Bureau du président du conseil de l'AÉUM
SSMU Office of the Speaker

Située sur les territoires traditionnels des collectivités Haudenosaunee et Anishinaabe.
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MOTION TO SUBMIT A PLEBISCITE QUESTION ON AFFORDABILITY 2026-10-22

Submitted for: 2026–10-22

Submitted to:	SSMU Legislative Council	Document no.:	LEG-PUB-MOT-2026-10-22-002 (to be assigned by Steering)
Moved by:	Harry Wang *Vice-president External*	Current Status:	☐ FOR APPROVAL ☐ **APPROVED** ☐ POSTPONED ☐ COMMITTED ☐ NOT APPROVED
Seconded by:	Hector Giraud *Engineering Representative*		

APPROVED

Issue

This motion seeks to hold a plebiscite question to the Fall 2026 Referendum regarding student affordability on-and off-campus.

Background and Rationale

The SSMU, in collaboration with several universities in Montreal, is currently exploring a potential 'UPass' to both ease the financial burden on students given the rising costs of living, and to encourage sustainable living practices. This plebiscite question is designed to help support this project by providing data to the SSMU on:

1. How much students are currently paying for housing and transport;
2. If students are interested in paying into a monthly system to receive a discount on their monthly transit pass.

The last time the SSMU conducted a survey on the status of students' living situations was 3 years ago, creating a sufficient lack of data to negotiate meaningfully with the municipal government and other organizations.

Therefore, this plebiscite aims to gather feedback on students' current living costs and the transportation methods they use to get to campus.

Often, transportation and housing go hand in hand: students who live farther away pay more for transportation, whereas those living closer to campus pay more for housing. Therefore, this plebiscite question aims to gauge where students are struggling most.

As part of SSMU's mission to promote green and sustainability education, this motion is also intended to prompt students to consider green transportation and reflect on their sustainability and carbon footprint in their daily transportation. With lower transportation costs, we may be able to encourage students to take public transport more often.

Alignment with Mission

This motion is aligned with SSMU Positions Book, particularly in Section 3: Housing. Likewise, it is aligned with the mandate outlined in the SSMU Sustainability Policy, particularly under Sections 4.2 Coordination and 4.4 Outreach.

Consultations Completed

This motion is written in consultation with the Vice-President External and External Affairs Commissioner. The following consultations have also been completed:

- Internal Counsel & Corporate Secretary
- Elections SSMU
- President
- Governance Affairs Coordinator

Risk Factors and Resource Implications

If this motion does not pass, the External Affairs teams will have insufficient guidance and data to support their advocacy plan with the municipal government, and when negotiating with other organizations.

As a plebiscite question to collect data, this is non-binding and does not hold or mandate the SSMU to create a 'UPass' or lower the cost of living for its membership.

APPROVED

Impact of Decision and Next Steps

If approved, the questions listed below will be sent out to the membership as part of the Fall 2026 Referendum.

Motion or Resolution for Approval

Be it resolved that, the Legislative Council approves the following plebiscite questions to be put to the membership during the Fall 2026 Referendum, with the context outlined below:

The SSMU, in collaboration with several other organizations and universities, is exploring several projects that aim to improve students' affordability within the city of Montreal and neighbouring regions, including a potential switch to the Universal Pass model ('UPass') for the ARTM (which includes buses, metro, REM, and EXO across 4 zones) to bring the price down for students, as well as a second housing project in collaboration with UTILE. However, given the costs associated with these plans, the SSMU must utilize its resources and consult with its membership to understand if this potential project would benefit students in the long term. The following non-binding plebiscite questions are designed to provide the SSMU with data to use to support these advocacy projects.

Transportation:

Question 1: How long (in minutes) is your commute to and from campus (one way, on average)? Please indicate whether by foot or other form of transportation.

(Open textbox for response)

Question 2: Do you use any of ARTM's services (Bus, metro, EXO, REM)? If so, how often do you take these services per week?

(Open textbox for response)

Housing:

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Question 3: How would you describe the quality of your current living conditions (e.g., room size, number of roommates, condition of appliances, etc.)?

(Open textbox to describe living conditions considering cost)

Question 4: If you do not mind sharing, how much do you pay in rent each month? This information will be tremendously useful for our advocacy effort(Optional)

$___ per month

Results of the Vote	☐ In favour	24
	☐ Opposed	0
	☐ Abstain	0

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Appendix A : Relevant Appendix

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