Prime Minister announced the creation of 500 green jobs and training opportunities for young people in STEM in the energy, forestry, mining, earth sciences, and clean technology sectors.

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## Expanded CEBA Delays:

Please note: the expanded CEBA has been delayed. We are working around the clock to ensure the program can securely launch across over 230 financial institutions. We know how important the program is to small businesses & want to launch as quickly as possible. More details to come.

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## NSERC Discovery Grants:

Minister Bains announced over \$492 million in funding for researchers across the country through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada's (NSERC) Discovery Grants Program.

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Discovery Grants support basic research in a wide variety of natural sciences and engineering disciplines including biology, mathematics and statistics, computer science and artificial intelligence, chemistry and chemical engineering. New knowledge in these fields will make possible breakthroughs in virology, pharmaceuticals, and other applications in the years to come.

Specific programs of research being funded through today's announcement will include the study of coronaviruses and viral ecology in Canadian bats, research in virus interactions with cells and cellular defence mechanisms, and the exploration of the evolution of mosquito-virus interactions. A significant portion of the Discovery Grant funds also goes to support the training of the graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who will be research leaders of tomorrow.

This program supports ongoing research with long-term goals and gives researchers not only the flexibility to pursue promising research avenues as they emerge, but also the opportunity to explore higher-risk and higher reward topics and ideas.

It is support like this that will drive scientific and engineering discoveries that build the necessary foundation for the future of innovation and economic growth.

We are supporting programs of research at universities across the country, including the following in Ontario:

- \* Algoma University
- \* Brock University
- \* Carleton University
- \* Lakehead University
- \* Laurentian University
- \* McMaster University
- \* Nipissing University
- \* OCAD University
- \* Queen's University
- \* Redeemer University College
- \* Royal Military College of Canada
- \* Ryerson University
- \* The University of Western Ontario
- \* Trent University
- \* University of Guelph
- \* Ontario Tech University (University of Ontario Institute of Technology)
- \* University of Ottawa
- \* University of Toronto
- \* University of Waterloo
- \* University of Windsor
- \* Wilfrid Laurier University
- \* York University

As our government focuses on responding to the challenges of COVID-19, it also recognizes the ongoing work Canadian researchers are doing in the natural sciences and engineering.

We're proud to support and invest in fundamental research, the bedrock of scientific advancement. Scientific and engineering discoveries build the necessary foundation for innovation and economic growth. With this investment, our government is supporting researchers as they pursue high-risk, high reward ideas and discoveries.

**May I, once again, express my sincere appreciation to all residents, our front-line workers, essential service providers, government partners at all levels, businesses and students, for your ongoing efforts to help in this time of crisis. We are in this together! Your daily efforts are ensuring that we will get through this together. If you require any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.**

**Enjoy your weekend.**

**Happy Canada Day.**

**Stay safe.**