

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

SURVEY AND FINAL REPORTING EVALUATION

Ontario Ministry of Transportation

How the Pilot Performed

- The CT Program evaluation found that community transportation is an effective service delivery model to provide transportation to underserved communities.
- Survey results and reports on pilot outcomes indicate that pilots have met the program objectives:

CT Program Objectives	CT Program Outcomes
<u>Objective #1</u> : Improve mobility options for people who do not have access to their own transportation, including seniors, persons living with disabilities, youth, and other residents who need transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of pilots indicated that the CT Program had a high/moderately high impact on improving mobility for individuals who do not have access to their own method of transportation. • Most of the pilots focused on providing transportation service to seniors (82%), persons living on low income (59%), persons with disabilities (59%) and Local Health Integration Network clients (59%). • 25,172 rides were provided to seniors over a 12-month period.
<u>Objective #2</u> : Build capacity to better meet local transportation demand, particularly where it is challenging or not feasible to provide conventional or specialized transit service due to population size or density.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77% of pilots reported that the CT program had a high/moderately high impact on increasing service capacity in their community. • 78% of pilots indicated that the program had a high/moderately high impact on providing service to communities that are hard to serve by other types of transportation systems. • 12 pilots had no community transportation service prior to the pilot. • 50% of pilots served communities with a population under 50,000. • 105,297 passenger trips were provided over a 12-month period during the pilot.
<u>Objective #3</u> : Create networks of coordinated community transportation service that leverages existing services and pools resources to provide more rides, to more people, and to more destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of pilots shared or pooled assets and resources among partnering community organizations, particularly for staff (73%), drivers (59%), vehicles and staff training (59%). • Many pilots jointly procured goods and services with partner organizations to help support the project in a cost-effective manner, particularly for training staff and drivers (50%). • 50% of recipients ranked the program as having a high/moderately high impact on connecting people to existing services, systems or modes.

What Recipients Had To Say

“Prior to this program no one would consider living in Pelham unless they had a vehicle to drive. Now on a daily basis we have some inquiry about the transit system and the connections to regional services...We actually have residents from other municipalities using the transit system to come to Pelham for work.”

- *Town of Pelham*

This pilot helped in trying out new concepts (particularly flex routing) to allow the delivery of transit services to areas that might not otherwise receive it (low density rural area).”

- *Region of Waterloo*

“This pilot project has been very successful with seniors... This service has allowed seniors to develop social relationships with others and has helped their mental frame of mind.”

- *Township of Black River-Matheson*

The Program

- Coordinated community transportation creates local solution to community and regional transportation needs, especially in rural and remote areas not served or underserved by public or private transportation services.
- In November 2014, MTO launched the Community Transportation Pilot Grant Program (CT Program) to provide financial assistance to Ontario municipalities that partner with community organizations to leverage and coordinate existing resources for transportation services.
- The purpose of the pilot was to determine whether the community transportation service delivery model is an effective method to meet the transportation needs of small, rural, and other communities in Ontario.
- The program initially dedicated \$2M in operating and capital funding for the period of April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2017 for 22 pilots across the province. MTO is providing an additional \$1M in operating funding to support pilot projects to continue until March 31, 2018.



Specialized Transportation, Peel Region
Photo source: Peel Region TransHelp



Specialized Transportation, Northumberland
Photo source: Community Care Northumberland



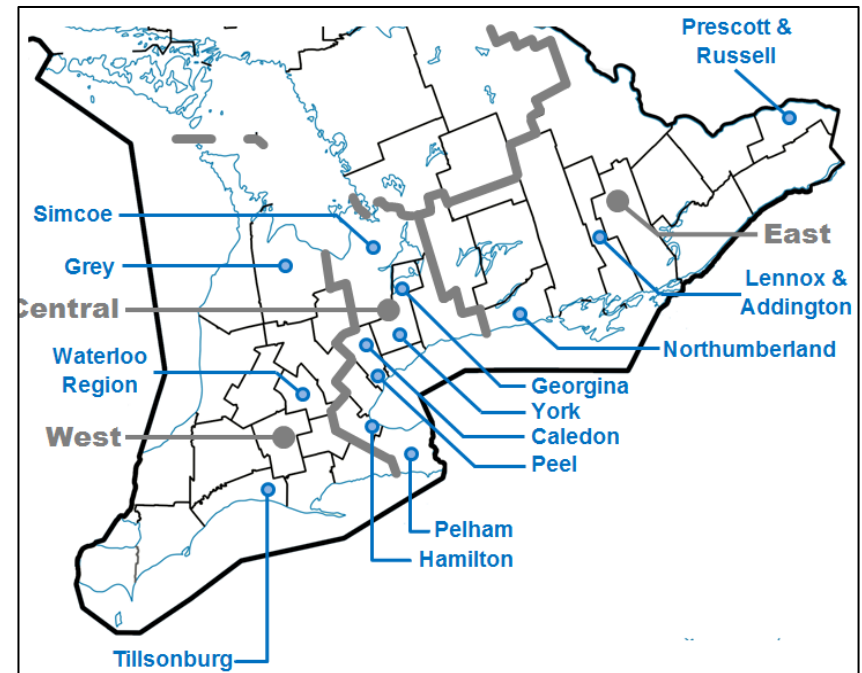
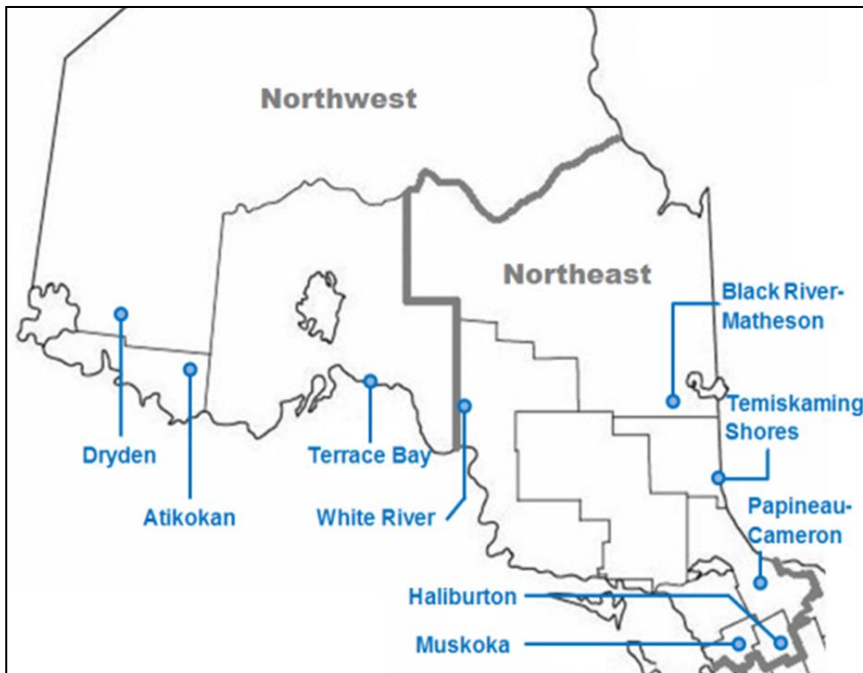
Community Health Transportation, Terrace Bay
Photo source: Terrace Bay

The Study

- MTO undertook an evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the community transportation service delivery model in meeting the program objectives.
- Data Collection Methods:
 - Survey Monkey
 - Approximately 29 questions collecting qualitative and quantitative data.
 - Baseline and Pilot Outcome Final Reports
 - Measured 10 quantitative performance indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of each pilot in 2017 compared to baseline (2015).
 - Project Updates and Service Reports
 - Final Financial Reports
 - Interim Information Request

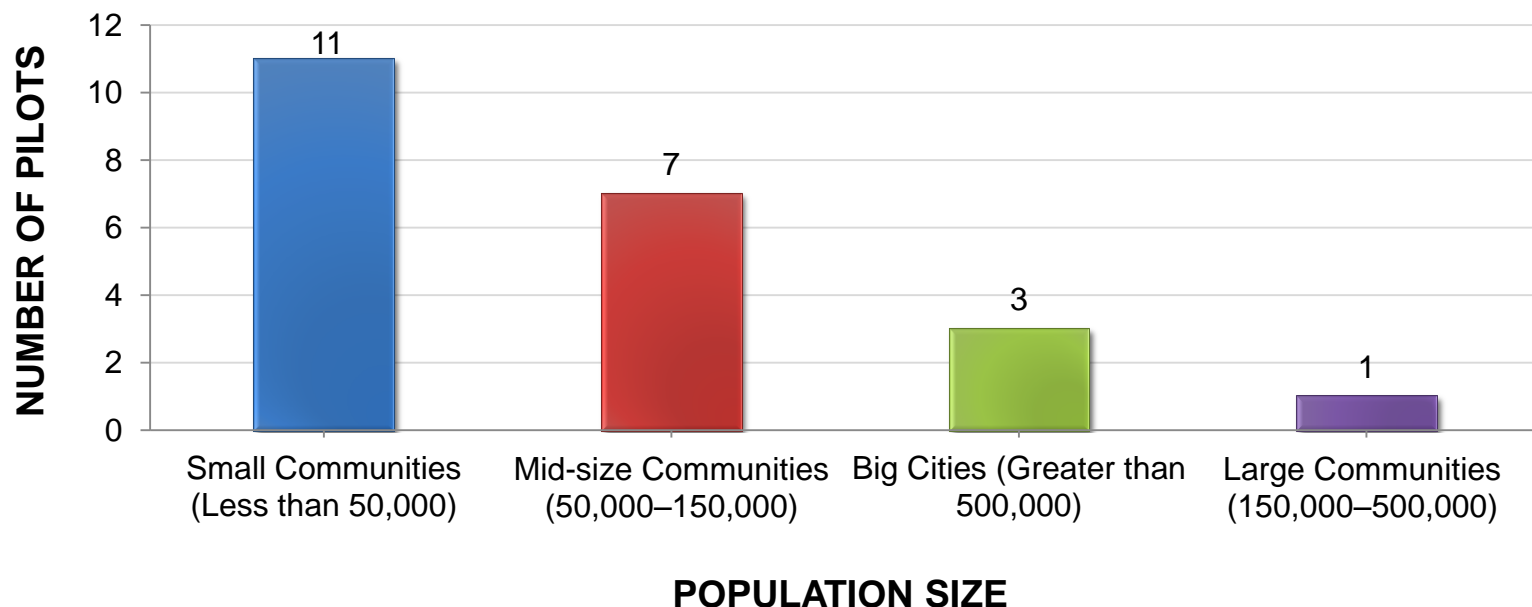
Location of Pilots

- Twenty-two municipalities received grant funding, including:
 - Nine recipients in northern Ontario
 - Thirteen recipients in southern Ontario



Population Size

- The majority (82%) of municipal recipients are small (population less than 50,000) to mid-size communities (population of 50,000 to 150,000).



N=22

Data source: Statistics Canada 2016 census data

Population categories are based on MTO's Transit Supportive Guidelines

Funding

- As part of the initial two-year pilot period (2015-17), recipients were eligible to receive a maximum grant amount of \$100,000.
 - The average funding amount provided to recipients was \$88,512.
 - The range of funding distributed to recipients was \$30,500 to \$100,000

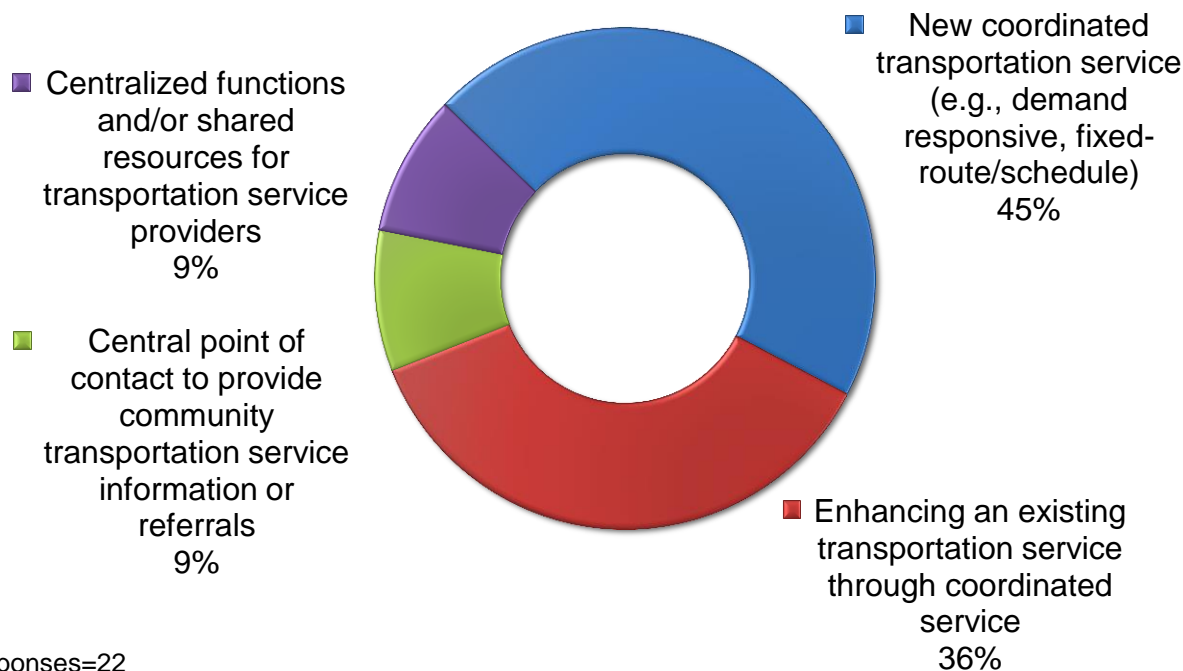


Muskoka Extended Transit (MET) Service
Photo Source: District Municipality of Muskoka

Primary Service

- The majority (81%) of pilots used grant funding to provide new service or to enhance existing transportation service.
- Other pilots focused on centralizing information, referrals, promotion and trip availability for multiple services in the community.

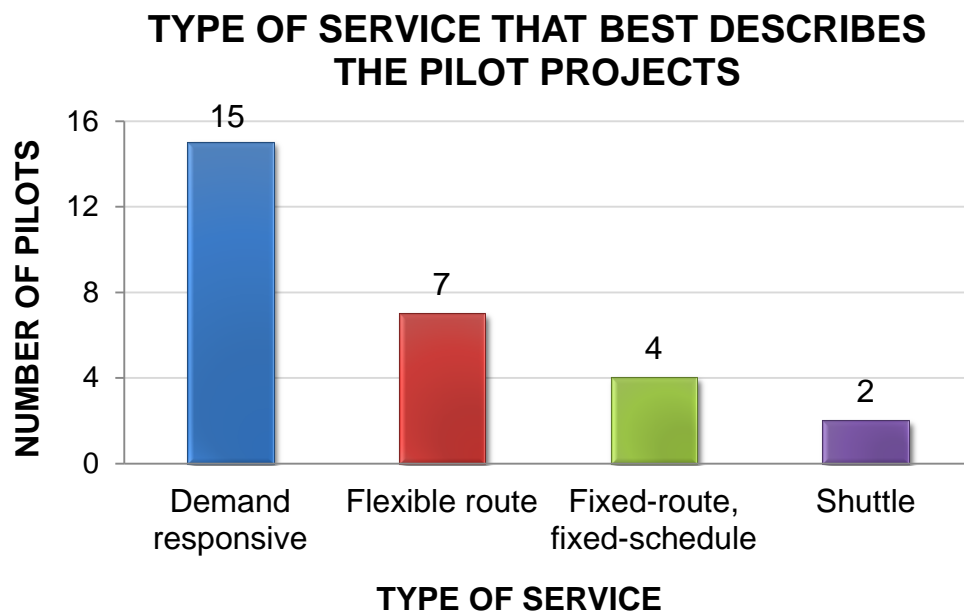
PRIMARY SERVICE OFFERED BY PILOTS



Number of responses=22

Type of Service

- CT service was often responsive to trip requests, and offered flexibility in pick-up/drop-off locations.
- The types of service varied in order to meet specific travel demand.
- The most common vehicles that were used during the pilot were vans with seating for less than 10 passengers and small busses of less than 30ft.



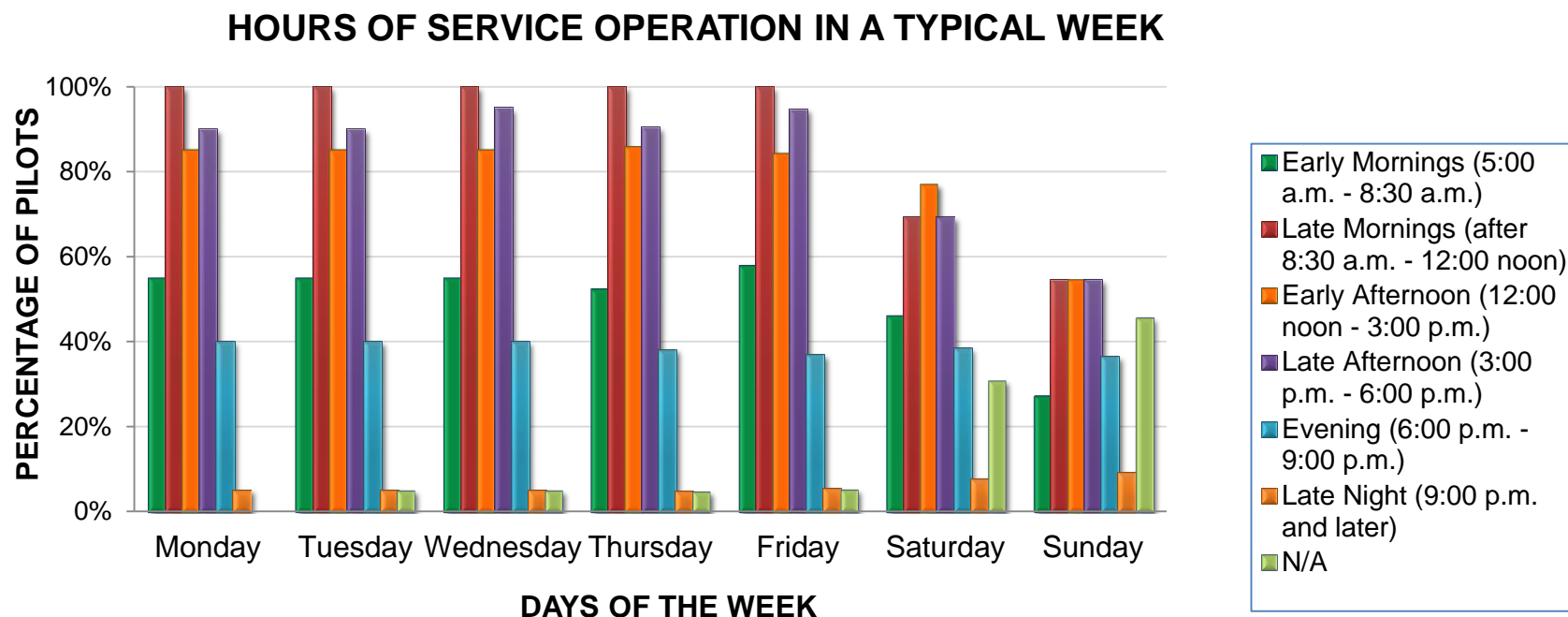
Number of responses=19

Definitions:

- ***Demand responsive service:*** service where there are no formal or designated routes. Drivers collect passengers at certain points (which could include door-to-door service), to respond to requests that are booked in advance.
- ***Flexible route service:*** service whereby routes are partly fixed and partly demand responsive. Drivers are free to deviate away from a route to respond to requests on any portion of the journey.
- ***Fixed-route, fixed-schedule service:*** service whereby vehicles are assigned to particular routes with fixed stops on an established schedule.
- ***Shuttle service:*** service that carries passengers for short trips along busy corridors.

Service Hours

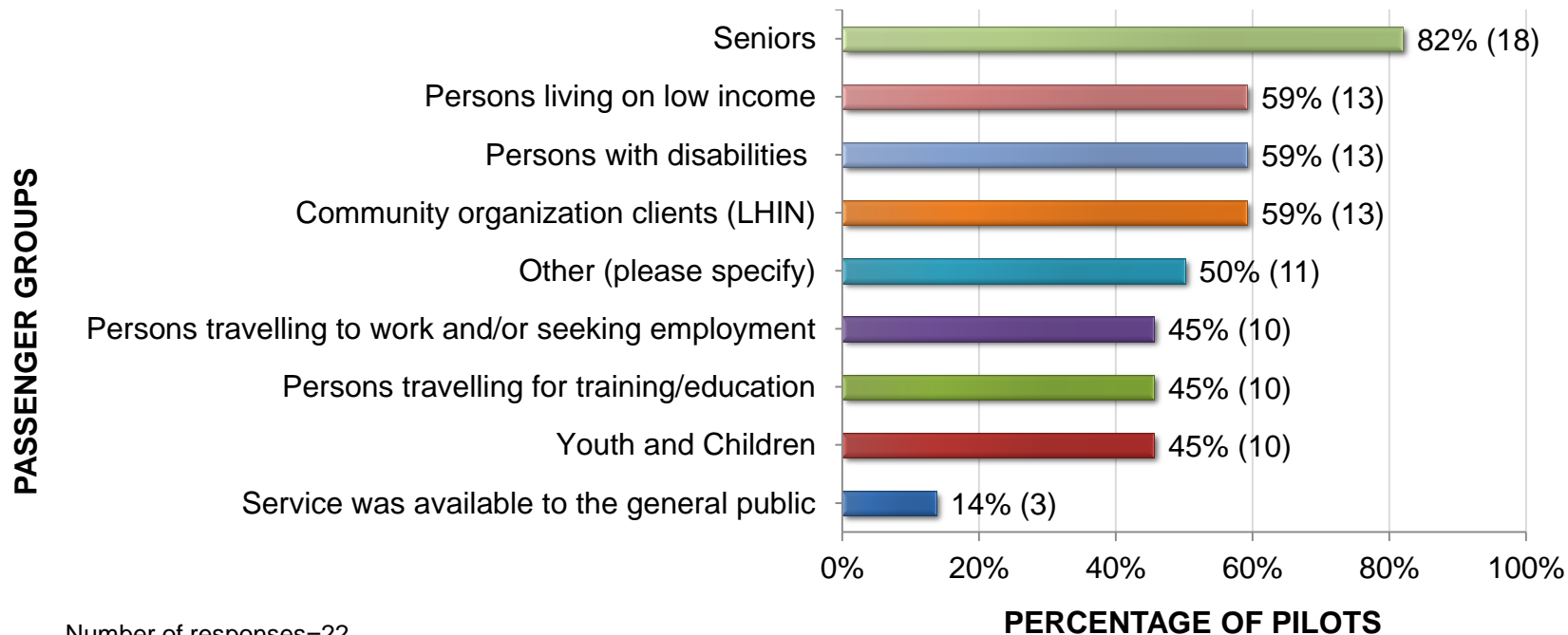
- The pilots operated a wide range of service hours to meet the unique mobility needs of each community.
 - Service hours ranged from 1 to 84 hours per week (n=18)
 - All pilots operated service during business hours on weekdays.
 - Service peaked in the late morning (8:30am-12:00pm) and late afternoon (3:00pm-6:00pm) (n=22)



Number of responses=22

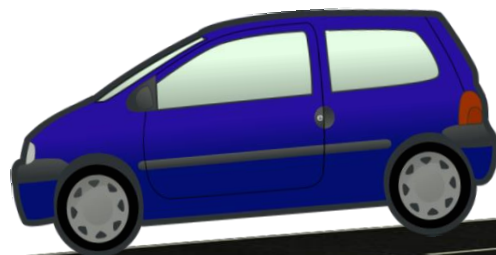
Passengers

- The majority of pilots provided service to targeted groups, such as seniors, palliative care clients, Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients, students, youth and children.
 - Most pilots provided service to seniors (82%), people living on low income (59%), people living with disabilities (59%), and Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) clients (59%).
 - Service was also provided to other groups, such as individuals travelling to non-urgent medical appointments and individuals who face transportation barriers due to socioeconomic factors.



Service Areas

- 82% of pilots provided intercommunity service, connecting residents to other municipalities in the region and/or outside of the region. For example:
 - Community Care Northumberland (Northumberland County) expanded its rural transportation service into rural Port Hope and Hamilton Township and offered a pilot route called the “Western Route”.
 - The Town of Pelham established an all-day conventional transit service with a school bus operator that connects residents to the Niagara Region, to Niagara College, Brock University, as well as other services, such as Niagara Regional Transit and GO Transit.
- 18% of pilots provided solely intracommunity service, moving people locally within the municipality. For example:
 - The Town of Tillsonburg used funding to start an affordable intra-community accessible service operated daily to residents to reach jobs, medical and other services, retail, recreation and other activities.



Baseline

- **New Service:** twelve pilots provided service to communities with no prior service:

- Township of Black River-Matheson
- Muskoka
- Township of Papineau-Cameron
- Town of Pelham
- County of Simcoe
- Town of Tillsonburg
- Town of Caledon
- County of Northumberland
- Region of Peel
- United Counties of Prescott and Russell
- Township of Terrace Bay
- York Region

- **Enhanced Service:** ten pilots improved on an existing transportation service:

- Town of Atikokan
- Town of Georgina
- County of Haliburton
- Lennox and Addington
- Township of White River
- City of Dryden
- County of Grey
- City of Hamilton
- Region of Waterloo
- Temiskaming Shores

Service Outcomes and Improvements

- Overall, the recipients' performance reports indicate that the CT Program has led to significant transportation service improvements in participating communities:
 - Over 28,831 passengers served over a 12-month period.
 - More than 105,297 passenger trips provided over a 12-month period.
 - 25,172 rides provided to seniors over a 12-month period.
 - 416 new destinations.
 - 89 municipalities served.
- The CT Program has also helped to enhance service for nine pilots that had some form of existing CT service at baseline, including:
 - Average of 69% increase in the total number of clients served in a year.
 - On average, the total number of rides in a year has increased three times with the help of CT Program funding.
 - Seven new municipalities provided with service.



Specialized Transportation, Pelham Transit
Photo Source: Town of Pelham



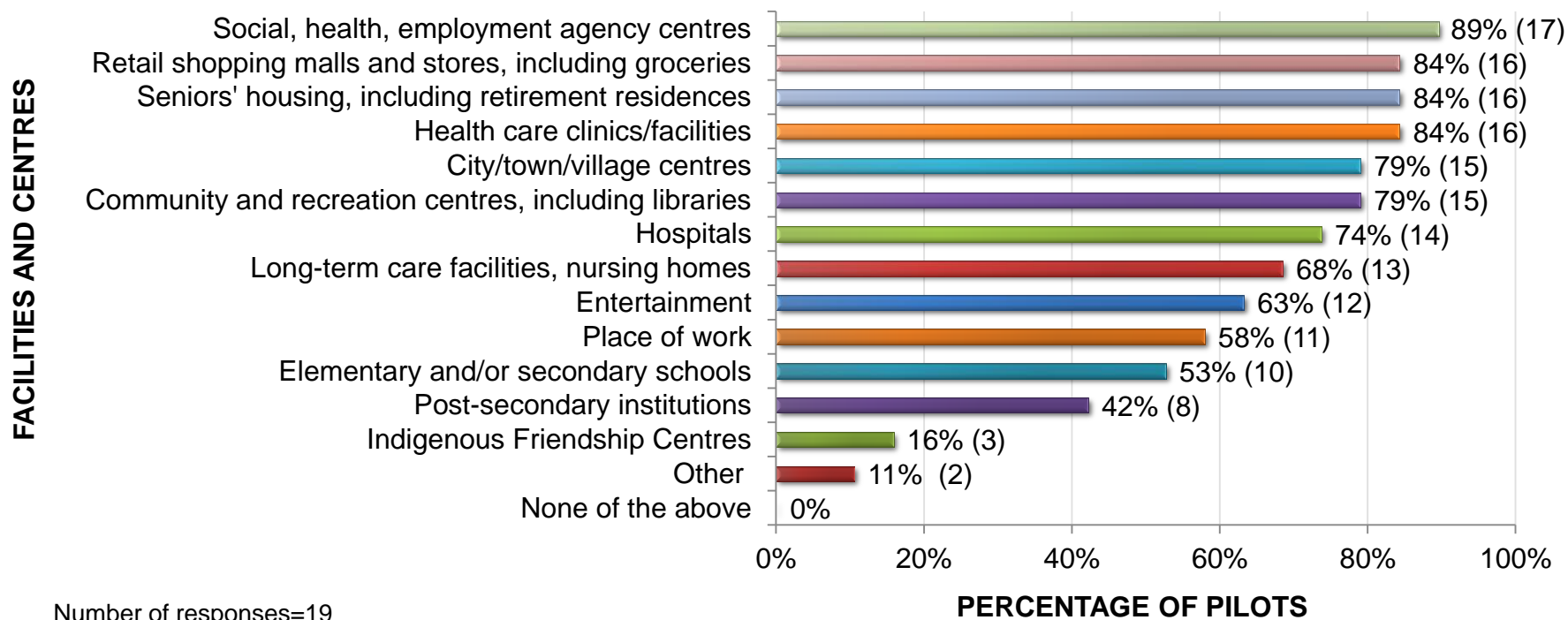
Timiskaming Home Support
Photo Source: City of Temiskaming Shores



CT Initiative, City of Hamilton
Photo Source: Disabled & Aged Regional Transit System (DARTS)

Access to Facilities and Centres

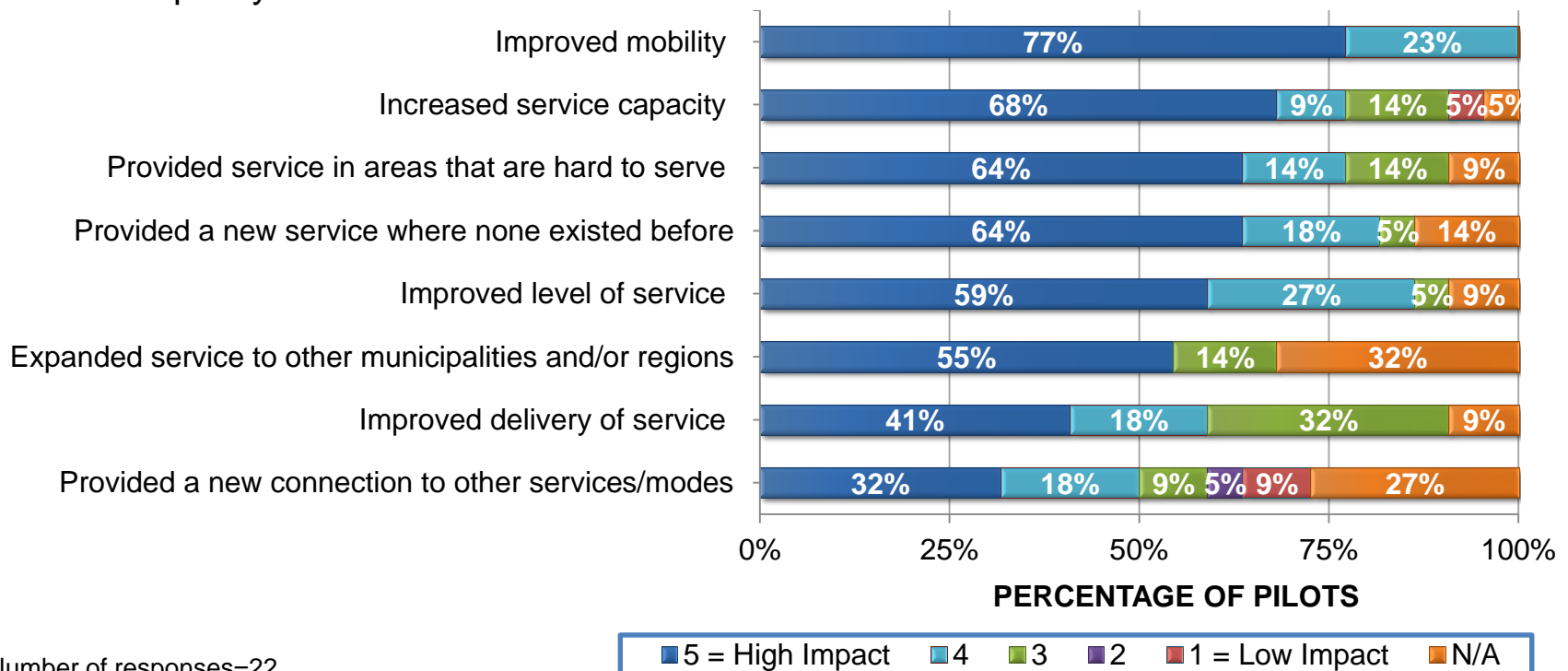
- Pilots helped to improve mobility by offering more transportation stops at community facilities and centres, including.
 - Social and health services (89%)
 - Seniors' housing (84%)
 - Health care clinics/facilities (84%)
 - Retail shopping centres, including grocery stores (84%)



Transportation Benefits

- 100% of program recipients reported that the program had a high or moderately high impact on improving mobility for individuals without access to their own personal method of transportation.
- 78% of recipients indicated that the program had a high or moderately high impact on providing a new service where none existed before.
- 77% of pilots reported that the program had a high or moderately high impact on increasing service capacity.

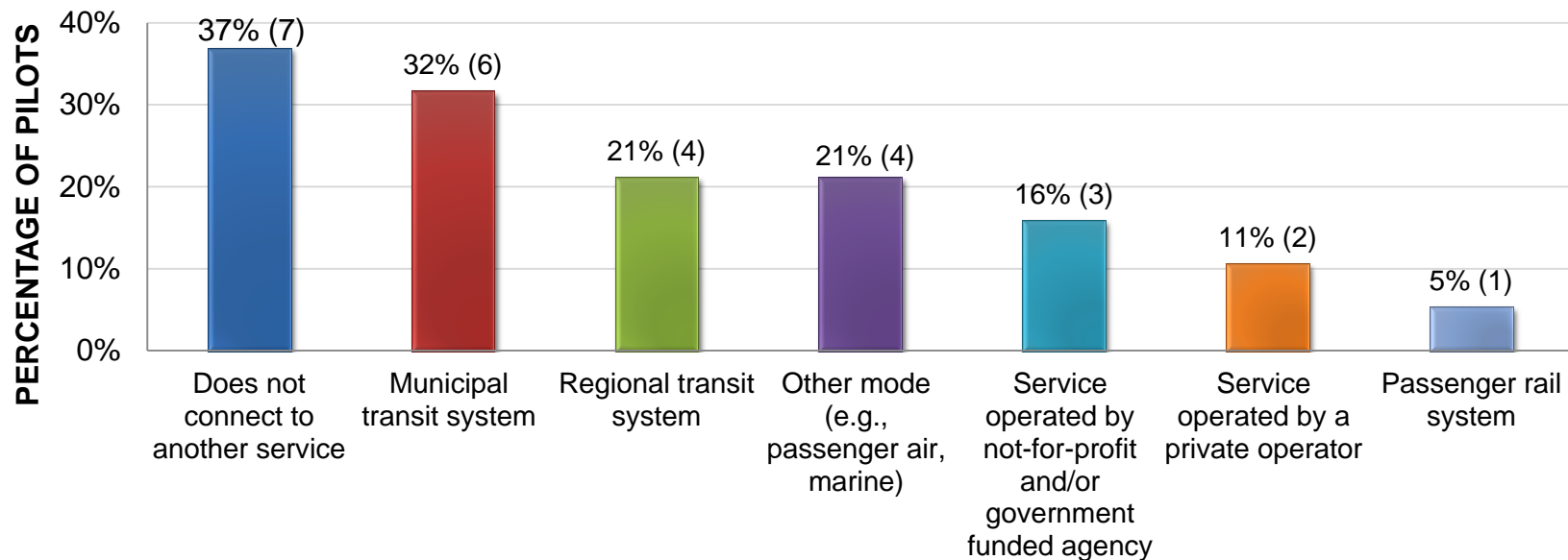
ACHIEVING CT BENEFITS



Number of responses=22

Service Connections

- 50% of recipients ranked the CT Program as having a high or moderately high impact on connecting people to other existing transportation services, systems or modes. The top three connecting services or modes include:
 - Municipal transit systems (32%)
 - Regional Transit system (21%)
 - Passenger air, marine, water taxi/ferry, and other modes (21%)

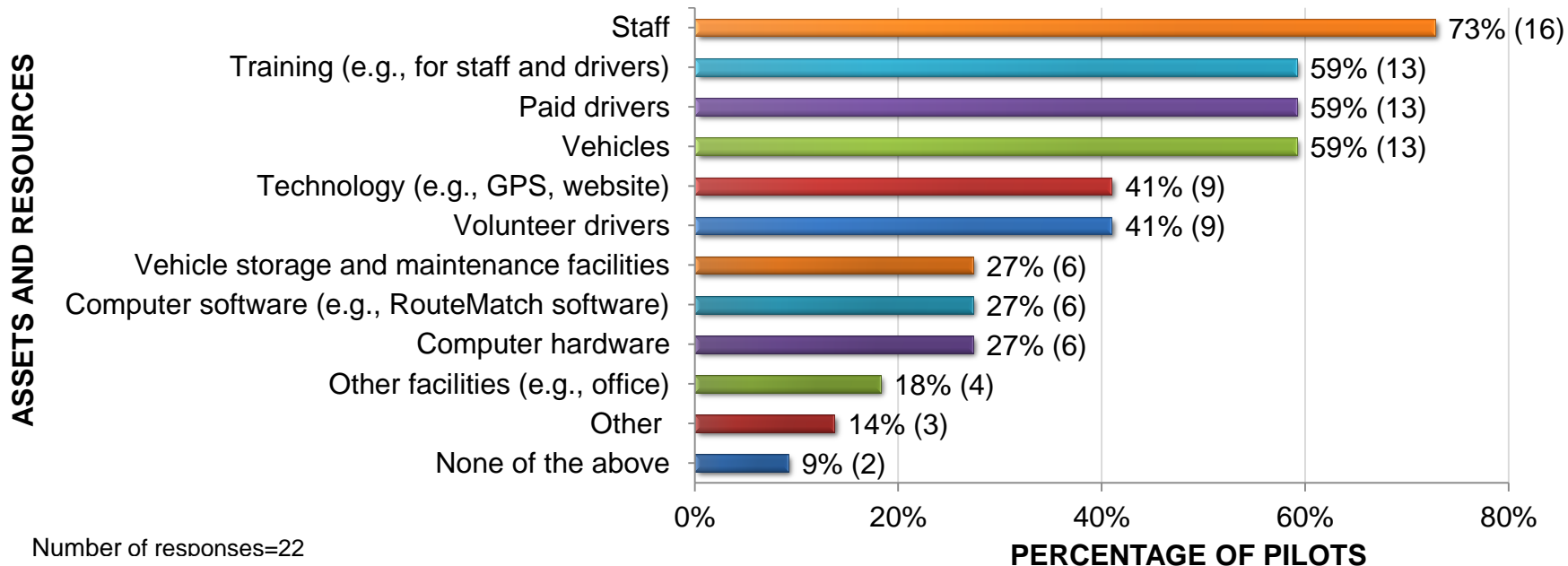


CONNECTING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/MODES

Number of responses=19

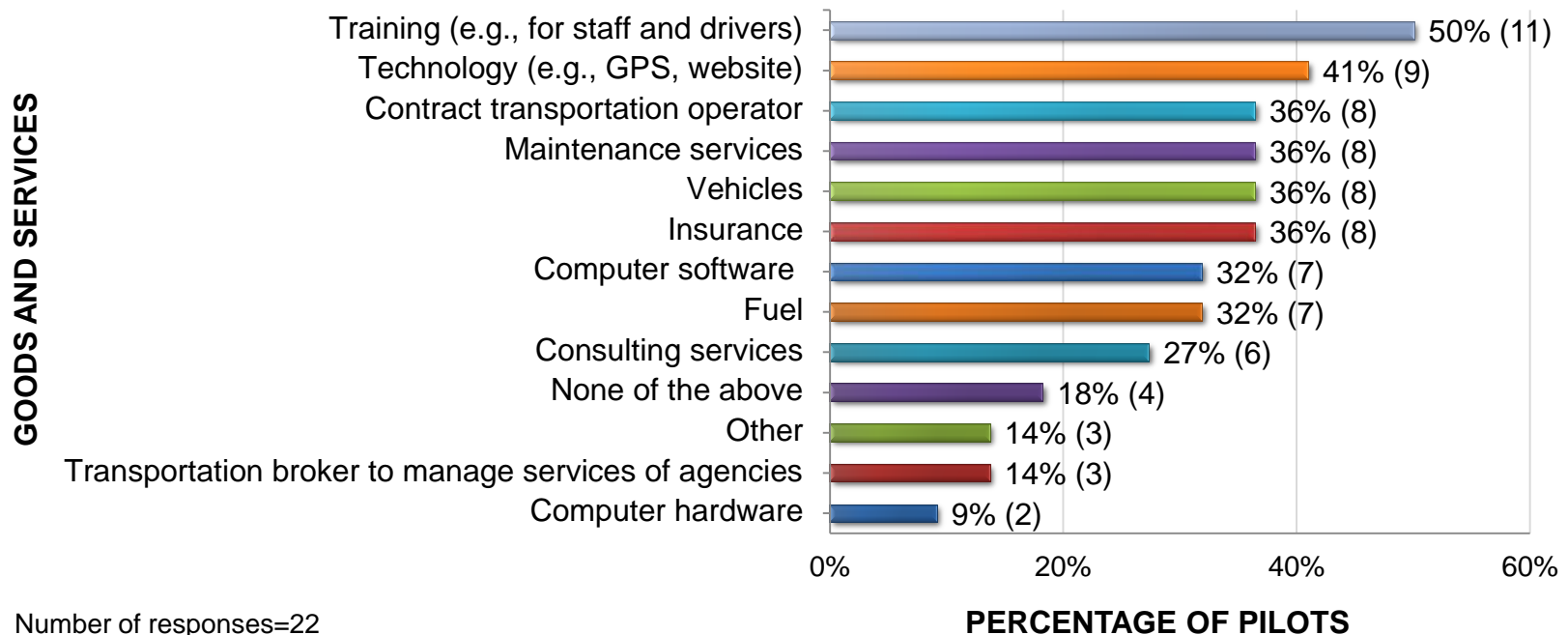
Shared Assets and Resources

- The most common types of shared/pooled assets and resources among partnering organizations are:
 - Staff (73%)
 - Paid drivers (59%)
 - Vehicles (59%)
 - Training for staff and drivers (59%)



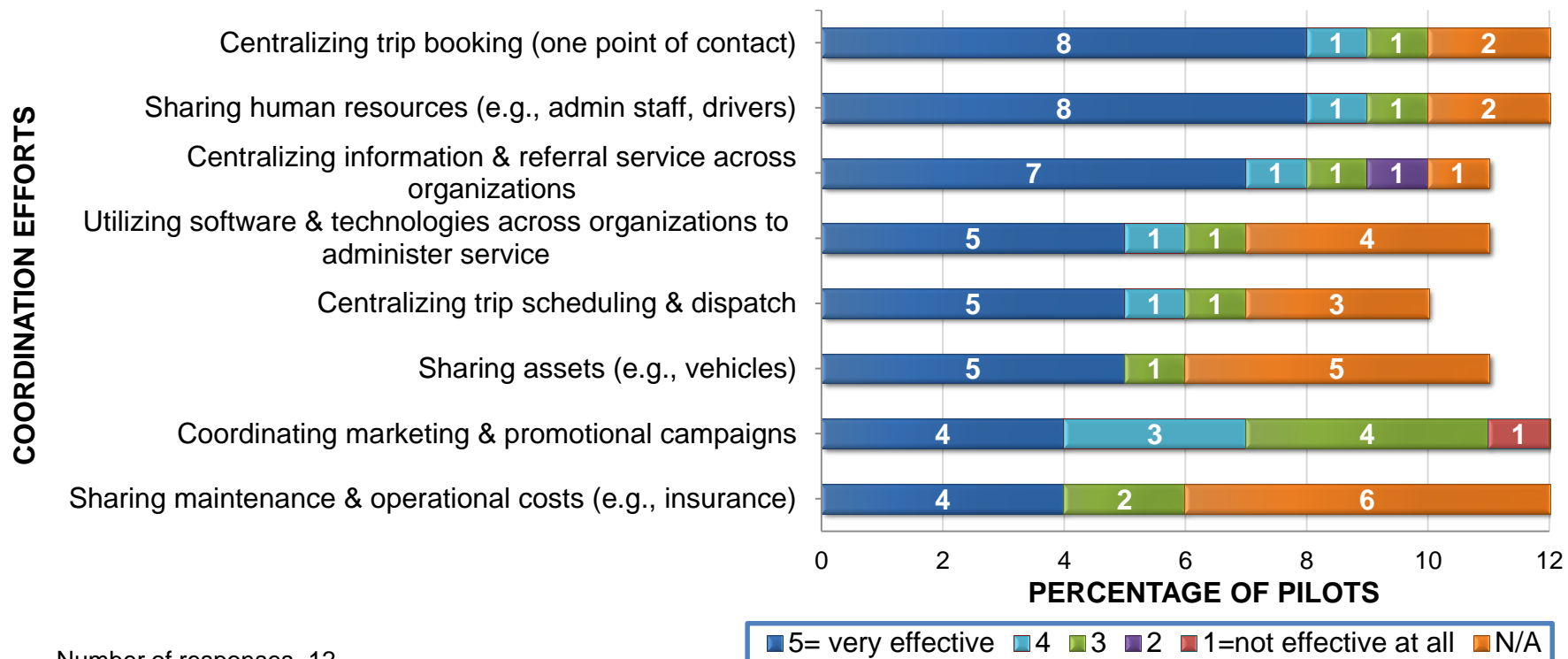
Joint Procurement

- There were a range of goods and services jointly procured with partner organizations, from training staff and drivers to fuel and computer hardware.
 - Other responses include a transportation navigator (mobility manager), online transportation hub and a ride share website.



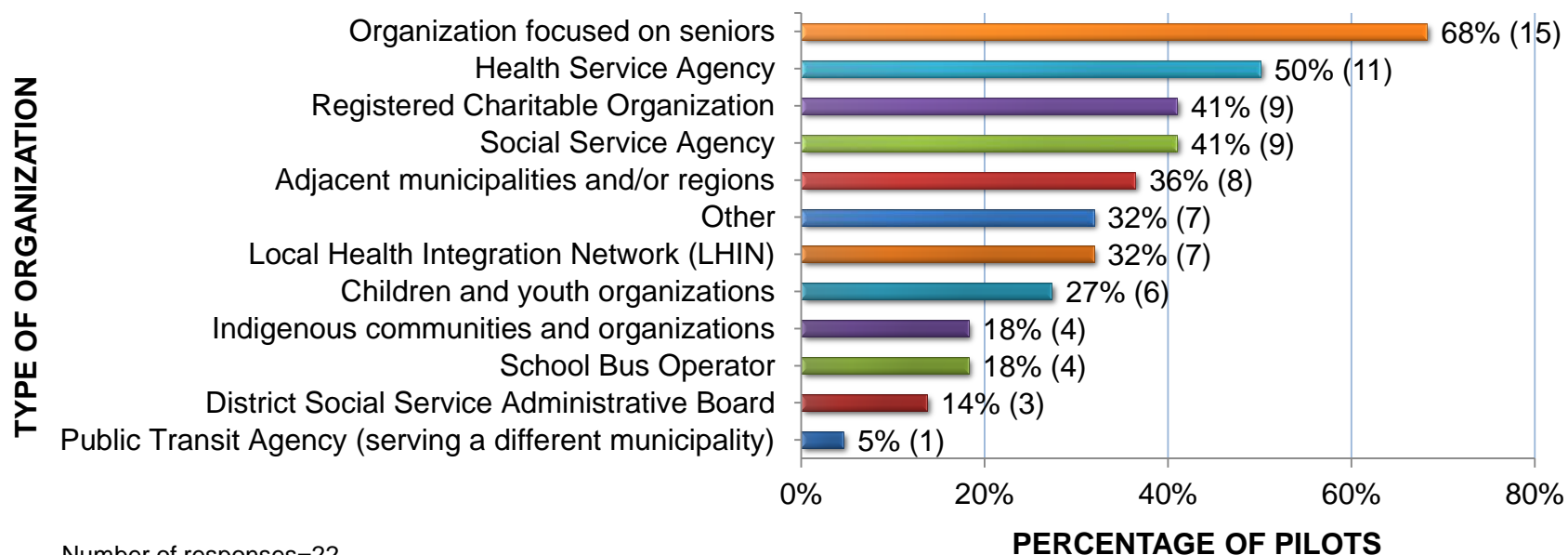
Coordination Effectiveness

- Pilots ranked coordination efforts as very effective or effective in some of the following areas:
 - Centralizing trip bookings (75%)
 - Sharing human resources (75%)
 - Centralizing information and referral service across community organizations (72%)



Partners

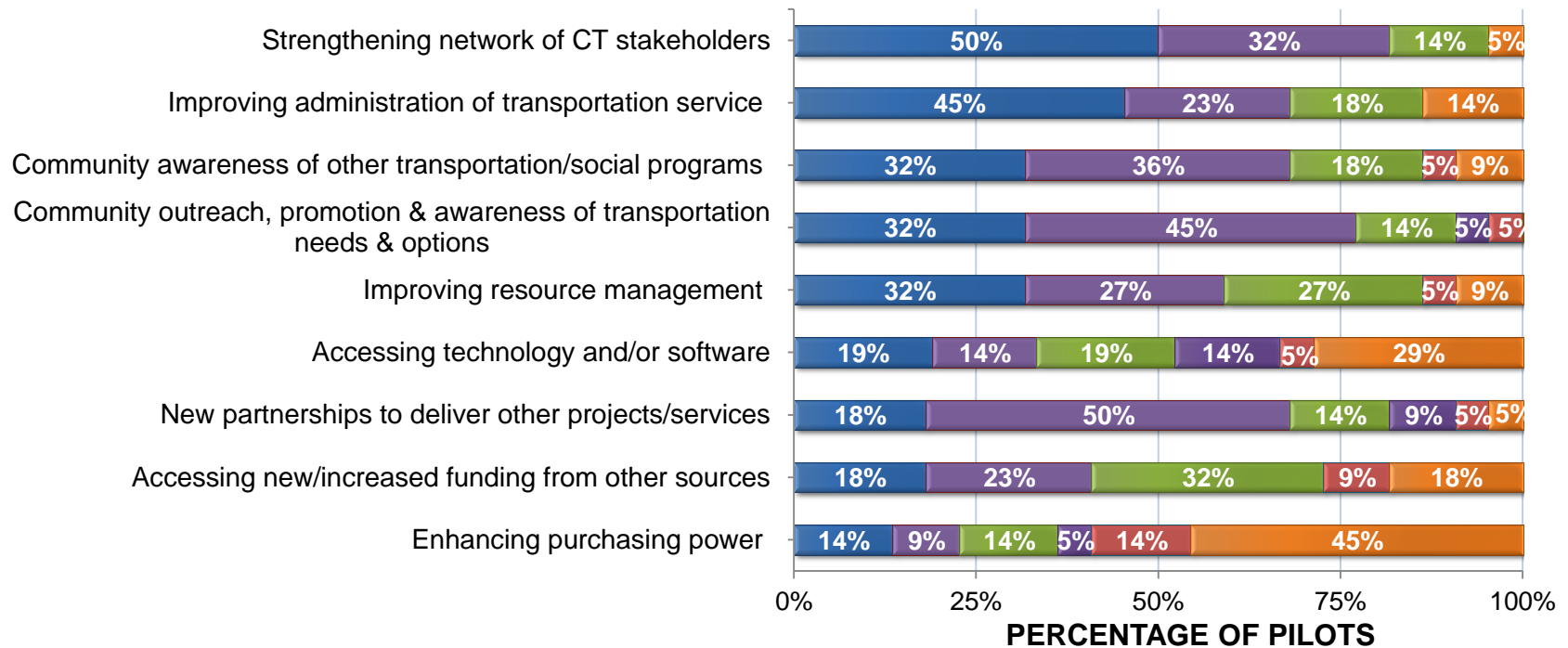
- Municipalities partnered with a range of community organizations. The most common community partners include:
 - Organizations focused on seniors (68%)
 - Health service agencies (50%)
 - Other partnerships included not-for-profit agencies, community service organizations, school bus operators and adjacent municipalities.



Partnership Effectiveness

- Pilots ranked partnerships as very effective or effective in some the following areas:
 - Strengthening network of CT stakeholders (82%)
 - Community outreach, promotion and awareness of transportation needs and options (77%)
 - Improving administration of transportation service (68%)
 - Raising community awareness of transportation services and other programs in the area (68%)
 - New partnerships and collaboration to deliver other projects/services (68%)

PLANNING & OPERATING SERVICE

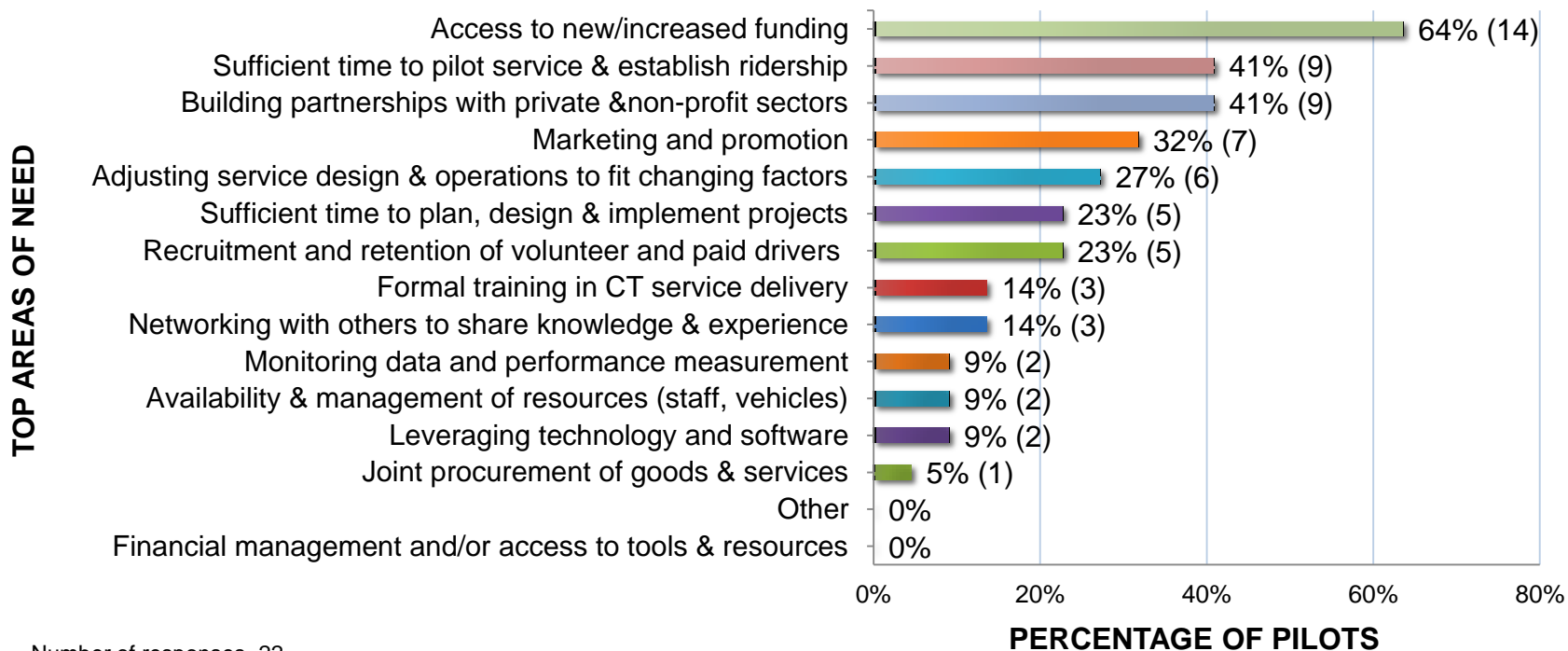


Number of responses=22

■ 5 = very effective ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1 = not effective at all ■ N/A

Areas to Help Develop & Sustain CT Initiatives

- The top three areas of need to help pilot communities develop and sustain CT initiatives now and in the near future, include:
 - Access to new or increased funding (64%)
 - Sufficient time to pilot service and establish ridership (41%)
 - Building partnerships (41%)



Number of responses=22

Conclusion

- The community transportation approach is an effective method to meet the transportation needs of small, rural and underserved areas in Ontario:
 - Piloting communities customized transportation service to meet the communities unique needs using community resources.
 - Pilot partnerships strengthened community networks and improved the administration of transportation services.
 - Sharing resources and assets increased transportation capacity and mobility options for smaller communities.