

Staff Report



To Council
Department Community and Customer Services Department
Meeting Date Regular Council - 25 May 2021
Subject Improving Public Transportation - Progress Report
Report Number SR- 1741

Recommendation

That the report from the Public Works Division, May 25, 2021 re: be received for information; and that

1. That staff be authorized to release the results of the public transportation survey by posting a copy of the results on the Township website.
2. That Council authorize staff to continue consultation with key stakeholders (Kingston Transit, The Town of Greater Napanee, Lennox and Addington County) on public transportation and engage residents to obtain their feedback on an expanded public transportation system that would service all residents of Loyalist Township.
3. That staff provide a progress report to Council by September 2021.

Executive Summary:

Purpose of Report

Loyalist Township strives to be a leader in Municipal Government. The accomplishments that have been recognized through awards and public feedback coupled with Council's strategic plan clearly indicate that Loyalist Township is a leader now and will be in the future.

A Council objective within the 2019-2023 strategic plan was to improve public transportation. The key initiative was to review, assess and suggest enhancements to transit for the benefit of the Loyalist community.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the status of this initiative.

Report Highlights

- Staff are diligently working on a service agreement with the intent to implement a new accessible transportation service to the residents of Amherstview by the summer of 2021.
- Through collaboration between Loyalist Township's Engineering and Environmental Division and the Public Works Division an online survey was created to gather residents' input and define their public transportation needs. Most of the responses received were in favour of expanding transportation services throughout the Township, specifically, to Bath and the Rural areas.
- Loyalist Township staff and C.A.O. had discussions with L&A County and member municipalities which resulted in an exciting opportunity that would benefit the residents of Loyalist Township and the Town of Greater Napanee (Napanee). Staff have scheduled a meeting with Napanee to discuss a partnership that would provide public transportation services to both communities. Start-up funding for this initiative is available for both Loyalist Township and Napanee, from L&A County, in the amount of approximately \$222,000 collectively.
- Loyalist Township's CAO is working with the City of Kingston to create a joint-use by-law that will permit ride-sharing services, such as Uber, to the residents of Loyalist Township.
- Staff have submitted an expression of interest to the Eastern Ontario Leadership Council for a Commuter Transportation Pilot Project. Staff are not pursuing the pilot project until the community transportation initiative between Napanee and Loyalist Township has been thoroughly reviewed.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications beyond the current years approved operating budget.

Report Details:

Background and Analysis

Background

A Council objective within the 2019-2023 strategic plan was to improve public transportation. The key initiative was to review, assess and suggest enhancements to transit for the benefit of the Loyalist community.

In June 2020 the Technical Supervisor and Senior Technical Advisor met with the Director of Community and Customer Services and the Manager of Public Works to

determine the appropriate method of action to address the immediate needs of the Township as they related to Accessible Transit and the scope of work to achieve the goals of Council as they related to Public Transportation. As a result of the meeting, staff were directed to conduct public consultations with various stakeholders and find a solution to comply with the AODA requirements. Reports SR-882, SR-1579, and SR-1647 have been presented to Council that detail the progress to date. Staff are currently obtaining legal counsel on the draft service agreement. Further negotiations with the service provider will be conducted. Staff anticipate that Council will be provided with a report in the summer of 2021 that will present the final service agreement and will recommend that Loyalist Township enter a one-year pilot program with the service provider.

To achieve the goal of the strategic plan mentioned above, it was necessary to conduct Public Consultation with stakeholders to gather residents' input and define their public transportation needs. As part of stakeholder consultation, Public Works staff approached the Engineering and Environment Division (EED) to discuss a collaborative approach to public consultation. Staff learned that the EED had already created a public engagement framework for their Climate Action Plan and that since public transportation is a key to reducing Climate Change, messaging could be created and sent simultaneously and separately thereby promoting both initiatives with consistent messaging.

Together the Public Works Division and the Engineering and Environmental Services Division created an online survey that was offered online from September through to December 2020. The survey gathered vital information from residents that is essential in decision making as it relates to the future of public transportation in Loyalist Township. Examples of information obtained from the survey are presented below:

- Gender
- Age range
- Employment Status
- Vehicle ownership (own one? yes or no)
- Transportation Use (school, employment, leisure, access to essential needs)
- Use of existing transit route
- Use of expanded transit (rural)
- Accessibility requirements
- Postal code

The Engineering and Environment Division Project Coordinator and Summer Student were instrumental in creating the survey and for providing the attached statistical analysis report that explains in detail the results of the survey. Key takeaways have been presented in the analysis section of this report.

As part of the research that was conducted staff learned that the County of Lennox and Addington (L&A County) employed the services of Mr. Micheal Cooke who was commissioned:

- To provide an environmental scan of best practices or initiatives that are taking place in communities of similar size/scope and relevant available data with a view to identifying viable options, potential partners and sustainable funding models.
- To consult with internal and external stakeholders in order to provide an analysis of current community transportation options, needs and gaps.
- To contact the local municipalities to discuss their transportation needs, ideas and plans.
- To identify community transportation options for the County to consider for implementation including an analysis of the costs, benefits, challenges, risks and risk mitigation for each option.

Several research documents, including the report sent to L&A County by Mr. Michael Cooke were reviewed by staff and in most cases, on-demand public transportation has proven to be successful in comparable communities to Loyalist Township and Napanee. According to Mr. Cooke,

rural residents, employers and other stakeholders know firsthand the challenges of getting to work, to appointments, to shop, to visit with family and friends. Those challenges are highly co-related with poverty and can often have significant negative impacts on the health and well-being of those residents” and “a viable transportation network is key to addressing rural youth unemployment, access to education/skills training, and social networking among youth. Accessible and affordable transportation is key to the socio-economic health of the region for a significant cross-section of County residents.

Mr. Cooke's report was presented to L&A County on March 1, 2021. The report provided five recommendations:

1. That the County agree in principle to establish a community transportation network that will offer increased opportunities for mobility across the County.
2. That the County set parameters for the new Community Transportation Network that favours a coordinated and regional approach.
3. That the County engage a qualified consultant to develop an agreement among current community agencies on a coordinated model.
4. That the County empower the lead agency to procure the required services with an agreed-on scope of services and projected timeline for launch.
5. That the lead agency works with the appropriate County staff and external experts to establish operating structures, policies and procedures.

Following Mr. Cooke’s presentation County Council passed the below resolutions;
Moved by Councillor Fritsch

Seconded by Councillor Kaiser

That the presentation from Michael Cooke re: L&A Community Transportation Network Study be noted and received.

Moved by Councillor Hogg
Seconded by Councillor Kaiser

That the March 1, 2021 - staff report re: Lennox and Addington Community Transportation (Director, Community and Development Services) be noted and received; and further,

- That the Community Transportation Project Report be received for information at this time; and further,
- That the Community Transportation Project be included in a future strategic review process.

Loyalist Township staff and CAO, Steve Silver, have remained in constant contact with L&A County and have fostered an exciting opportunity that could benefit the residents of Loyalist Township and the Town of Greater Napanee (Napanee). Recently, staff have scheduled a meeting with Napanee to discuss a partnership that would provide public transportation services to both communities. Start-up funding for this initiative is available for both Loyalist Township and Napanee, through L&A County summing approximately \$222,000 collectively.

Loyalist Township's CAO met with L&A County CAO, and CAO's from the Town of Greater Napanee, the Township of Stone Mills, and the Township of Addington Highlands to discuss Mr. Cooke's report and to determine the interest of an inter-community public transportation network.

Loyalist Township and Napanee expressed an interest in pursuing a partnership in providing public transportation services to both communities. A meeting was scheduled to discuss the partnership and details related to providing a joint service for May 20, 2021.

Should the result of discussions with Napanee strongly suggest that it is in the best interest of both parties to consider providing community public transportation, public engagement may be required to obtain feedback from the residents of Loyalist Township prior to any long-term decisions being made Council. A series of focus groups or a public transportation steering committee could be included in a public engagement plan.

Analysis

As stated in the statistical analysis report, 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 that 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.

The survey was promoted through the use of the Loyalist Township social media pages, the Township website, flyers posted on Route 10 bus shelters, and a postcard that was mailed specifically to Rural residents. Approximately 495 residents responded to the survey, representing a response rate just under 3%.

Results of the online survey suggest that the challenges mentioned above exist within Loyalist Township and therefore **accessible and affordable transportation is key to the socio-economic health of Loyalist Township residents as well.**

Key takeaways from the statistical analysis report were:

- 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.
- 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
- Reasons for needing a transit system
 - Concerns about old age
 - Responsible method of transportation when consuming alcohol or other substances
 - To access employment
 - Bad weather
 - Independence for youth
- When asked if respondents interested in public transit would make use of connections to other municipalities' public transit systems, 76% answered "yes,
- a higher proportion of rural residents responded to this survey than their urban counterparts.
- 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
-
- 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.
 - There is a desire for more Active Transportation options. Based on the results residents would like more walking and bicycle trails, multi-use trails that will connect our settlement areas, and snowmobile/ATV trails to connect our communities with other communities.
 - required accessibility features for respondents to make use of public transit. include 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.
 - the largest proportion of respondents (40%) indicated that public transportation should be funded using a combination of ridership fares and the general rate.
 - 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

Comments were received regarding Route 10. Staff are prepared and will meet with Kingston Transit (KT) to discuss the enhancements as below. The result of discussions with KT will be presented in a progress report to Council.

- On-demand service vs current hourly service
- Introduce a second bus to accommodate for the morning commute – 6:00am to 9:00am to provide more service during peak commuting time
- Park and Ride Designated Parking Lot - this would offer some residents, who have a vehicle, the ability to travel one location, park, and then take the bus for the remainder of their trip. This would save them from driving, and save on potential parking costs in Kingston.
- Elimination bus stops with low ridership - Could improve commute time
- Direct route to downtown core - several comments were received about this
- ODSP discount program for residents of Loyalist Township - to provide financial relief to those who are in need

The County of Lennox and Addington received a grant of \$262,000 from the Province of Ontario to develop an inter-community transportation action plan. As a first step in the development of this plan, the County engaged Michael Cooke Consulting to prepare a report and a framework that would:

- Be rooted in broad-based consultation with key informants, stakeholders and potential partners in the County and in adjacent jurisdictions;
- Include a scan of best practices and considerations of data from a range of relevant studies such as the project initiated by the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus;
- Include a synthesis of current community transportation options, the needs of residents in all four municipalities in the County and an analysis of existing gaps;
- Identify a limited number of transportation options including an analysis of the costs, benefits, challenges, risks and risk mitigation for each option.

Mr. Cooke's report titled "Community Transportation Network Project" outlined several benefits that the County and its residents would reap from the implementation of a reliable community transportation system. A snapshot of just some of these benefits include the following:

1. Minimize existing poverty gaps and thereby reduce demands on strained health and social services. This includes:
 - a. Increasing participation in economic and social activity in the region;
 - b. Improving the health of citizens who would have better access to the health and social services they need;
 - c. Increasing the independence and escape from isolation it affords people who are non-drivers by choice or necessity—seniors, children, students, workers, low-income families, some tourists and persons with disabilities who may have very limited mobility options;

2. Increase support to local businesses by bringing shoppers to stores, supporting dynamic economic centres and supporting community events and tourism;
3. Increase capacity to attract new residents and businesses;
4. Increase opportunities for youth to work and participate in the social fabric of the County and potentially lower the trend of young adults moving away;
5. Make it easier for seniors to stay in their own homes longer;
6. Maximize human and financial investment in current transportation programs and achieve efficiencies in delivery by consolidating/integrating existing services to create a one-stop shopping experience for riders;
7. Attract new revenue through the provincial gas tax;
8. Strengthen the County's competitive position vis-à-vis other rural counties with robust community transportation systems in place.

The provincial grant includes up to \$200,000 to seed the implementation of the preferred option. The completion of Mr. Cooke's report constituted the initial and essential first phase. According to provincial program criteria as developed and administered by the Ministry of Transportation, the implementation and expenditure of the grant funds must be completed by March 2023.

Since the Community Transportation Network Project report was written with a focus across the entire County of Lennox and Addington it fell to senior managers within the County to determine how the remaining grant monies would be allocated and expended.

Accordingly, County and local municipal Chief Administrative Officers met in early April to discuss appropriate action following the presentation of Mr. Cooke's report to County Council on March 10, 2021. It was concluded that both Loyalist Township and the Town of Greater Napanee would share equally the \$220,000 to develop a plan for enhanced public transportation in the southern part of the County.

This creates a unique opportunity for our two municipalities to establish a partnership that could ultimately achieve many of the benefits outlined in Mr. Cooke's report (as noted above) while serving as an initial phase of a transportation system that could be implemented, in the future, to serve the northern parts of the County.

Operational Considerations

There are two options for consideration:

The first option is as follows:

- That staff be authorized to release the results of the public transportation survey by posting a copy of the results on the Township website;
- That Council authorize staff to continue consultation with key stakeholders (Kingston Transit, The Town of Greater Napanee, Lennox and Addington)

County) on public transportation and engage residents to obtain their feedback on an expanded public transportation system that would service all residents of Loyalist Township; and

- That staff provide a progress report to Council by September 2021.

The second option would be to receive the report for information and direct staff not to proceed with the consultation.

Risk/Implications

There are no risks or implications to note.

Communication Plan

Adoption of this report will authorize the posting of the Public Transportation Online Survey results to the Loyalist Township website. Further consultation will be held with Kingston Transit, the Town of Greater Napanee, Lennox and Addington County to discuss public transportation options.

Cost Benefit Analysis

There are no financial implications beyond the current years approved operating budget.

Relevant Policy/Legislation

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005).

Accessibility

No elements of this report prevented or removed barriers for those with disabilities.

Asset Management Plan Reference

The initiative contained within this report pertains to asset management plan as follows:

- Future Demand

Links to Strategic Plan

Council adopted the Loyalist Township Strategic Plan (2019-2023) at its regular meeting held November 25, 2019. The initiative contained within this report supports the Strategic Priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan as it pertains to the following Strategic Objectives:

- Engage public through broad range of communication and marketing on multiple platforms and creating greater opportunities for public communications and engagement fostering a positive public/municipal relationship
- Improve public transportation system

File or Reference

[Online Public Transportation Survey - Statistical Analysis Report](#)

Prepared by:

Jesse Gawley, Technical Supervisor

Approved by

Alex Scott, Manager of Public Works

Lorie McFarland, Director of Community and Customer Services

Steven Silver, Chief Administrative Officer

Status:

Approved - 17 May 2021

Approved - 17 May 2021

Approved - 17 May 2021

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.

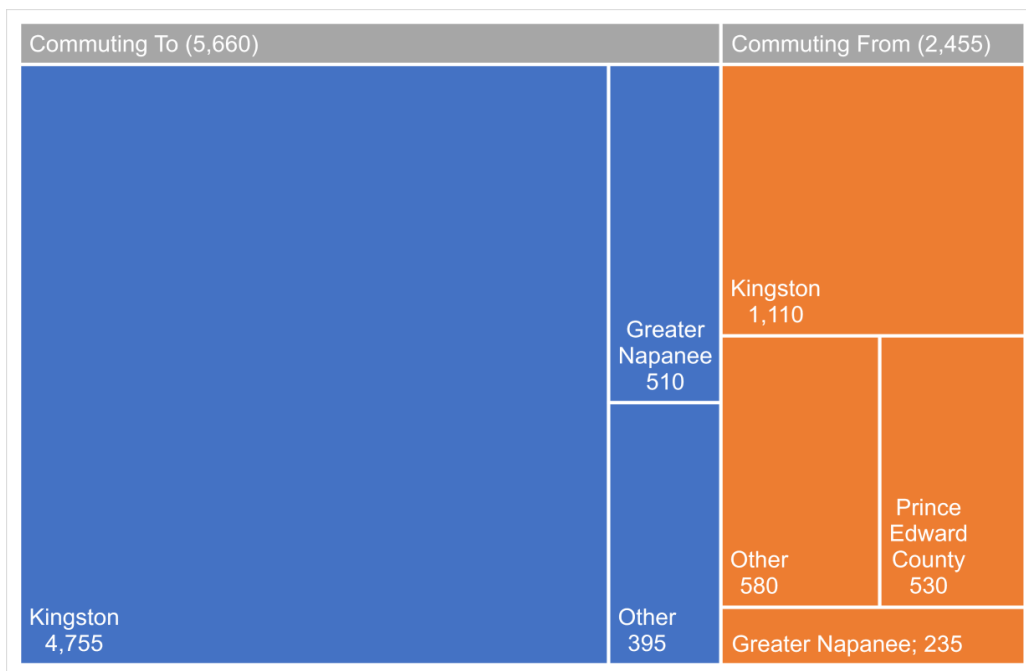


Figure 1 - Origin and destination of commuters in and out of Loyalist Township

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.

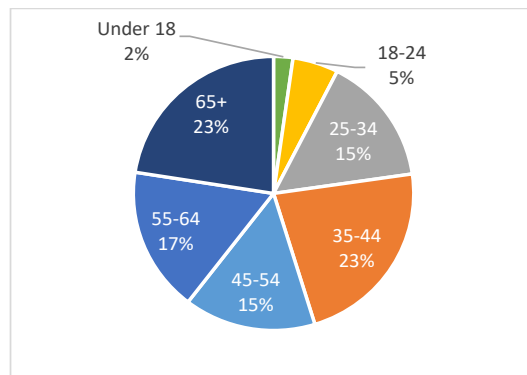


Figure 2: Age range in 10-year increments; 493 responses.

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:

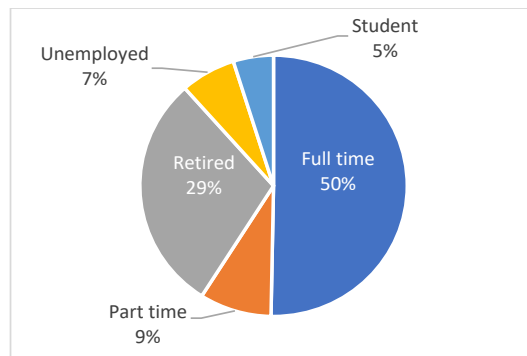


Figure 3: Employment Status; 493 responses.

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.

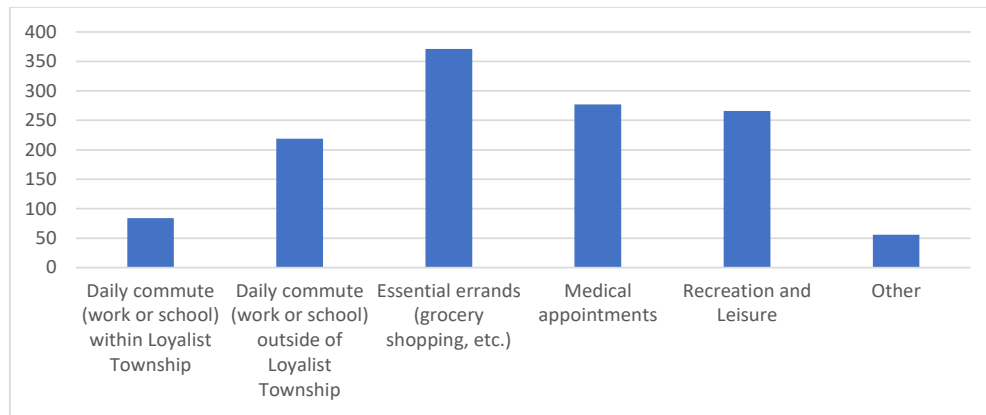


Figure 4: Residents' primary reasons for travel (multi-select); 456 responses.

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.

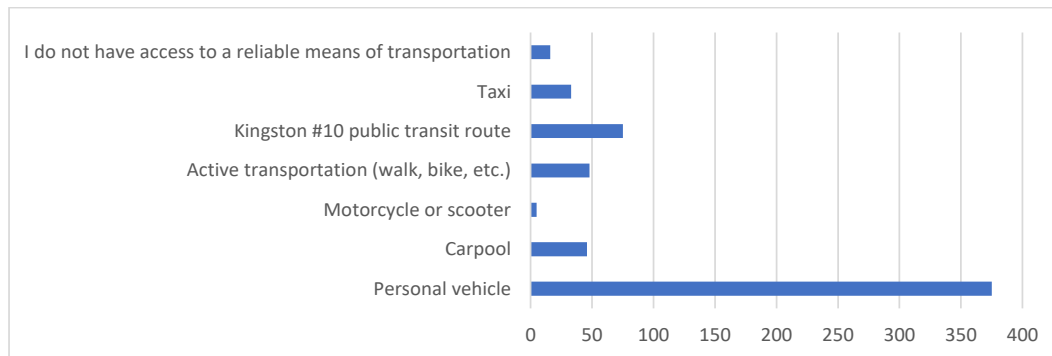


Figure 5: Current methods of travel for respondents (multi-select); 456 responses.

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.

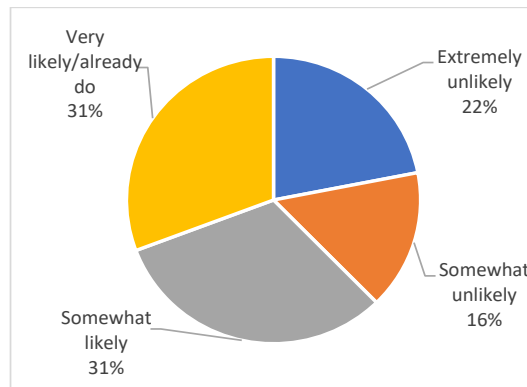


Figure 6: Likelihood of respondents, or their family members, using public transit; 433 responses.

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).

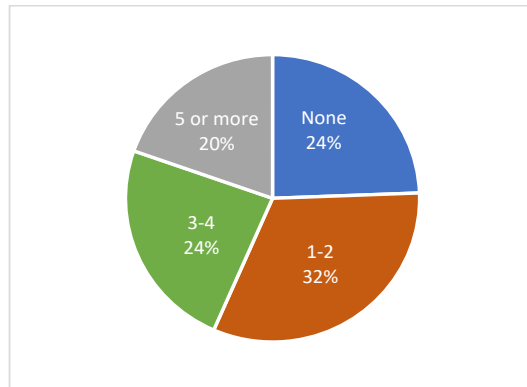


Figure 7: Responses to: “How many times per week would you make use of, or are currently using, public transit within, or outside of, Loyalist Township?”; 431 responses.

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.

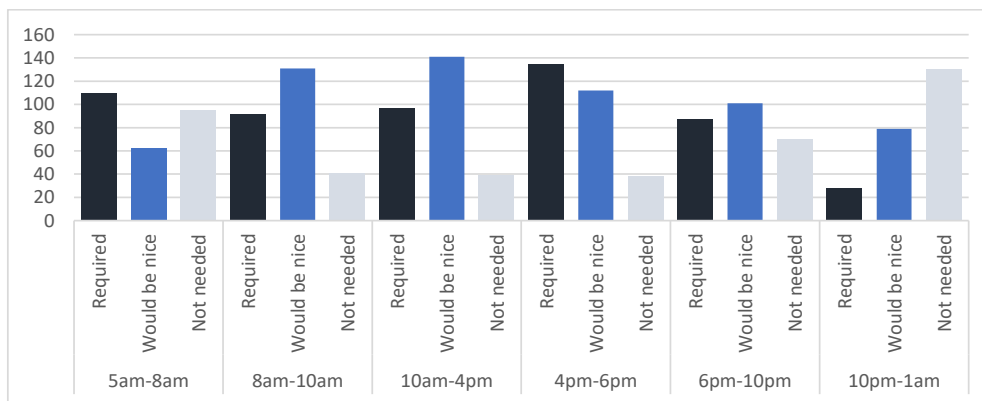


Figure 8: Access requirements for public transit for various times of day; 419 responses.

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

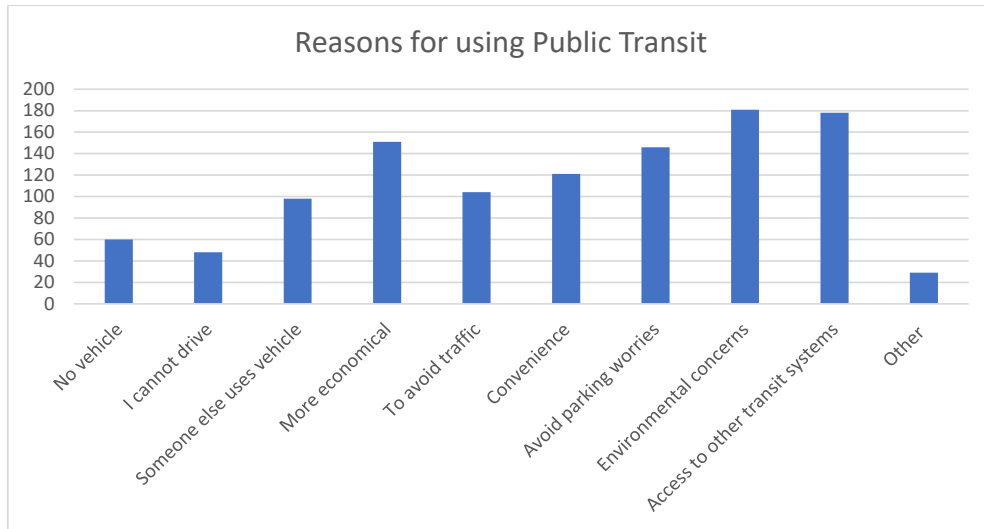


Figure 9: Potential reasons residents would use public transit within Loyalist Township; 399 responses

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.

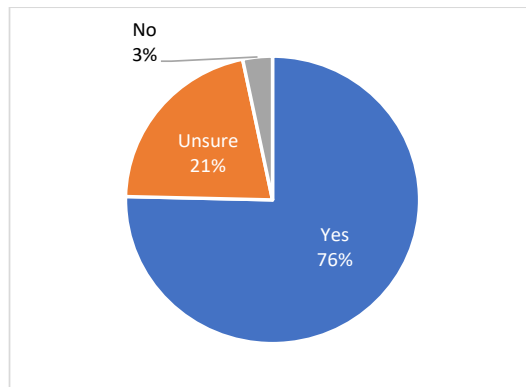


Figure 10: Response breakdown for "would you use a public transit service which runs inside Loyalist Township while also servicing connections to neighboring municipalities?"; 431 responses.

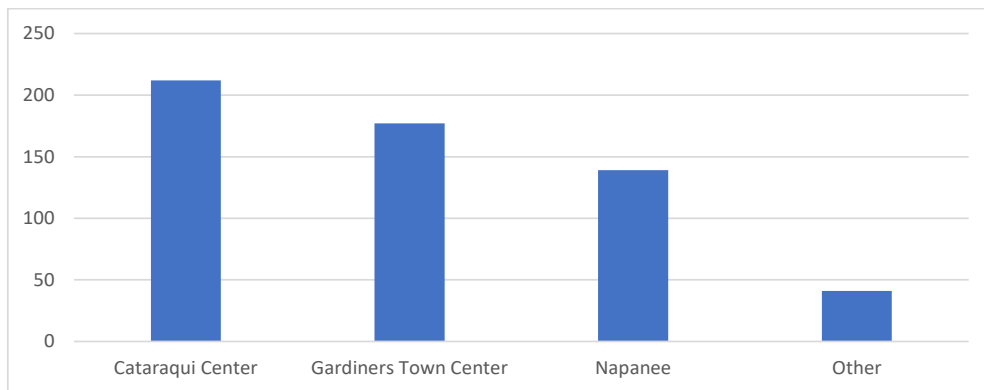


Figure 11: Responses concerning where potential connections should be; 287 responses.

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).

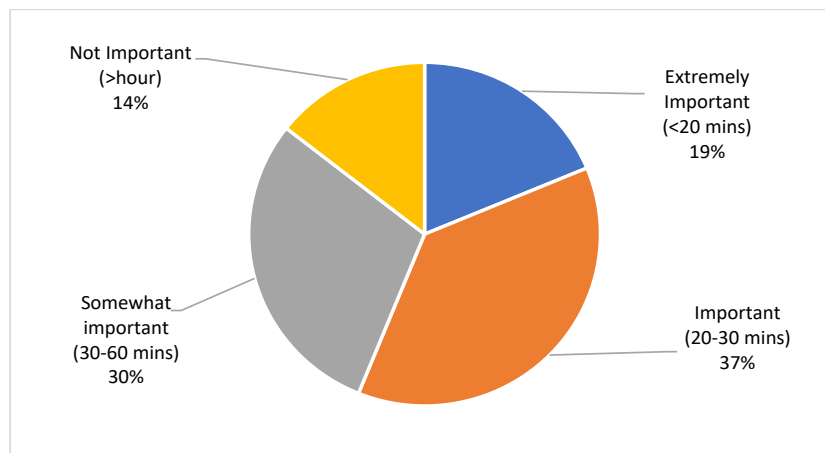


Figure 12: Importance of pick up frequency, given in terms of importance and subsequent timing. Times included next to the measure of importance indicate minimum times respondents would be willing to have between pick up opportunities, with pick up frequency being important as the most common answer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

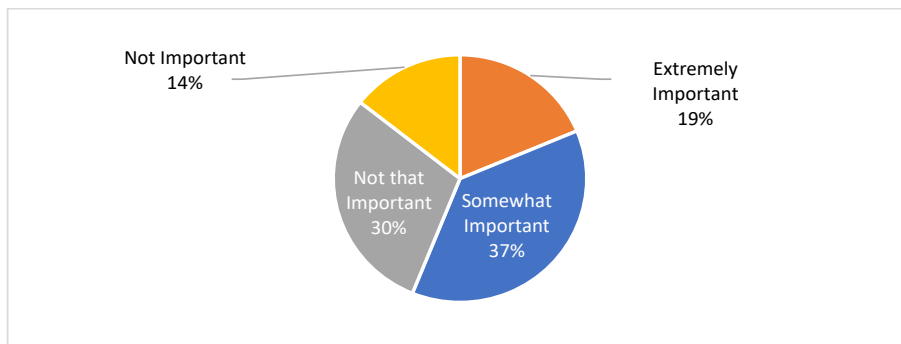


Figure 13: Importance of having a large amount of serviced areas, and the frequency of transit vehicle stops within these areas. These were given in terms of time to walk to bus stations, with extremely important being 5 minutes or less, not that important being 10 to 15 minutes of walking away, and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

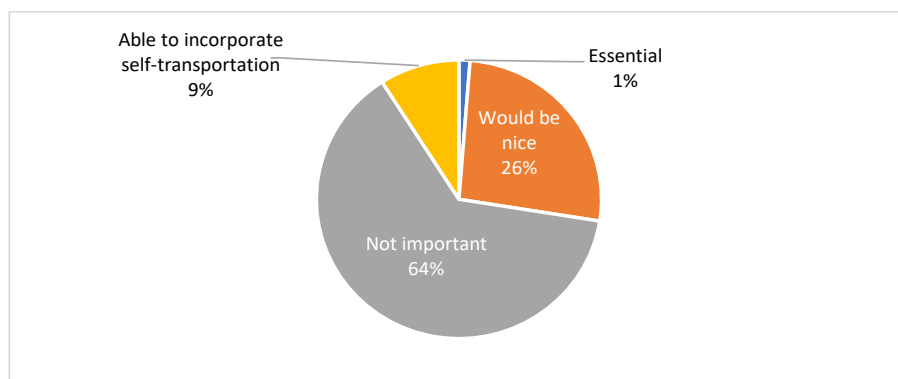


Figure 14: Range of service required to be able to make use of public transit, with "essential," indicating that door to door service is required due to mobility concerns; 389 responses.

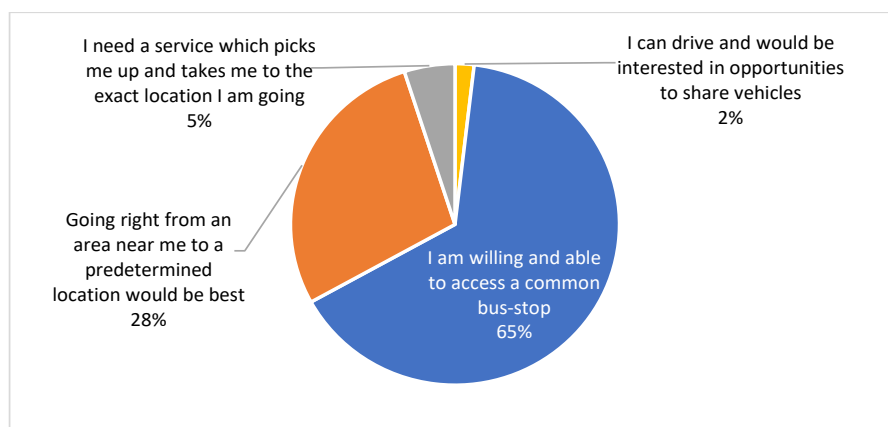


Figure 15: Transportation needs from the range of services that can constitute public transit; 385 responses.

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.

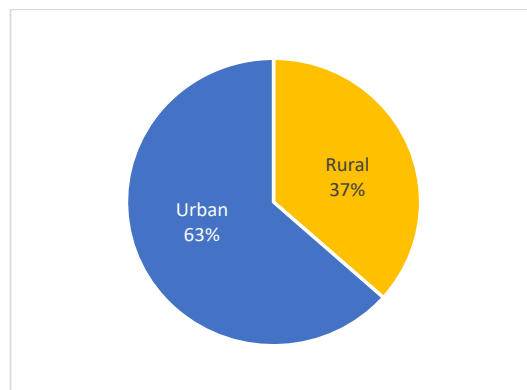


Figure 16: Rural and urban composition and percentage as self-identified by respondents; 473 responses.

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.

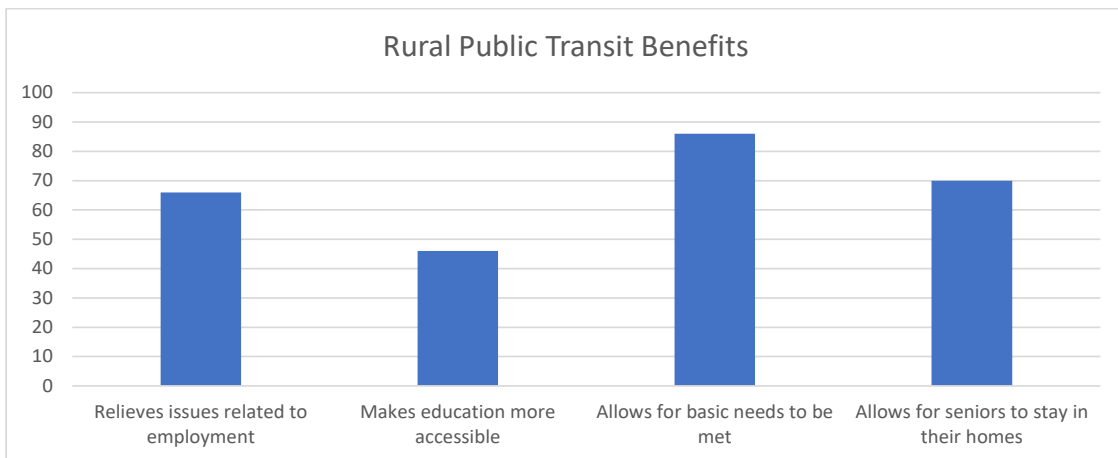


Figure 17: Various ways public transit could benefit rural residents; 140 responses.

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.

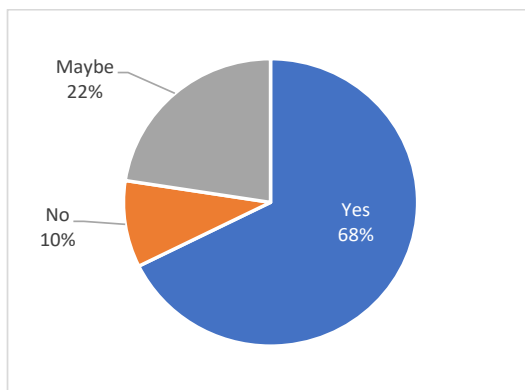


Figure 18: Responses to "should rural servicing be incorporated into a transit system within Loyalist Township"; 164 responses.

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.

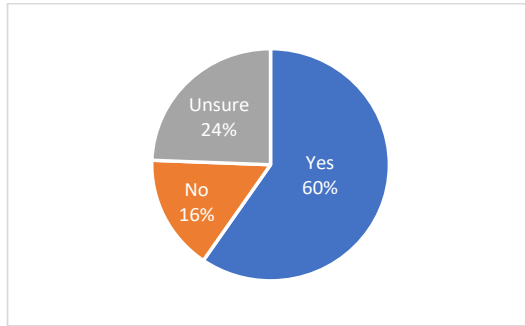


Figure 19: Responses to whether an active transportation network, such as walking trails or bike paths, should be incorporated into the design of a transit system in Loyalist Township; 410 responses.

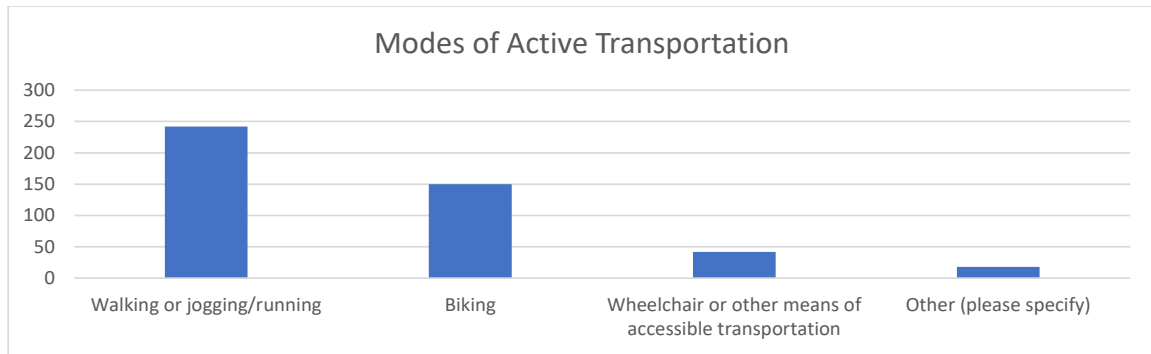


Figure 20: Potential modes of active transportation respondents would be likely to use in conjunction with a public transit system (multi-select); 368 responses.

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.

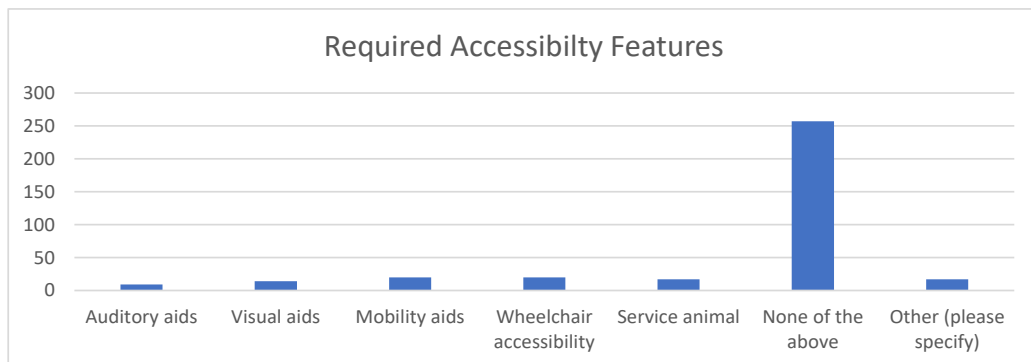


Figure 21: Required accessibility features in order to make use of public transit; 387 responses.

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.

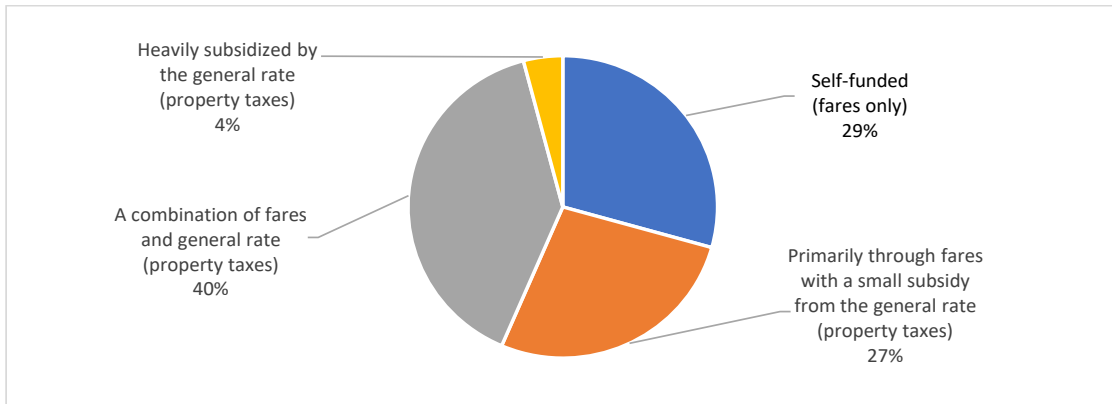


Figure 22: Desired funding methods should a need for public transit be identified in Loyalist Township; 401 responses.

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.

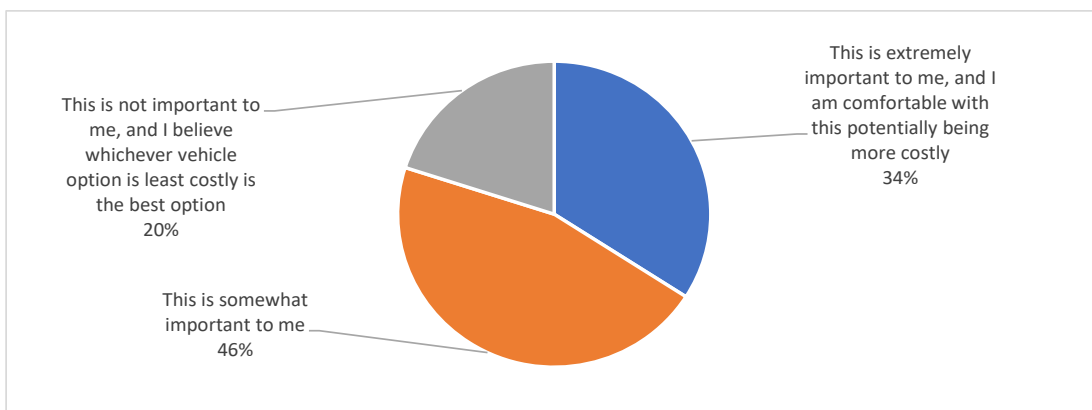


Figure 23: Responses on how important it is that vehicles used for public transit be as environmentally friendly as possible; 392 responses.

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