

Transportation Equity

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Healthy Transportation
Coalition 
pour les transports sains


CAWI-IVTF
City for All Women Initiative
Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes


HealthBridge

Transportation Equity

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

**The Healthy Transportation Coalition
City for All Women Initiative**

By Jessica Lambert

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Table of Contents

- INTRODUCTION** 5
- SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS** 7
- PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION** 9
- METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS** 10
- FINDINGS** 12
 - Themes by Equity-Seeking Groups 12
 - Themes by Order of Voted Priority 15
- CONCLUSION** 20
- REFERENCES** 21
- APPENDICES** 22
 - Appendix A: Workshop Agenda – Considerations for Inclusion 22
 - Appendix B: Citizens Agenda for Transportation Equity 23
 - Appendix C: Community Conversation Summary Reports 24

INTRODUCTION

Ottawa is at a crossroads with its transportation infrastructure with the arrival of Light Rail and enhancement of multi-modes of transportation. Investing in efficient and accessible transportation has the aim of benefiting everyone. However, without paying specific attention to hear all voices, some people and communities will be left behind. This report aims to inform transportation actions and improvements that will contribute to a city for all.

From April 2018 to August 2018, transportation equity community conversations were hosted by 12 organizations to help us answer the question “How can Ottawa become a leader in transportation equity and mobility justice?” The Healthy Transportation Coalition and HealthBridge partnered in this work with the aim of informing the application of an equity lens in the 2019 revision of the City of Ottawa Transportation Master Plan and related transit decisions. City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) joined this undertaking as part of their work to apply an intersectional gender lens (Gender-based Analysis+) to city decision making (Status of Women Canada, 2018). Toward this end, the City of Ottawa Equity and Inclusion Lens was applied in the design of the consultation, selection of facilitators and participants, and the analysis of findings.

Participants in the conversations included representatives from the equity-seeking groups identified in the Equity and Inclusion Lens (see “Themes by Equity-Seeking Groups”, p. 10). It was noted that for many people living on low-incomes and for those without a car, public transit is an essential service. Participants expressed challenges faced in accessing services, doing grocery shopping and avoiding isolation when public transit was not easily accessible.

Participants in all conversations told us transit fares were high, which resulted in their using transit less often. Some immigrant women shared that they were not aware of discounts and passes available to them and found transit fares unaffordable especially with large families. Many felt the EquiPass was positive, but the fare was still too high. For those participants who don't qualify for EquiPass/Fare, the regular fares were considered inaccessible. Free transit options were of interest, looking to the City of Calgary's fare-free zone and its sliding scale for transit as promising practices.

For those of us without cars, public transit is an essential service.

— participant at The Well

It is hard on families to afford public transit when their cost of housing is so high.

— Safe People participant

Ideas were shared as to what needs to be addressed to make transit more friendly and accessible. Young women from low-income neighbourhoods spoke of not feeling safe in taking the bus at night. They along with many others, also spoke of the importance of having affordable housing in close proximity to rapid transit. People with disabilities and women who provide care for families shared struggles in using transit when elevators or automatic doors at transit stations don't work and when one or more buses pass them by as there is no room for their wheelchair or stroller. For people who make multiple connections or travel long distances between connections, the duration of the transfer gave them little time between buses to make their connection. At the same time, it was suggested increasing the accuracy of the smartphone apps would help in knowing wait times.

Access to multiple forms of transit was key for the diversity of communities engaged. Rural and suburban residents, including LGBTQ youth, spoke of the challenges of accessing services for after school activities and jobs when there is limited or no access to transit. For low-income neighbourhoods, walkability could be improved with increased cross-walks, shade trees and safe short-cut pathways to transit. People with disabilities, older adults and women with families emphasized the need for better snowplowing of sidewalks, while rural residents spoke of the need for better snowplowing of roads where there are no sidewalks. Many conversations emphasized the need for improved bicycle infrastructure, preferably infrastructure that creates a road and bike path separated by a barrier.

A consistent comment typically made in the community conversations was an appreciation that the facilitators came to them. Many groups stated that there is a barrier for them to get to City Hall for consultations, financially and psychologically. For further work on transportation equity, a consultation that engages equity-seeking groups and goes to where people are most comfortable is key for ensuring the Transportation Master Plan benefits everyone.

Since I have to make multiple stops in caring for my family, the length of waits between buses is really a challenge. Often, the time on my transfer isn't enough.

— IWSO participant

We are grateful that you came to us to get our opinions and that you are taking a diversity of people into account.

— Queerios participant

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many actions the City of Ottawa can take to move towards becoming a leader in transportation equity. Broken down into the main themes identified by this consultation process, here are some actions concluded from participant suggestions, an analysis of this project, and other CAWI and HTC work:

1 Increase Affordability of Public Transit

- a Lower the cost of the EquiPass to be on par with the Seniors' discount.
- b Create a monthly pass that enables family members to travel together at a reduced rate.
- c Look to other jurisdictions, such as Calgary (which has a fare-free transit zone in the downtown portion of the C-Train), to study what could work in Ottawa.
- d Address the inequity of students at La Cité collégiale paying full price for transit, while other post-secondary students get the U-pass
- e Explore free transit options for youth in afterschool activities in rural areas.

2 More Transit Near Where People Live

- a Prioritize building affordable housing near rapid transit.
- b The City should advocate to the province for access to funding for transit in rural areas of Ottawa

3 Make Transit More User-Friendly

- a Put more buses into service, especially on weekends and on particular routes with long waits, such as in Kanata and Vanier.
- b Ensure maintenance of elevators and automatic doors at transit stations so as to not deny accessibility.
- c Implement online booking for Para Transpo.
- d Extend the length of time transfers are valid to make it possible to complete errands and make transit connections. This is especially important for those making multiple connections or travelling long distances.
- e Install more bus shelters to make it easier to wait for the bus in winter.
- f Enhance the reliability of the apps using GPS, and display it at major transit hubs so customers are better informed of expected arrivals of buses and trains.

4 Customer Service / Outreach

- a Open more OC Transpo service centres to reduce queuing and increase accessibility.
- b Enhance promotion of free travel days, discounts and passes so that people are aware of the services available to them.
- c Increase the number of locations for loading the Presto card to reduce the burden on people who do not have computers and were used to easy access to tickets.
- d Simplify the application for the EquiPass and avoid a gap in eligibility upon renewal.

5 Safe Pedestrian & Cycling Infrastructure

- a Prioritize low-income neighbourhoods for better walking and cycling infrastructure.
- b Improve snow clearing on sidewalks and roads where there are no sidewalks.
- c Explore methods for plowing that do not flatten the snow in a way that ices the streets, as doing so makes it difficult for people, particularly seniors, to walk.
- d Create more bike lanes with barriers between them and vehicles.
- e Educate drivers on rules of sharing the road with cyclists.
- f Make walking more possible in low-income neighbourhoods by putting in more crosswalk lights, planting trees for shade and creating safe shortcuts to transit.
- g Enhance access to free bikes for residents living on low-income and promote those bikes to encourage uptake.

6 Consultations

- a Reduce barriers and enhance participation in future consultations for the Transportation Master Plan by working with community groups to host meetings where a given community gathers. Cover any additional childcare or transit cost they may incur in order to participate.
- b Apply the Equity and Inclusion Lens to all stages of the consultation including design, recruitment, analysis, recommendations and feedback to communities.
- c Hold consultations in communities not benefiting from light rail to ensure their transportation needs are being met with accessible and reliable routes.
- d Use examples from other jurisdictions for how to improve Ottawa's transportation system including:
 - Portland, Oregon (low-income transit options) (Loose, 2018)
 - Calgary, Alberta (zones with free transit) (Calgary Transit, 2015)
 - Stockholm, Sweden (gender lens snow-clearing, focus on cycling and pedestrian paths and bus routes) (Radio Sweden, 2018)

PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

The purpose of this study was to gather information and experiences about transportation from individuals in the city who are often unable to participate in typical City consultations. Our study is timely as there are ongoing infrastructure developments in Ottawa, such as the light rail system, and an identified need for improvements to active transportation. In addition, the City of Ottawa has committed to applying the Equity and Inclusion Lens to the Transportation Master Plan (TMP), which it will begin updating in 2019. HealthBridge, one of the Healthy Transportation Coalition's organizational members, defines transport equity as a practice that "ensures the benefits and costs related to the transport system are distributed fairly and appropriately" (HealthBridge, 2018).

City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) joined with the Healthy Transportation Coalition and HealthBridge to undertake this study, given their current work with women's organizations to reduce women's poverty in Ottawa, in which they have found that safe, affordable and accessible transit is key for reducing the poverty of women and their families. A recent study found that women in Sweden tend to walk, cycle and use public transport to a greater extent than men, who, in turn, dominate the roads (Radio Sweden, 2018). It has also been documented that women use public transit differently than men, transferring more often in completing household errands, and caregiving. If these trends are true in Ottawa, then making transit more equitable will contribute to gender equality.

The high price of taking the bus does not just impact people living on social assistance, but also the working poor. It is hard to afford the bus when making minimum wage.

– The Well participant

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Consultation Goal

To collect quantitative and qualitative information for the City of Ottawa and the public to ensure that the capital of Canada is striving to provide equitable and accessible transportation services and city planning.

The Consultation was intended to help participants

- Consider what transportation equity means to them
- Learn about the Citizen's Agenda for Transportation Equity
- Share their thoughts and consider actions they might take

In total, there were 12 community conversations with a total of 104 participants. We identified organizations to contact by using the list of equity-seeking groups identified in the Equity and Inclusion Lens. Multiple organizations were contacted for participation in the conversations, including community organizations, day programs, women's shelters, community health and resource centres, Aboriginal agencies and agencies for people living with disabilities. Of the 11 equity-seeking groups in the City of Ottawa Equity and Inclusion Lens, we were able to reach ten of the groups: Francophones, LGBTQ, Immigrants, Older Adults, People with Disabilities, People living in Poverty, Racialized People, Rural Residents, Women and Youth. There may have been Aboriginal people in the community conversations who did not self-identify. Ninety-seven percent of participants were women as the conversations were partially funded through the CAWI project to engage women's organizations in poverty reduction. A larger sample of men and trans people would be needed to have a comparison among genders.

With collaboration from CAWI and HTC, a facilitator team of diverse backgrounds, languages and experiences was trained to carry-out the consultations. The duration of the community conversations was one to two hours. An outline of the facilitator notes can be found in Appendix A.

The community conversations focused on a discussion of participants' experiences and a visualization of how Ottawa can become a leader in transportation. Broken up into five sections, the intent was to draw out the priority transportation issues of participants, as well as to identify actions the City could take to address these issues. The conversations began with issues previously identified by Ottawa

residents, as outlined in the Citizen's Agenda for Transportation Equity (Appendix B). Participants were then invited to compare the agenda with their own experiences by considering what they would add or change, and then they were asked to vote on what they found to be the most important issues. Each participant was given five dots to place as they chose, and they were able to place more than one dot on the same item.

After votes were totaled, the group reflected once more on their observations. Participants were then invited to complete a survey to determine the likelihood they would take action on transportation issues in the future.

Some participants came and went during the session as it was a drop-in environment, while others left before the end of the session so that their votes were not included in the final tally, which are limitations of the consultations. This may have, in part, been due to requiring them to read text in order to vote. To compensate for this, the analysis of findings draws on the qualitative data or conversations, as well as the final tally of votes. As mentioned above, a conversation was not held with Indigenous people who would have their own unique perspective to bring, especially for Inuit or First Nations people who may have moved to Ottawa recently from remote communities. Further consultation should take care to include them.

FINDINGS

Through prioritization and conversation, participants identified what they see as key to transforming Ottawa into a leader in transportation equity. See Appendix C for summary reports from each community conversation.

Themes by Equity-Seeking Groups

Diverse views were expressed by participants according to the equity-seeking group with which they identified. In a given person, as well as in a given community conversation, there may be a mix of these identities and opinions. For example, the Queerios community conversation was comprised of LGBTQ youth, some of whom live in a rural or suburban part of Ottawa. Table 1: indicates the percentage of participants from each equity-seeking group across all conversations and a summary of the issues discussed.

Table 1: Groups by % and Key Issue areas

Equity-Seeking Group	% of participants	Comments
Aboriginal/ Indigenous	unknown (no conversation was hosted by an Indigenous organization)	unknown
Francophone	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> students at La Cité collégiale pay full price for transit, while other post-secondary students get passes * see people living on low-income, women and immigrants
Immigrant	40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not aware of discounts, passes (EquiPass, Senior pass) documentation required for EquiPass is a challenge family pass needed for large families to share larger space on bus needed for seniors, strollers and wheelchairs more safe pedestrian paths, without conflict from bicycles

Equity-Seeking Group	% of participants	Comments
LGBTQ	5% (as self-identified)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feel unsafe at bus stops and cycling • lack of community awareness regarding the rules of the road increases risk for cyclist • appreciated this consultation came to them and that it took into account a diversity of people * see also youth
People Living in Poverty	90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public transit is an essential service for people without cars • cost of housing makes transit unaffordable • plant more trees for pedestrian shade • more crosswalks to increase walkability • free pass one day a week to be able to run errands • access to transit near affordable housing and low-income neighbourhoods • safe cycling and pedestrian connections from low-income neighbourhoods to rapid transit • EquiPass is too expensive and difficult to apply for • return to bus tickets as paying through Presto is difficult with limited funds, mobility and computer access challenges • make bus passes a percentage of your weekly income • come to our neighbourhoods and the services we frequent to hear from us, rather than have us pay bus fare to go to consultations
People with Disabilities	unknown (among the clients of the services that hosted conversations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mental health challenges aggravated when can't afford to travel, can't access services, recreation, social spaces • route changes are confusing, add to stress • elevators need to be working • too many people on the bus raises anxiety • animals not in cages, except for guide dogs, can be a trigger for people • icy, unplowed sidewalks are dangerous and make it hard for people in wheelchair or other mobility devices to access transit • on-line booking for Para is needed • wait time or being cut off when calling Para • people with wheelchairs turned away as bus is full

Equity-Seeking Group	% of participants	Comments
Older Adults	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • icy, unplowed sidewalks, risk of falling • not aware of seniors discount and free day • longer time for pedestrian crossing • weekend free transit to take advantage of grocery sales and visit grandkids
Racialized	53%	* see women, youth, immigrant
Rural residents	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City should advocate for provincial funding to improve transit in rural areas of Ottawa • multi-modal transit is needed in rural areas paying attention to diversity • better snow clearing for roads/streets without sidewalks • lack of sidewalks • free transit for youth under 12, and for teens for after school activities • more parking at Park-and-Ride parking lots • extend LRT to far East, South, West
Women/Girls	97%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when making multiple stops for errands and family care, bus waits/changes are a challenge • extend time that transfers are valid • safety at bus stops, especially at night, not well lit and isolated • free transit days for errands • more stroller space, as sometimes have to wait for next bus, sometimes up to 3 buses. • women, more isolated when can't afford bus • young women, safety concerns, especially at night
Youth	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better cycling paths in low-income neighbourhoods • access to free bikes as many can't afford one • better bus routes home to school • traffic calming measures are needed so that it is safe to bike on the street • run more buses at a later hour • an accurate and reliable app to track bus arrivals • discount pass for youth in summer months

Themes by Order of Voted Priority

Below are the top five themes identified through the voting system, followed by a summary of the comments made by participants for the top five themes.

- 1 Lower fares for public transit (54 votes)
- 2 More buses, more frequently (40 votes)
- 3 Free transit options (39 votes)
- 4 Affordable housing near rapid transit (28 votes)
- 5 Prioritize safe cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in lower-income neighbourhoods (33 votes)

THEME ONE: Lower Fares for Public Transit

The need to lower OC Transpo transit passes and fares was the dominant theme among all groups consulted, especially at the drop-in centres. Groups that placed most emphasis on the cost of transit as the top barrier included participants from Maison d’amitié, St. Joe’s Women’s Centre, United Sisters, Vanier Community Service Centre and The Well. These groups work primarily with women and families, except United Sisters, which is a girls’ youth group. Rural Issues Collective suggested shifting the fare burden from the users to the tax base.

Table 2: Comments by Key Issue

Key Issue	Comments
EquiPass/ EquiFare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current cost of the EquiPass is too expensive for many low-income residents (Maison d’amitié, St. Joe’s Women’s Centre, Vanier CSC) • Revise eligibility criteria for EquiPass/EquiFare (The Well) • Better promotion of the EquiPass (The Well, Vanier CSC)
Regular fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Price of a Presto card itself is an extra burden (United Sisters, The Well) • High price of taking the bus does not just impact people living on social assistance, but also the working poor (The Well) • Students at La Cité pay full price for bus passes, when other post-secondary students have student passes (Vanier CSC) • Bus fees should be lowered (Vanier CSC)

THEME TWO: More Buses, More Frequently

Many participating groups identified the lack of access to bus routes and the infrequency of buses as major barriers they face. IWSO, United Sisters, Safe People, Collective Kitchen and Vanier Community Service Centre participants shared that long wait times for buses has consistently affected them. Queerios, an LGBTQ+ youth group from Kanata, shared with facilitators that they felt excluded from public transportation planning, when they see so many residents that do not have equitable access to public transportation.

Rural Issues Collective from Manotick echoed that concern, further sharing that they feel changing City definitions of what "rural" is might help rural residents get the attention needed in regard to bus routes and stops. Finally, participants from Maison D'amitié, Collective Kitchen and Vanier Community Service Centre spoke to the inconsistencies they face regarding scheduling, sharing that on weekends wait times for buses are longer and an inconvenience, and that morning buses and night buses should be prioritized.

Table 3: Comments by Key Issue

Key Issue	Comments
Wait times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses should come more often (IWSO, Vanier CSC) • More route options (United Sisters, Safe People) • More "QuickLink" buses (Collective Kitchen) • Sometimes buses do not stop, causing longer wait times (Vanier CSC) • There should be shorter wait times in the winter (Vanier CSC) • Without bus shelters, wait times are difficult (Vanier CSC)
Rural - Suburban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be more bus routes in Kanata to connect people, with reduction of buses it's hard to get around (Queerios) • Change how rural is defined to allow for access to funding to improve transit (Rural Issues Collective)
Schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease wait times between buses on weekends (Maison d'amitié, Collective Kitchen) • Have more morning buses on certain routes (i.e. before 11:00 a.m.) (Collective Kitchen) • Have buses that run at a later hour (Queerios) • Posted bus times are often not respected (Vanier CSC)

THEME THREE: Free Transit Options

The theme of free transit did not receive the most votes, but was the topic raised most often in the conversations. Rural Issues Collective and rural youth accessing Queerios, recommended that the City consider free transit options oriented to help youth access jobs and after-school activities. Vanier Community Service Centre also expressed that a youth-oriented free transit pass could improve the situation for youth in their community.

Participants from Immigrant Women Services Ottawa, St. Joe’s, Collective Kitchen and Safe People, who were all women and mostly racialized, voted to improve seniors’ free transit options and better promote that option. Many expressed that they were not aware of the free senior transit option on Wednesdays, and that weekends would be better for errands, shopping and to visit with grandchildren.

Various groups voted on options for free transit for the general population, suggesting that the City consider free transit-zones like Calgary, Alberta. Finally, participants from The Well and Queerios expressed that for emergency situations, such as hospital visits, free transit would make these situations less stressful and the services needed in emergencies more accessible.

Table 4: Comments by Key Issue

Key Issue	Comments
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free transit for youth under 12 would help families (Rural Issues Collective) Be able to purchase discounted bus pass during the summer months (Safe People) Elementary school students should have free bus passes (Vanier CSC)
Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday is not a good day for seniors to have a free ride with OC Transpo because many sales end on Wednesdays, where on a weekend people could save money with sales, do errands and be with family (Safe People) Lack of knowledge of seniors’ discounts and free days with OC Transpo (IWSO, St. Joe’s Women’s Centre) An additional bus designated for seniors (Collective Kitchen)
Free Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free transit options for more events, like after-school programming for public school students (Queerios) Free-transit zone, like Calgary (Harmony House) Free transit pass for those considered low-income would be helpful to do errands and access services (The Well) A free family pass, a day a week (The Well)
Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free transit options for emergency situations, such as hospital visits (The Well, Queerios)

THEME FOUR: Affordable Housing Near Rapid Transit

Many community conversations from across the city, including those of people living in shelters, immigrants and LGBTQ communities shared their belief in the need for the City to prioritize building affordable housing close to rapid transit. Conversations delved into the construction of the Light Rail Transit system (or LRT) in contrast to the amount of people who are unable to access affordable housing. Many participants stated frustration that so much money is going into the building of Light Rail, rather than money going into affordable housing.

Table 5: Comments by Key Issue

Key Issue	Comments
Affordable Housing Near Rapid Transit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be better bus routes and Light Rail Transit (LRT) in areas with affordable housing (IWSO, Queerios, Cornerstone) • Social housing near rapid transit should be prioritized (Harmony House) • Many people are in support of mixed-housing and would like rent-geared-to-income housing (The Well) • There is frustration around having to live without access to public transportation because the housing is expensive (Safe People)

THEME FIVE: Prioritize Safe Cycling and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Harmony House, Cornerstone, and St. Joe’s Women’s Centre shared their thoughts on how cycling infrastructure should be prioritized in low-income neighbourhoods. Participants from United Sisters and Queerios, two youth groups, as well as immigrant women at IWSO expressed that more work needs to be done to implement and be consistent with bike lanes around the city. In discussion with participants from Queerios, it was made clear that residents felt the inconsistencies between riding a bike in Kanata as compared to downtown. In Kanata, residents are encouraged to ride on the sidewalks for safety, but in downtown Ottawa this is not an option due to bylaws.

Residents from Collective Kitchen, Queerios, and United Sisters shared fears for their safety when they bike. In the Queerios conversation, some shared that having a barrier separating bike lanes and the road would make them feel safer riding their bike. In the United Sisters and Collective Kitchen conversations, participants shared

that they bike in areas with less traffic for their safety, and having more bike paths would be appreciated.

Participants noted that in some low-income neighbourhoods and rural communities, the lack of sidewalks makes it unsafe to walk. While in the winter, lack of snow removal makes the sidewalks unusable, especially for seniors and people with disabilities. Other suggestions to make pedestrian travel more friendly were to plant trees, have more crosswalks, provide short cuts and walk ways that lead to transit.

Table 6: Comments by Key Issue

Key Issue	Comments
Low-Income Neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling and pedestrian improvements should be prioritized in low-income neighbourhoods (Harmony House, St. Joe’s)
Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow removal on sidewalks, and on roads when there are no sidewalks to make walking possible. • More cross lights • Create sidewalks in low-income neighbourhoods and rural communities that link to transit • Plant trees for shade
Bike Lanes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian and bike lanes should be prioritized (United Sisters, IWSO) • Cycling infrastructure should be prioritized such as free bikes for residents to use and more bike lanes (United Sisters) • Inconsistent access to bike lanes and sidewalks between suburban areas and urban (Queerios)
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More bike paths without traffic (Collective Kitchen) • Need physical barrier between vehicles and bike lanes (IWSO, Queerios) • Fear of riding bikes on roads in Kanata (Queerios) • Many play and ride their bikes in the area with more seniors across the street, as there is less traffic and they feel safer (United Sisters)

CONCLUSION

The City of Ottawa is continuously building transportation infrastructure at a time when many residents across the city feel they are being left behind. Based on past work done by City for All Women Initiative and the Healthy Transportation Coalition, this transportation equity community conversation project was conducted to ensure that the City is informed about residents' needs for the next Transportation Master Plan, a process that will begin in 2019. We request that the City conduct its own consultations with equity-seeking groups as part of the upcoming Transportation Master Plan update.

Moving forward, we need the City to systematically prioritize the transportation needs of historically disadvantaged people and neighbourhoods. Recognizing that not everyone is starting from the same place (in terms of income, language proficiency, ability, etc) the City's limited funding should be used to make the transportation system better for people in situations of vulnerability.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Workshop Agenda – Considerations for Inclusion

Citizens Agenda for Transportation Equity Community Conversations – HTC & CAWI

OBJECTIVES:

- Consider what transportation equity would be like
- Learn about the Citizen’s Agenda for Transportation Equity
- Share your thoughts and consider actions you might take

Activity One:

Welcome and Introduction

Activity Two:

Introduce the Citizens Agenda for Transportation Equity

Activity Three:

Assess the Citizen’s Agenda – what needs to be added/changed from your experience

Activity Four:

Prioritize what is most important

Activity Five:

Next Steps

Activity Six:

Wrap Up – Complete survey

CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCLUSION:

- Adapt - Every group will be different. Consider ahead of time and during the session what is needed to ensure inclusion for everyone.
- Reading capacity – Do not call on people to read, let them volunteer. Do not assume everyone can read any written text.
- Writing capacity - Work in pairs so as not to put anyone on the spot.
- Unique perspectives – Be sure to listen to all voices, including minority. Consider how to adjust to draw out the perspective of a specific group
- Expertise - Recognize the expertise, experience they bring.

APPENDIX B

Citizens Agenda for Transportation Equity

Executive Summary Policy proposals

What Ottawa needs to do to make progress on transport equity

The Healthy Transportation Coalition, HealthBridge, the City for All Women Initiative (CAWI), and the Ontario Public Interest Research Group at the University of Ottawa are consulting with individuals and organizations across Ottawa on what they feel Ottawa needs to do to make progress on transportation equity.

Working with our partners, an initial Citizen's Agenda for Transportation Equity includes the following policy proposals that the Healthy Transportation Coalition is urging the City to act upon:

A) INCLUSIVE PUBLIC TRANSIT:

- OC Transpo should create a single fare discount (the EquiFare) for qualifying low-income people priced at least 50% off the regular single fare price.
- OC Transpo should reduce the EquiPass cost to no more than \$42 a month for qualifying low-income people (close to the same amount the City charges for seniors' monthly passes, and for the Community Pass, available to people on ODSP payments).
- OC Transpo should create an on-line booking system for Para Transpo users, similar to the Wheel-Trans online trip booking system in Toronto (see <https://mywheel-trans.ttc.ca/changes>).

B) HELP LOW-INCOME CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS:

- The City of Ottawa should ensure safe cycling and pedestrian connections from low-income neighbourhoods to rapid transit station from a 5 km radius around those stations.

C) PRIORITIZE SOCIAL/AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

- The City of Ottawa should ensure that the land and "air space" that the City owns at and around LRT and Transitway stations is filled with as much social/affordable housing as possible.

D) HOW TO HELP PAY FOR A MORE EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

- The City of Ottawa should study road user fees and higher parking fees, both of which low-income people could be exempt from paying.

E) CREATE A ROLE FOR EQUITY-SEEKING GROUPS WHEN DRAFTING THE TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

- There must be collaborative action between the City of Ottawa and community-based equity seeking groups advocating for the needs of specific demographic groups.

Further ideas will be added to the *Citizen's Agenda for Transportation Equity* over the coming months and we hope to present a final version to staff and politicians at Ottawa City Hall toward the end of 2019.

APPENDIX C

Community Conversation Summary Reports

Harmony House and Cornerstone Women's Housing

Date: March 14, 2018 | Time: Afternoon
Number of Participants: 11
Facilitators: Trevor Haché and Fathiya Warsame
Note-Taker: Sylvie Amizero

This community conversation was conducted with Cornerstone and Harmony House women's shelters. Harmony House opened in 1987 in response to a need for safe, longer-term housing and support for abused women and their children fleeing violent situations (Harmony House, 2017). Cornerstone Housing for Women provides emergency shelter and housing for women in Ottawa (Cornerstone Women, 2017).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

1st place- Social housing close to rapid transit (15 votes)
2- Free transit zone like Calgary (10)
3- Improve Para Transpo (7)
Tie for 4- Increase parking fees (5)
Tie for 4- Cycling and pedestrian improvements in low-income neighbourhoods (5)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Concern with the amount of people on buses for people with mental health problems such as anxiety.
- Animals should be in cages on transit.
- Bike lanes need to have a physical separation between vehicle and bikes as they do in the Netherlands.

Centretown Women in Action Centretown Community Health Centre

Date: April 4, 2018 | Time: 5-6:30 p.m.
Number of Participants: 13
Facilitators: Jessica Lambert, Sylvie Amizero, Trevor Haché
Flip-Chart: Gada Nohra
Note-Taker: Fathiya Warsame

Centretown Women in Action is a group of women from diverse backgrounds who are committed to supporting each other, learning new skills and knowledge, building network to make positive change in their lives. This group is out of Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

1st place - Regular bus fares are too expensive (12 votes)
1st place - Better coordination of bus schedules, better aligned. Should come every 10 minutes. (12)
Tied for 2- Build affordable housing closer to rapid transit (8)
Tied for 2- Lower cost of EquiFares (8)
3- When you call to schedule it takes a long time to get the information or the call is interrupted (6)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Fear of backlash towards low-income from those with higher socioeconomic status if city road user and parking fees are implemented.
- People wish the buses were larger; they are not big enough for those who have wheelchairs or those with strollers.

- There should be more accessibility for public transit for those with disabilities.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Seven participants normally walk, two drive, and seven bus.

Rural Issues Collective

Date: April 11, 2018 | Time: 1:45 p.m.- 3:00 p.m.
 Number of Participants: 9
 Location: Manotick
 Facilitators: Fathiya Warsame and Trevor Haché
 Note-Taker: Fathiya Warsame

The Rural Issues Collective (RIC) is a group of service providers and residents who gather every alternate month to share information on what is transpiring in Ottawa's rural communities and discuss emerging issues. RIC focuses on activities that are responsive to community-identified needs and are collaborative.

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- 1st place- Changing how rural is defined to allow for access to funding to improve transit (12 votes)
- 2- Study multi-modal transportation for rural Ottawa, paying attention to diversity (10)
- 3- Shift transit fare burden to tax base (8)
- Tie 4- Better snow cleaning of roads without sidewalks (4)
- Tie 4- Free public transit for youth under 12 (4)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Would like inclusive transportation.
- Feels the need for Park-and-Ride lots in rural areas.

- Students have to re-locate to access schooling.
- There are fumes and noise associated with living near transit.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The way snow plowing is currently done flattens the ice on streets and makes it hard for people, particularly seniors, to walk.

Studying where people usually travel to and what the likelihood of employment is can lead to request for economic development funding.

Because of the lack of public transportation, people in rural areas need to drive, so toll roads would become a penalty.

Immigrant Women's Services Ottawa (IWSO)

Date: April 18th, 2018 | Time: 1-2:30 p.m.
 Number of Participants: 4
 Facilitators: Gada Nohra, Fathiya Warsame
 Note-Taker: Jessica Lambert

IWSO does crisis intervention and counselling services for culturally diverse women who are victims and survivors of violence (Immigrant Women's Services Ottawa, 2014). They also offer services to enable immigrants and refugees to integrate into Canadian society, and American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation services free of charge for clients who are victims of domestic violence, sexual violence and human trafficking (2014).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- 1st place- Lowered fees for public transit (six votes)
- 2nd Tied - Buses should come more often (3), Affordable housing near LRT (3)

3- Ottawa should build safe cycling and pedestrian infrastructure connections from low-income neighbourhoods to rapid transit stations from a 5-km radius around those stations (2)

4- Online booking for Para Transpo (1)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Dissatisfaction with the switch from bus tickets to electronic purchase, as it is easier to acquire bus tickets.
- One participant noted that the fabric of the bus seats should be leather rather than fabric because the seats get wet on rainy days and she does not perceive them as hygienic.
- or staff working in the downtown core, a particular challenge they face is finding suitable parking. The existing parking spaces that are close to their places of employment have a 2-hour time limit and the total daily fees can be costly. They are dependent on their cars and public transit from where they live to where they work is also expensive, and time-consuming.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

One participant asked about seniors' discounts. There was also a question about what ParaTranspo was.

There was another comment that compared Australia to Ottawa's bus services. This person said that in Australia, buses come at the right time, and were not expensive. Her experience in Iran was also compared, saying that her experience in Canada is worse.

The Well

Date: May 2, 2018 | Time: 10-12:00 p.m.
Number of Participants: 12

Facilitators: Sylvie Amizero
and Fathiya Warsame

Note-Taker: Jessica Lambert

The Well/ La Source (The Well) first opened at St. Luke's Church on January 4, 1984 and is now located at St. John The Evangelist Church on Somerset St. (The Well, 2018). The Well was originally a three day a week drop-in program completely staffed by volunteers (2018). By mid-summer 1984, The Well acquired its first staff member and became a five day a week program to meet the increasing need for its services (2018). The Well/La Source delivers programs that support women in meeting their basic needs, making their life choices and participating in their community (The Well, 2018).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ITEMS

1st place- Free pass for people considered low-income (10 votes)

Tied 2- Free emergency buses for events, hospital visits, etc. (7)

Tied 2- Revise eligibility criteria for EquiPass/ EquiFare (7)

3- Concern about wait times and access to service (i.e. late buses)

4- Make pass a percentage of weekly income

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Identified that many public consultations happen in places where people cannot get to. Comment that people would like politicians to come to them to hear what they need, rather than them having to go to City Hall or various other places.
- Concerns about those with mental health issues being unable to access recreation if unable to afford the bus.
- There was an identified safety concern for late-night bus stops.
- Comments about accessibility issues for those in wheelchairs.

- The price of taking the bus does not just impact low-income people, but also the working poor.
- Many people are in support of mixed-housing and would like rent-geared-to-income housing.
- Identified that public transit is an essential service.
- Discussed that there should be more public awareness about the benefits of taking public transit rather than driving.
- Having a family pass, or a free day a week, would allow low-income people to do errands.
- There should be better promotion of the EquiPass.

**United Sisters
Pinecrest Queensway Community
Health Centre**

Date: May 31, 2018 | Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
 Number of Participants: 14
 Facilitators: Sylvie Amizero
 and Fathiya Warsame
 Note-Taker: Fathiya Warsame

United Sisters is an early intervention program for Ottawa girls aged 10 to 15 (Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre, n.d.). The overall goal of the program is to provide opportunities for young girls to develop the skills to be confident, independent, and active members of their communities (n.d.). Attendees take part in a wide range of fun activities.

TOP-FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- 1st place- Increase the number of bike lanes in the community (12 votes)
- 2- Decrease the fee for bus passes (9)

- Tied for 3- More buses to come through the neighbourhood (5)
- Tied for 3- Attitude of bus drivers (they should be more patient and polite) (5)
- 4- Give pedestrians a longer crossing time at the light (3)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Would like to see more pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, such as more sidewalks, wider sidewalks, free bikes for residents to use, longer crossing time at lights, more bike lanes, and safe pedestrian shortcuts.
- There should be an accurate and reliable app to track bus arrivals.
- There should be larger buses on busy routes.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Comments that people do not feel safe taking the bus at night due to the location of the bus stop take, lack of lighting, and lack of other people around.

Many play and ride their bikes in the area with more “seniors” across the street as there is less traffic, and they feel safer.

Consideration for those who take the bus to and from school, with comments that buses should be more frequent with better services.

**Safe People
Pinecrest Queensway Community
Health Centre**

Date: June 11, 2018 | Time: 9:45 a.m.-11:00 a.m.
 Number of Participants: 6
 Facilitators: Gada Nohra and Sylvie Amizero
 Note-taker: Fathiya Warsame

PQCHC recognizes that the neighbourhoods of Ottawa thrive with the diligent efforts of their community members (Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre, n.d.). Pinecrest-Queensway's Safe People program, which is funded by the United Way Ottawa, is an ongoing volunteer leadership program that brings neighbours together to ensure the continued improvement of health and safety in the community (n.d.).

TOP-FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

1st place- subsidized shared fare family pass (4 votes)

Tied for 2- snow removal at bus stops during the Winter (3 votes)

Tied for 2- Increase number of bus stops and their locations (3 votes)

Tied for 3- Elevator has to be working at the bus stations (2 votes)

Tied for 3- Affordable housing near rapid transit (2 votes)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Would like there to be more free riding days for seniors because sales on flyers end on Wednesday so it is not a good errand day, and many like to visit grandkids on weekends.
- Frustration around having to live without access to public transportation because the housing is so expensive.
- Bus schedules need to be adjusted, people have to take multiple buses which aren't on time and do not run often.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Youth should be able to purchase discounted bus passes during the Summer months.

Maison d'amitié

Date: June 20, 2018 | Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Number of Participants: 5

Facilitators: Gada Nohra and Sylvie Amizero

Note-taker: Fathiya Warsame

Maison d'amitié is a not-for-profit organization that brings refuge to women victim of violence and their children (Maison d'amitié, n.d.). Founded in 1976, it is the only shelter within the capital region to offer a wide range of French VAW (Violence against Women) services to a multicultural clientele (n.d.). *Maison d'amitié* is a safe, friendly and accessible place where women can be listened to and supported throughout their journey (n.d.).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

Tied for 1st place- Decrease the price of the EquiPass to \$43/month (5 votes)

Tied for 1st place- make the passenger entryway larger (on the buses) (5 votes)

2- More shelters at bus stops (3 votes)

Tied for 3- Increase the number of buses per route to shorten wait times (2 votes)

Tied for 3- Address the issue of some routes not having any operating buses on the weekend (2 votes)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- There needs to be a larger space on the bus for children, seniors, and those living with a disability.
- The presence of animals (aside from guide dogs) on the bus could be a trigger for some people living with mental health issues.
- There is sometimes a delayed arrival of the bus.
- There is sometimes a bad odour on the buses.

Collective Kitchen Lowertown Community Resource Centre

Date: June 22, 2018 | Time: 1:30-3:30 p.m.
Number of Participants: 9 (one was staff)
Facilitators: Gada Nohra and Sylvie Amizero
Note-taker: Fathiya Warsame

Lowertown Community Resource Centre has a Multicultural Program with the goals of “Facilitates the integration of people of various ethnic backgrounds who are new to Canada through services and activities such as counselling, drop-ins, exercise groups and collective kitchens” (Lowertown Community Resource Centre, 2018).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

1st place- Decrease the price of public transit (5 votes)

Tied for 2- Plant more trees to create shade for pedestrians (2)

Tied for 2- Decrease wait times for buses on the weekends (2)

Tied for 2- Increase how long transfers are valid for (2)

Tied for 2- Increase the number of buses on certain routes before 11:00 a.m. (2)

Tied for 2- Put buses on routes that they usually don't drive down to make it more accessible (2)

Tied for 2- Make the train available for the busiest parts of the city (2)

Tied for 2- More OC Transpo centres around the city to reduce queuing (2)

Tied for 2- QuickLink buses which do not stop at every bus stop (2)

Tied for 2- More bike paths without traffic (2)

Tied for 2- More accessible bus stops, cleared during the winter so you don't have to walk on the road (2)

Tied for 3- More cross lights at intersections (1)
Tied for 3- Make it easier for riders to load their cards (i.e. recharging docks at bus shelters) (1)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- There should be more paths for pedestrians, ensuring safety without conflict from bicycles.
- The Park-and-Ride lots should be extended for more parking space.
- The LRT should be extended to the far East, South and West parts of the city.
- The time transfers are valid for should be increased.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

It would be helpful if Presto loading stations could be on the bus, or in bus shelters.

It would be helpful to have clear bus rules. One participant identified that drivers follow different rules, which can be confusing and contradictory.

It would be nice to have more bike racks on buses.

An additional designated bus for seniors would be nice.

More buses should be on certain routes before 11:00 a.m.

Interest in getting involved in moving these things forward.

St. Joe's Women's Centre

Date: April 25, 2018 | Time: 2-3:30 p.m.
Number of participants: 6
Facilitators: Fathiya Warsame, Jessica Lambert, Trevor Haché
Note-Taker: Sylvie Amizero

St. Joe's Women's Centre was founded in May 1984 to provide daytime shelter for Ottawa's homeless women (St. Joe's Women's Centre, 2018). Today, St. Joe's Women's Centre, located on Laurier Avenue East, continues to play a significant role in the lives of many women and their children (2018). A warm, safe, caring place to spend the day makes a real difference in one's life (2018).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- 1st place- Return to bus tickets (5 votes)
- 2- Routes should not be changed often, especially in Winter (4)
- 3- Conditions of sidewalks can be an issue (icy, damaged, not enough) (3)
- Tied for 4- cycling improvements should be prioritized in low-income neighbourhoods (2)
- Tied for 4- \$43 a month is still too expensive for the EquiPass (2)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- People in wheelchairs turned away because buses are full, and the lack of snow removal makes it hard for people in wheelchairs to get on buses.
- Explanation given about current senior discounts for OC Transpo.
- Many asked when they would have follow-up from this conversation.

Queerios Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre

Date: August 16, 2018 | Time: 6:30-8:00 p.m.
Number of Participants: 6
Facilitators: Jessica Lambert
and Fathiya Warsame
Note-taker: Fathiya Warsame

Queerios is a social group for LGBTQ+* youth from 12-18 years old, housed under the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre in Kanata (Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre, n.d.). It is a safe(r) space for youth to hang out and meet new people (n.d.). There is access to services, support from staff, and it connects youth and their families to community resources and services (n.d.). Some key values are inclusion, belonging and respect (Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- 1st place- There should be more routes (in Kanata), particularly in remote areas (6 votes)
- 2- Subsidized passes (5)
- Tied for 3- Buses should be more frequent (3)
- Tied for 3- High school bus passes should be an option with OC Transpo (3)
- Tied for 3- Cement blocks should separate bike lanes (3)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

- Sidewalk plowing should be prioritized in the Winter. A participant identified that areas like Carp are excluded from snow clearing.
- Security measures around bus shelters should be considered for safety.
- Living in Kanata, participants feel that buses come every hour, and because buses have been amalgamated it is difficult to get around.
- Participants felt that there is an accessibility issue with the Presto passes because not everyone can easily load one.
- It takes a long time for repairs to be made to the roads in Kanata.
- There is a fear of riding a bike on the road in Kanata.

- Many neighbourhoods do not have sidewalks, which is unsafe for pedestrians.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Free transit options for emergency situations or after-school programming would be appreciated.

Bus shelter locations in Kanata should be re-considered as participants have had situations where they felt unsafe and at an inconvenience because of farness to stops and speeding by stops.

There has been an inconsistency regarding instruction to cyclists about where to bike and how to bike safely (when biking in Kanata, told to bike on the sidewalk, but not allowed downtown). The policy and road rules should be the same throughout the city, and people should be informed of this.

This group stated their appreciation for the facilitators gathering information from a diversity of people.

Infrastructure should be coupled with public education about road rules.

This group said they appreciated the facilitators coming to them for the consultation because it allowed them to participate.

A participant shared their belief that Metrolinks should not be privatized because there is no incentive to make the system more efficient. A negative experience was that it takes 24 hours for funds to become available on the Presto pass.

There should be better bus routes and Light Rail Transit in areas with affordable housing.

Participants would appreciate it if bus schedules went later.

Bus cleaning should be prioritized.

It would be helpful if transfer times were longer.

Vanier Community Service Centre

Date: August 28, 2018 | Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Number of Participants: 9

Population/Organization: Vanier Community Service Centre

Facilitator: Gada Nohra

Note-taker: Fathiya Warsame

The Vanier Community Service Centre is a francophone organization offering a range of services in French and English to improve the quality of life for citizen of Ottawa-Vanier and surroundings (CSC Vanier, n.d.).

TOP FIVE PRIORITIZED ISSUES

- More bus shelters (19 votes)
- Extend duration of time that bus transfers are valid for (at least two hours) (9)
- Reduce bus fees (7)
- Lessen wait times at bus stops and ensure buses try to wait to allow all passengers on when possible (4)
- More frequent bus hours (2)

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

Participants noted that many were unaware of the EquiPass. One said that they went to La Cité collégiale and paid full fare for her monthly bus pass.

Taking the bus with a stroller is difficult.

Summer hours for OC Transpo are inconvenient.

During the Winter, accessing the bus is often difficult because of the snow.

There should be shorter wait times for the bus during the Winter.

The bus times posted are not always respected, and buses do not arrive on time.

Bus shelters are important because the sun can be overwhelming in the Summer and the Winter can be rough.

Would like free bus passes for elementary school students.

The price of the EquiPass is too expensive for low-income residents.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Participants get around predominantly on the bus.

There were questions regarding how one finds out about bus passes, and the application process was explained.

There were questions about bus passes for different age groups and demographics. For example, Carleton and University of Ottawa students get UPass but La Cité has to pay full price. Also, some high school students get assistance but if newcomer students are attending ESL then the same assistance is inaccessible.

For the bus route 12 Bank, there are often lots of people and many have to stand; adding additional buses on the route could help.

Participants thanked facilitators for introducing them to the EquiPass.

Some bus drivers do not stop at the requested stops.

Some buses do not display the number on the bus, causing confusion.

It would help to have information such as bus prices included in announcements.