

FORUM DISCUSSION NOTES
RURAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS



JUNE 23, 2014
BROCKVILLE, ONTARIO

For contributing to the success of this forum, thank you to Judi Baril, Executive Director, United Way Leeds and Grenville; Sayyida Jaffer, Program Manager Quinte, Kingston, Rideau, Ontario Trillium Foundation; Kevin Dowling, Team Leader, Municipal Transit Policy Office, Ministry of Transportation; Susan Stolarchuk, Transit Administrator, Desoronto Transit; and all of our partners in the *Accelerating Rural Transportation Solutions* Project.

ACCELERATING RURAL TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS



The Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges funding support for this project provided by the Government of Ontario.



FORUM DESCRIPTION

The Rural Ontario Institute, in partnership with Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition and Every Kid in our Communities, hosted a half-day forum in Brockville, Ontario to explore rural transportation solutions.

In total, 41 stakeholders from across the region participated in the forum, which included representatives from regional municipalities, health and social service providers, and provincial ministry staff (for a complete list of organizations represented, see APPENDIX I). The following notes were captured during four concurrent small group discussions among the participants.

TABLE DISCUSSION NOTES

GROUP #1

Q1. What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of rural transportation in your community?

- Funding – what is the commitment required by municipalities to quality for the gas tax?
- Having current data on current needs
- Ability/willingness for users to pay
- Can improved collaboration occur between agencies to create an environment with a less restrictive mandate?
- How do we assess the gap/need?

Q2. Based on the information presented here today, what are you hearing that's at the centre of rural transportation solutions?

- Collaborative partnerships
- Solution may be different based on the community
- Funding, especially start-up
- Awareness of what the need is
- Knowledge of community assets building on what's already in place
- Having measurable tools
- Social, economic, emotional and health impact

Q3. What can we do together that we can't do by working alone? Then, how can we support each other in taking the next steps?

- Identify each other's assets and roles
- Determining ability and capacity and then posting it
- Stretch skills and resources to maximize efforts
- Communication and knowledge exchange
- Shared accountability and leadership
- Information sharing
- Identifying gaps
- Leadership, keeping energy up and communication open and ongoing

Q4. If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/clarity on these issues today, what would that be?

- Where is the need?
- Who determines the need?
- Shared ride system (including alternative transportation methods like bicycles)?

GROUP #2

Q1. What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of rural transportation in your community?

- Sustainable funding
- How to get everyone to the table to collaborate? I.e. Different funding sources, including LHINs, social service providers, provincial ministries etc.
- How can we all get together to look at the big picture of transportation, and not just our own specific smaller issues?

Q2. Based on the information presented here today, what are you hearing that's at the centre of rural transportation solutions?

- Collaboration/partnership to pool funding and fund resources to meet the needs
- Knowing the client needs
- Starting the discussion to meet the needs cost-effectively
- Collaboration evolves; more ideas, other needs identified
- Municipal support is the key – don't need to be the centralized model

Q3. What can we do together that we can't do by working alone? Then, how can we support each other in taking the next steps?

- Lots of gas tax talk
- Efficiency gained
- Gaining municipal support is easier; more voices
- Lessens stigma
- We can help more people by working together
- Working together saves time, re-invention is avoided, costs are shared
- Early municipal involvement

Q4. If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/clarity on these issues today, what would that be?

- School buses

GROUP #3

Q1. What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of rural transportation in your community?

- What is the proper allocation of gas tax funding - infrastructure vs. moving people?
- Is car sharing a better solution in a rural area?

Q2. Based on the information presented here today, what are you hearing that's at the centre of rural transportation solutions?

- Partnerships
- Collaboration and innovation
- Municipal support
- Representative data and the sharing of this information

Q3. What can we do together that we can't do by working alone? Then, how can we support each other in taking the next steps?

- Design thinking
- Engage non-traditional stakeholders i.e. schools

Q4. If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/clarity on these issues today, what would that be?

- Subdivision of county/ constellation model should be considered

GROUP #4

Q1. What question, if answered, could make the most difference to the future of rural transportation in your community?

- Provincial funding beyond the gas tax
- Social cost of not investing
- Hospital coordination (block booking)
- Efficient communication

Q2. Based on the information presented here today, what are you hearing that's at the centre of rural transportation solutions?

- System coordination
- Collaboration/trust
- Overcoming cultural issues

Q3. What can we do together that we can't do by working alone? Then, how can we support each other in taking the next steps?

- Collaborate
- Leadership (regional)
- Minimum time period for transportation plan (eg. 5 years)

Q4. If there was one thing that hasn't yet been said in order to reach a deeper level of understanding/clarity on these issues today, what would that be?

- Continued dialogue – realistic discussions
- Political will
- Ontario Lottery Corporation – transportation revenues
- EPILOGUE – What happens next?

APPENDIX I – ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE FORUM

Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition
Rural Ontario Institute
Dillon Consulting
Ministry of Transportation
Ontario Trillium Foundation, Quinte-Kingston-Rideau
Desoronto Transit
United Way of Leeds & Grenville
Town of Smiths Falls
Frontenac Arch Biosphere
Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre
CSE Consulting
Lanark United Way
Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
Frontenac County
Volunteer Centre of St. Lawrence-Rideau
Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario
Leeds & Grenville Mental Health
Country Roads Community Health Centre
Town of Gananoque
Municipality of Merrickville-Wolford
City of Ottawa
City of Kawartha Lakes
MMM Group
Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal
TriCounty Addiction Services
Developmental Services of Leeds and Grenville
United Ways of Ontario
Robinson Consultants
People First
Township of Rideau Lakes
Every Kid in Our Communities
United Counties of Leeds & Grenville
YMCA of Brockville
The Mills Community Support Corporation