

# Public Transit Survey

## Results Summary

### Purpose

An effective public transit system can be an important component of a connected, livable, and sustainable community. Loyalist Township Council identified improving the public transportation system as a key objective in the 2019 Strategic Plan and has committed to review, assess, and suggest enhancements to the transit system which could benefit the Loyalist Community.

Furthermore, a review of commuting flows in and out of Loyalist Township suggests that a large portion of Township residents are employed outside of the municipality, with the vast majority traveling to the City of Kingston for work. Commuters originating from surrounding municipalities also travel into Loyalist on a daily basis, however the overall net commuting flow indicate that more people leave the Township for work purposes than come into it, as illustrated in Figure 1.

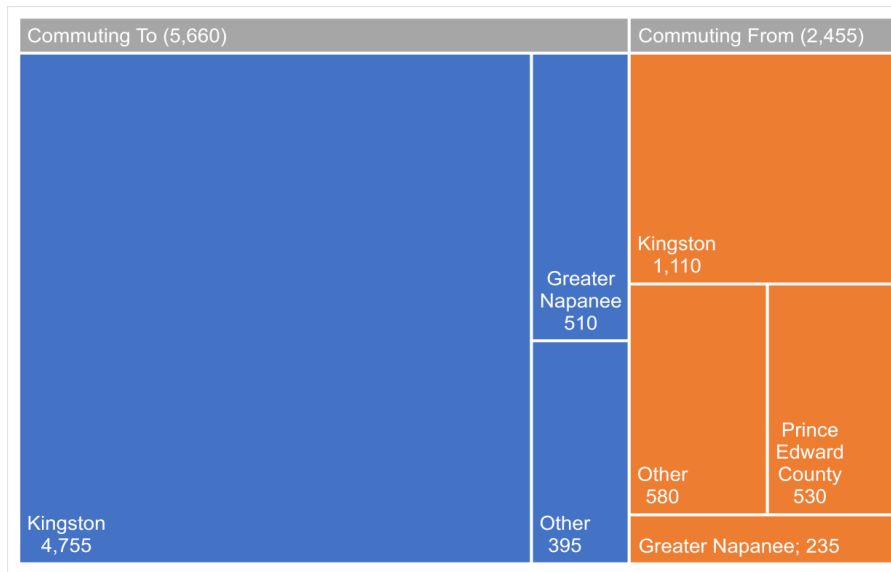


Figure 1 - Origin and destination of commuters in and out of Loyalist Township

Effective public transit cannot be approached using a one-size-fits-all approach. To that end, a survey was developed to identify the transportation needs within Loyalist Township and to gather input which would be used to inform future decisions. The survey was available through a Survey Monkey link posted to the Climate Action page of the Loyalist Township website from September to December of 2020. It was also promoted through the use of the Loyalist Township social media pages.

**Respondent Demographics**

General

Approximately 495 residents responded to the survey, representing a response rate just under 3%. Of the people who responded to the survey 66% identified as “female,” 31% identified as “male,” less than 1% identified as “other,” and 3% responded with “prefer not to say.”

Age

Respondents in the 35-44 and 65+ age groups submitted the most answers, with both segments account for 23% of responses (46% total). A full breakdown of respondent’s ages can be seen in Figure 2, accompanied by the number of respondents.

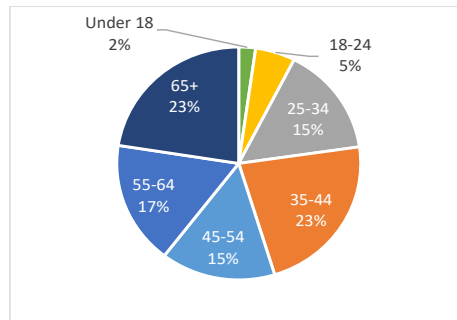


Figure 2: Age range in 10-year increments; 493 responses.

Employment status

In terms of work status, half of the respondents listed themselves as working full-time, 9% worked part time, 29% were retired, and 7% were unemployed. Students accounted for 5% of respondents, with 36% being in high school, 59% pursuing full time post-secondary education, and 5% taking part-time post-secondary. Figure 3 illustrates the employment status of respondents and number of respondents for each category:

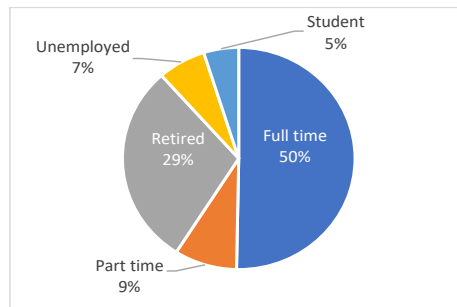


Figure 3: Employment Status; 493 responses.

Access to a vehicle

75% of respondents indicated they have access to a vehicle, 13% have access to a vehicle occasionally, and 12% indicated they do not have access to a vehicle.

**Current Transportation Practices**

Reasons for travel

When asked about their travel needs, respondents indicated that running essential errands, medical appointments, and recreation and leisure were their primary reasons for travel. It was also noted that a significant portion of respondents travel to the City of Kingston as part of their daily commute. Additional reasons for travel submitted by respondents are summarized in Figure 4.

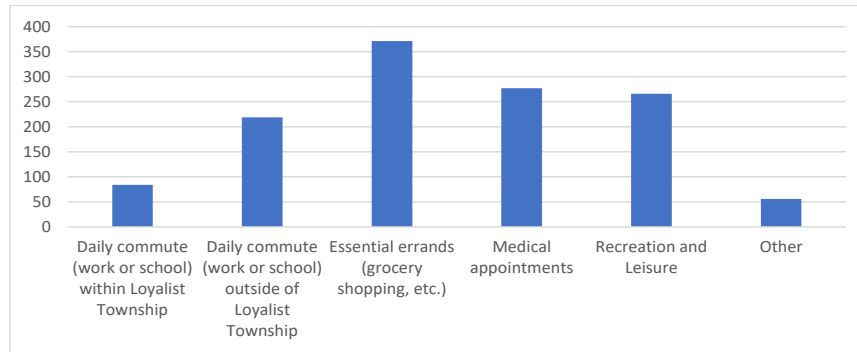


Figure 4: Residents' primary reasons for travel (multi-select); 456 responses.

Current travel methods

When asked to identify the current methods of transportation, the vast majority of respondents indicated the use of a personal vehicle, as illustrated in Figure 5.

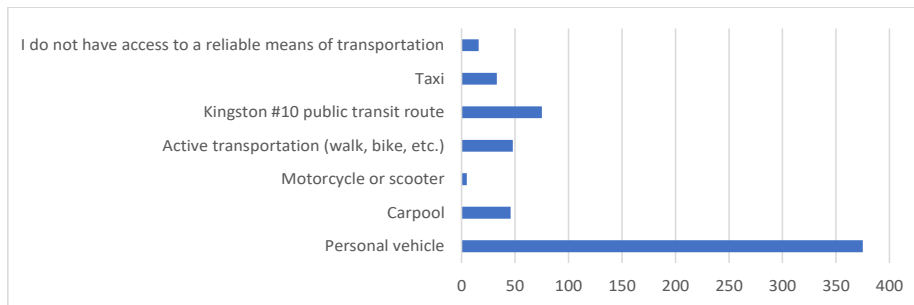


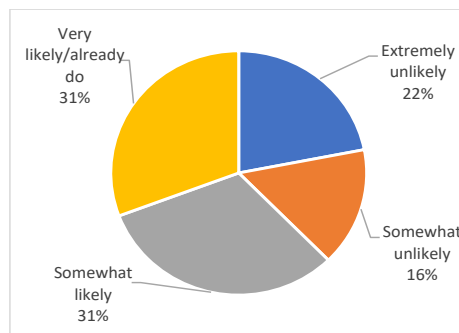
Figure 5: Current methods of travel for respondents (multi-select); 456 responses.

**Public Transit Considerations**

Respondents were presented with a series of questions meant to identify the levels of service that would be required of a public transit system in Loyalist Township.

Likelihood to use public transit

When asked about the likelihood of them using public transit, 78% of respondents indicated at least some interest, with 31% indicating they are either very likely to use public transit or are already making use of the single public transit route within the Township. Figure 6 presents a breakdown of responses to this question.



*Figure 6: Likelihood of respondents, or their family members, using public transit; 433 responses.*

Approximately 22% of respondents indicated that they would be extremely unlikely to use public transit if it were available to them. Concerns raised by this demographic include:

- Extremely unreliable service from Amherstview to Kingston must be improved to consider riding
- High existing taxes and concerns about increases
- Other issues should be focused on first
- Belief that the area would not benefit from public transit
- Concerns about ability to make the service worthwhile

Further analysis will omit the responses of respondents who identified as being extremely unlikely to use public transit. This will allow for an accurate representation of the needs of those respondents who are more likely to use public transit.

Frequency of use

Figure 7 presents a summary of the likely usage frequency of a transit system for respondents that indicated at least some interest in public transit (338). Responses to this question were split relatively evenly across the four available options (ranging from none to 5 or more times per week).

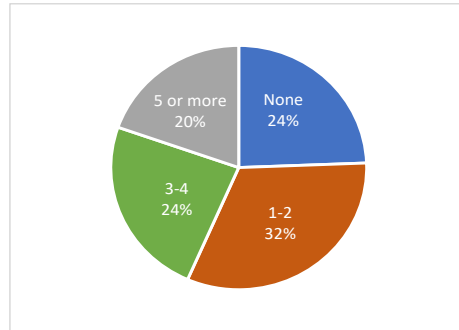


Figure 7: Responses to: “How many times per week would you make use of, or are currently using, public transit within, or outside of, Loyalist Township?”; 431 responses.

**Time of Use**

The time of use throughout an individual day are presented in Figure 8, with three possible responses to each time frame: required; would be nice; not needed. The time of day with the most responses for “required,” was between 4 pm and 6 pm, and 5 am to 8 am was closely listed as the second highest priority. This is consistent with the needs of commuters who would use transit for work purposes.

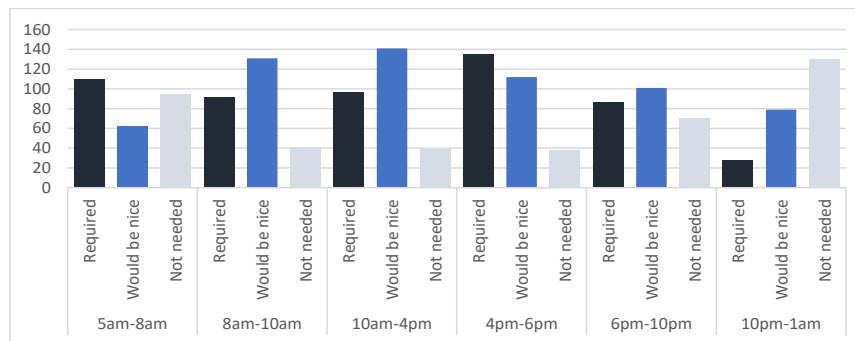


Figure 8: Access requirements for public transit for various times of day; 419 responses.

**Reasons for needing a transit system**

Figure 9 summarizes the reasons respondents would use public transit within Loyalist Township, with the most common response being environmental concerns, followed closely by the benefit of being able to access other transit systems in neighboring municipalities. The affordability of public transit relative to alternatives also ranked highly among the reasons for use. Responses also included:

- Concerns about old age
- Responsible method of transportation when consuming alcohol or other substances

- To access employment
- Bad weather
- Independence for youth

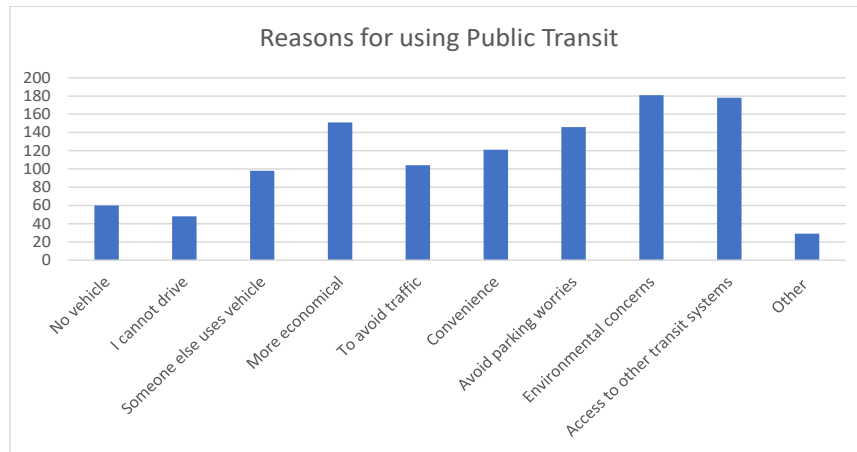


Figure 9: Potential reasons residents would use public transit within Loyalist Township; 399 responses

**Connections to Neighboring Municipalities**

To expand upon responses concerning connections to neighboring municipalities, additional questions were included. When asked if respondents interested in public transit would make use of connections to other municipalities' public transit systems, 76% answered "yes," as shown in Figure 10. Figure 11 addresses possible locations for these connections, with the most common response being the Cataraqui Center. Other responses were largely either downtown Kingston or locations within the Township, as well as the Via Rail Station. Comments also included concerns about accessing hospitals located in both Kingston and Napanee.

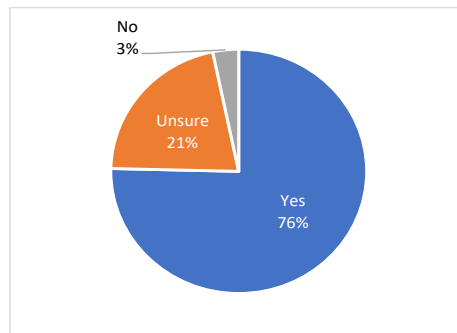


Figure 10: Response breakdown for "would you use a public transit service which runs inside Loyalist Township while also servicing connections to neighboring municipalities?"; 431 responses.

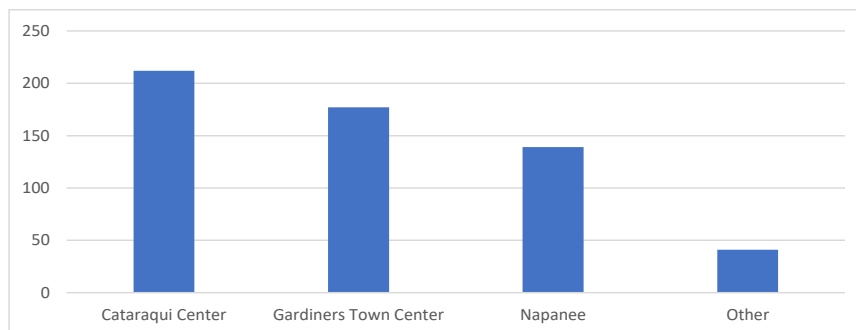


Figure 11: Responses concerning where potential connections should be; 287 responses.

**Transit Needs**

The following figures address specific transit needs, including pick up frequency (Figure 12), servicing area (Figure 13), need for door to door service (Figure 14), and general transportation and mobility needs (Figure 15).

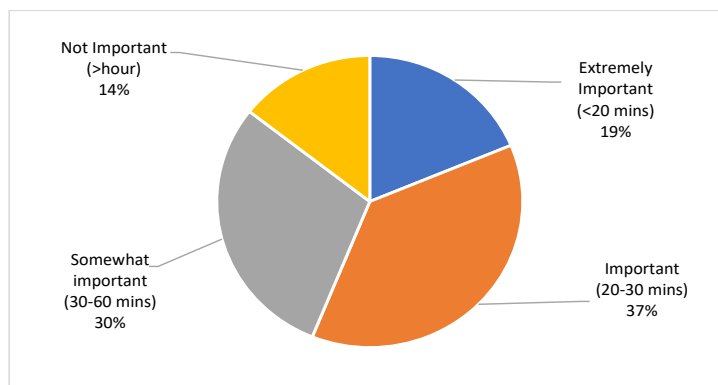


Figure 12: Importance of pick up frequency, given in terms of importance and subsequent timing. Times included next to the measure of importance indicate minimum times respondents would be willing to have between pick up opportunities, with pick up frequency being important as the most common answer at 37% of respondents; 394 responses.

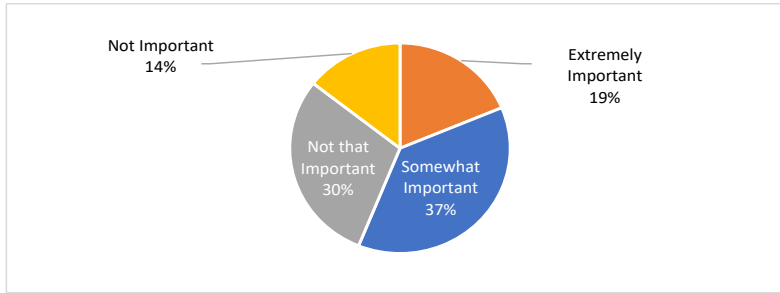


Figure 13: Importance of having a large amount of serviced areas, and the frequency of transit vehicle stops within these areas. These were given in terms of time to walk to bus stations, with extremely important being 5 minutes or less, not that important being 10 to 15 minutes of walking away, and not important indicating a willingness to use other means of transportation to access stops (walking, biking, or other means); 391 responses.

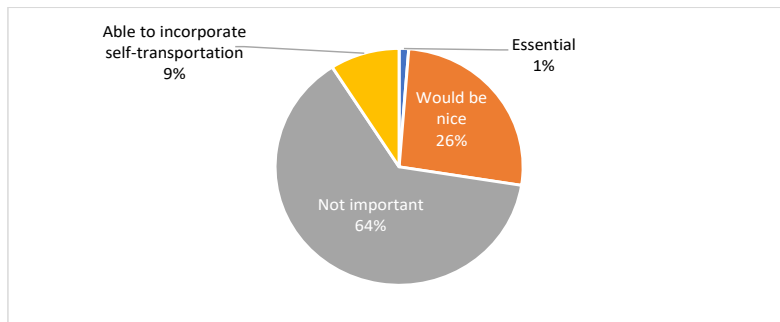


Figure 14: Range of service required to be able to make use of public transit, with "essential," indicating that door to door service is required due to mobility concerns; 389 responses.

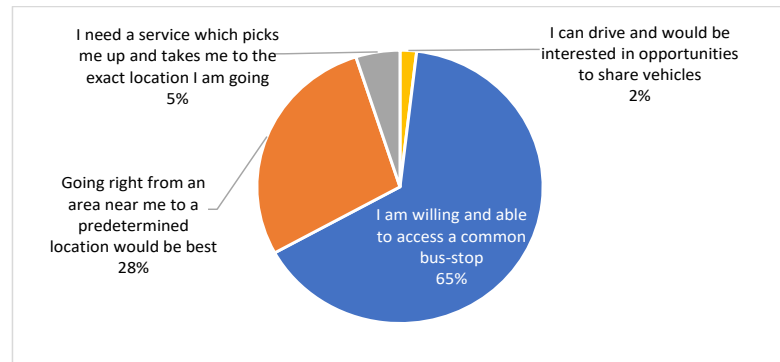


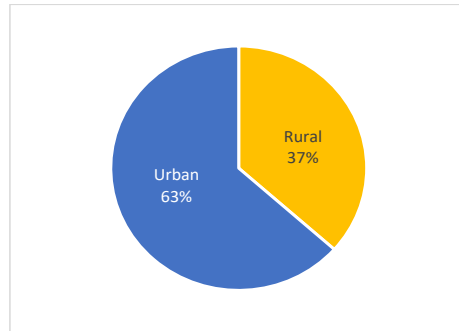
Figure 15: Transportation needs from the range of services that can constitute public transit; 385 responses.



To summarize, the majority of respondents indicated they required a pick-up frequency of 20 to 30 minutes, were willing and able to walk 10 to 15 minutes to access bus stops or pick up locations, and their likelihood of using public transit would not be impacted by a lack of door to door service. However, consideration must be made for those respondents who did indicate other needs.

**Rural Resident Considerations**

Approximately 37% of respondents live in rural areas of the Township, as indicated in Figure 16. According to 2016 census data, 20% of Township residents live outside of the three urban hubs (Amherstview, Bath, Odessa), indicating that a higher proportion of rural residents responded to this survey than their urban counterparts.



*Figure 16: Rural and urban composition and percentage as self-identified by respondents; 473 responses.*

Respondents who identified as living in a rural area, or 173 respondents, were asked additional questions concerning the impacts of transportation specific to rural areas of the Township. Of these, 56% of rural residents indicated they have been impacted by a lack of transit, be it public or otherwise. The remaining 44% did not feel as if they had been impacted by a lack of transit. Impacts caused by a lack of transit options in rural areas can be summarized as follows:

- A reduction in #10 service causing late and overcrowded buses, inconvenient timing of route
- Disabilities and impairments leading to inability to drive
- Decreased employment opportunities, particularly for youth
- Limited access to essential services

Figure 17 shows answers to a multi-response question on how public transit would serve rural residents, with "allows for basic needs to be met," being the most common response.

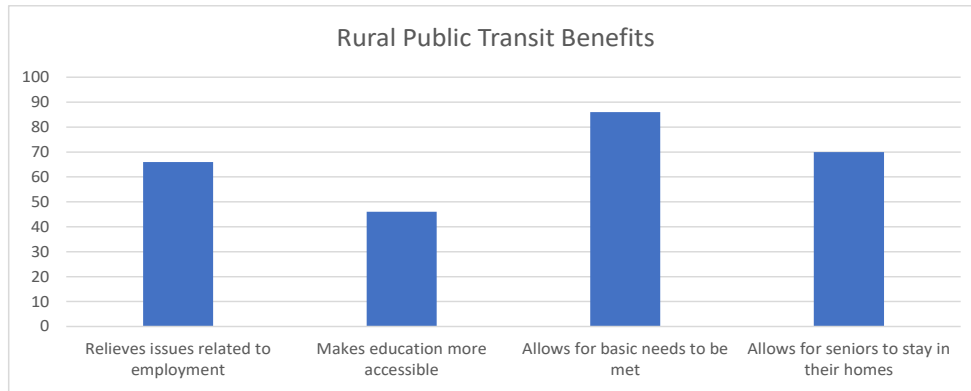


Figure 17: Various ways public transit could benefit rural residents; 140 responses.

More generally, Figure 18 illustrates responses to whether rural servicing should be incorporated into a transit system should once be implemented in the Township. Almost 70% of 173 rural respondents were of the opinion that rural servicing options should be incorporated into the Township’s transit system. 31% of rural respondents indicated door-to-door servicing is either required to use public transit, or would make them more likely to use the service.

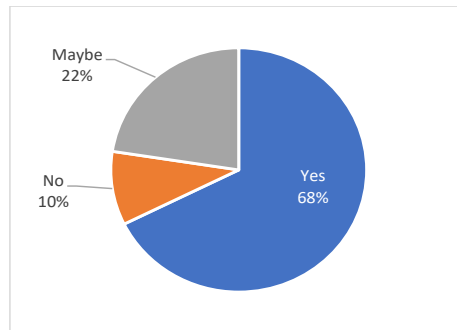


Figure 18: Responses to "should rural servicing be incorporated into a transit system within Loyalist Township"; 164 responses.

**Active Transit Considerations**

Active transportation methods can be a healthy and useful component of public transit systems, and aligns with aims of Loyalist Township’s Official Plan, which recognizes the need for the provision of open space for active use. As seen in Figure 19, 60% indicated interest in an active transportation network. Interest in several possible modes of active transportation is shown in Figure 20, with some variation of walking or running being the most selected method. Several responses to “other,” indicated the need for stroller accessibility.

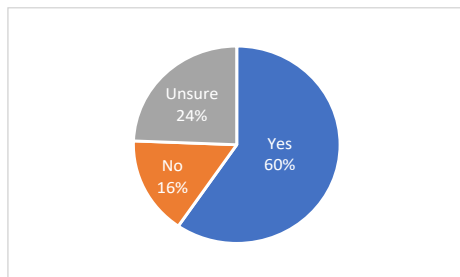


Figure 19: Responses to whether an active transportation network, such as walking trails or bike paths, should be incorporated into the design of a transit system in Loyalist Township; 410 responses.

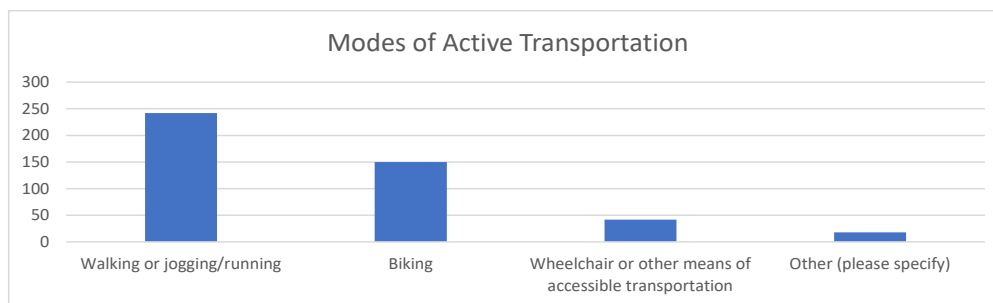


Figure 20: Potential modes of active transportation respondents would be likely to use in conjunction with a public transit system (multi-select); 368 responses.

**Accessibility Considerations**

Figure 21 indicates required accessibility features for respondents to make use of public transit. Other responses included scooters, stroller accessibility, bike racks, a bench or place to sit at bus stops or pick up locations, and a covering or shelter for these stops for winter conditions or inclement weather.

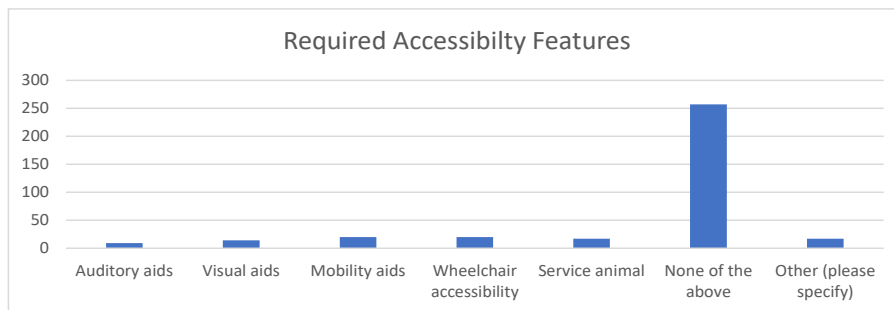


Figure 21: Required accessibility features in order to make use of public transit; 387 responses.

**Funding Methods**

When asked about funding methods should a public transit system be implemented in Loyalist Township, the largest proportion of respondents (40%) indicated it should be funded using a combination of ridership fares and the general rate. A full breakdown can be seen in Figure 22. The average maximum amounts respondents indicated respondents would be willing to pay for an individual fare was \$3.75, and an increase of \$5.69 per year in the general rate.

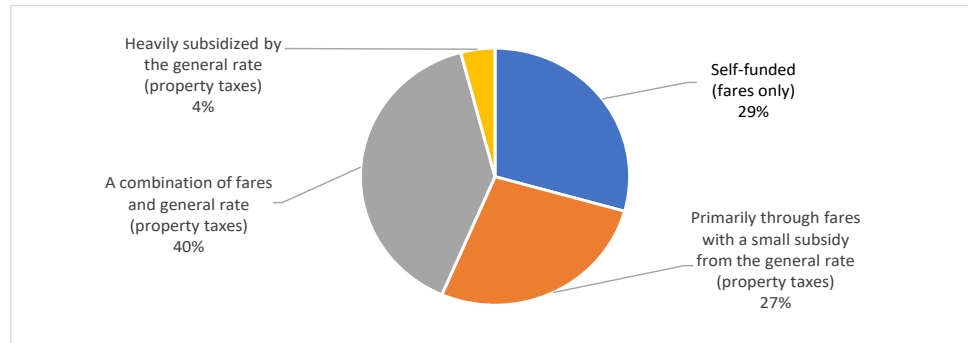


Figure 22: Desired funding methods should a need for public transit be identified in Loyalist Township; 401 responses.

**Green Transit**

Public transit can be made more environmentally friendly through various methods, one of which could be using electric vehicles rather than traditional combustion engine vehicles. Responses to a question inquiring about the importance of vehicles being environmentally friendly are summarized in Figure 23, with “this is somewhat important to me,” being the most common answer with 46% of respondents selecting this response.

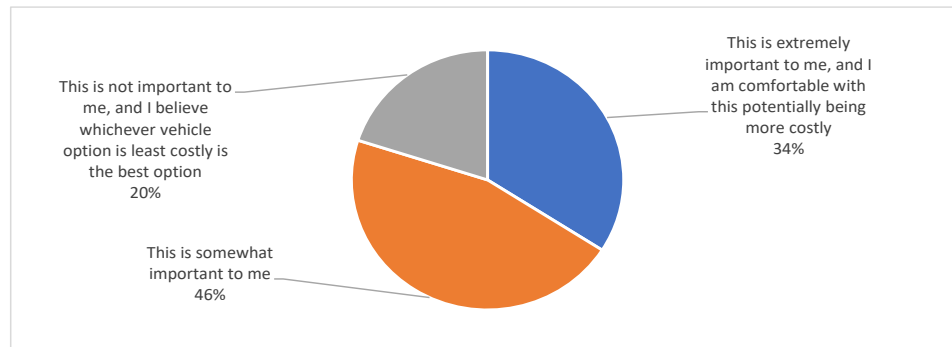


Figure 23: Responses on how important it is that vehicles used for public transit be as environmentally friendly as possible; 392 responses.

**Additional Feedback**

Respondents were given the opportunity at the end of the survey to leave any additional comments, concerns, or suggestions. These 91 comments can be generally summarized as:

- The current route needs to be adapted and improved to meet the needs of riders
- Access Bus option is essential/accessibility is a large concern for both urban and rural residents
- Need for a route that would conveniently access downtown Kingston (Bath Road)
- Concerns about increasing taxes
- Services need to be provided to all areas of the Township (particularly Bath)
- System considered must be able to adapt to variable ridership and different demands throughout the area
- A public transit system would allow aging residents freedom to access services without needing to move
- This is essential for youth to access extracurriculars, education, and jobs
- Comparing results of this survey to previous transit surveys could be beneficial
- Bus size must fit ridership size