

Peel Halton Transportation Study Challenges and Opportunities

Peel Halton  Workforce
Development
Group

 **LEPC** PEEL-HALTON
LOCAL EMPLOYMENT
PLANNING COUNCIL



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Executive Summary



Results of community consultations conducted as part of the Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC) in February 2018 indicate that transportation access for employers, workers, government, and service providers in the smaller municipalities of Milton, Caledon, and Halton Hills is a key barrier to employment.

Stakeholders stated that access to affordable and reliable transportation for the local workforce is a factor affecting workforce planning and development for industry in these communities. This assessment has been reflected in local governments' transportation plans, including the Milton Transportation Master Plan, the Caledon Transportation Feasibility Study, and the Halton Hills Transit Service Strategy.

The lack of affordable and reliable transit has created a barrier for many low-wage workers who might otherwise be able to find stable and secure employment opportunities in these municipalities. Thus, the need for an inter-regional public transit system is increasing. However, given the required financial investment and time required, to build public transit infrastructure, alternative transportation solutions need to be developed to address the short-term access concerns that have been identified.

As a result, the Peel Halton Workforce Development Group (PHWDG) undertook a research study designed to find innovative transportation solutions to the aforementioned challenges. The objectives of this report aimed to achieve the following:

- Increase awareness of transportation access barriers for workers in the target communities,
- Promote awareness of innovative transportation access opportunities,
- Find potential solutions to address transportation access issues in Peel Halton municipalities,
- Improve collaboration between government, employers, and service providers to address transportation access barriers for workers in the community.

Regarding the research study's methodology, PHWDG employed a mixed-methods approach where qualitative data were obtained from employers and residents in order to better understand the unique transportation issues experienced in Peel and Halton. These data were obtained through surveys, interviews and focus groups for both employers and residents/workers.

As a result, the Peel Halton Workforce Development Group undertook a research study designed to find innovative transportation solutions...



In addition to the innovative strategies provided by the panelists pointed out the transportation challenges presently faced as well as innovative approaches to address these challenges.

A secondary data analysis was conducted focusing on commuting patterns of Peel Halton municipalities in order to illustrate top commuting destinations and origins. Next to that, three case studies were presented to showcase innovative solutions from within and outside of Peel and Halton, and a literature review was prepared which explored best practices in responding to transportation challenges in other jurisdictions.

Lastly, PHWDG organized a transportation forum on January 31st, 2020, which brought together key stakeholders from Peel Halton municipalities such as municipal transportation management, large local employers, academia, economic development representatives, and members from business associations. At the forum, PHWDG reported on the key findings from the 2019 transportation study.

The research findings were followed by a panel presentation, which consisted of guest speakers from the Employer Individualized Marketing program at the Region of Peel, the Uber initiative at the Town of Innisfil, and Belleville's On-demand Transit project through Pantonium Inc. The key research findings delivered by PHWDG in addition to the innovative strategies provided by the panelists pointed out the transportation challenges presently faced as well as innovative approaches to address these challenges.

Most importantly, this forum was a route to refuel the conversation around ways to overcome transportation challenges in Peel and Halton.



Literature Review

This literature review explores best practices responding to the challenge of transportation barriers affecting employers and employees in locations poorly served by public transit.

Best practices for transportation barriers in different provinces throughout Canada

The following examples will highlight approaches that have been effective in small-size municipalities in different provinces throughout Canada:

- 1) **In the province of British Columbia**, innovative transit partnerships have emerged in order to facilitate commuting in small municipalities. For instance, in Terrace, both Trail and Fort St. John transit systems work together with school bus operators. Ski resorts in Kimberly, Golden, Fernie and Red Mountain offer contractual services to local municipalities to facilitate mobility.¹ Moreover, in the Regional District of East Kootenay, Elk Valley Transit offers transportation to the Cranbrook Hospital for medical patients in the nearby towns; however, residents can also take advantage of this route if buses are not full.
- 2) **The Northern Alberta Development Council** put together a report that discusses best practices for small communities with populations ranging from 5,000 to 50,000. The low population densities and large distances between communities in rural areas and small towns has resulted in little to no investment in public transportation infrastructure. Nevertheless, transit systems support local businesses by helping commuters get to work,

consumers to stores, supporting downtown cores, and meeting the needs of other community and private events. Additionally, they reduce air pollution and contribute to local climate change strategies. Building ridership can be difficult when costs to driving are low, with small distances, inexpensive parking, and little traffic. However, the report suggests that planners should weigh the costs to municipalities against the benefits and costs to the individuals, families, businesses, and communities that rely on them. Small community strategies have included inter-municipal partnerships, provincial partnership, market-oriented planning, and flexible delivery.²

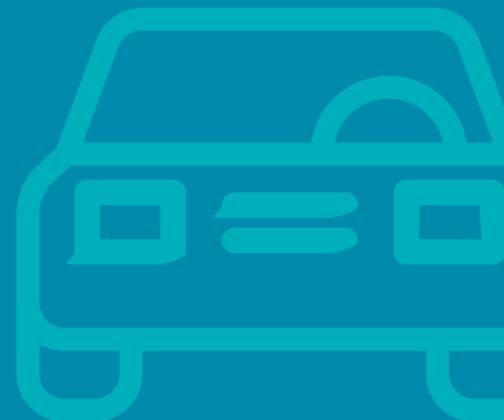
- 3) **Several small communities including the region of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Quebec** have adopted the TaxiBus model as a practical and economical form of transit. Passengers reserve a ride by telephone and are carried by taxi between numerous fixed stop locations in the community. En route, taxis can pick up other passengers as well.
- 4) **County of Kings Transit Authority in Nova Scotia** is one of Canada's most efficient small transit systems and offers a model for rural communities that want to provide cost-effective transit service. The Municipality of the County of Kings in partnership with the towns of Kentville, Wolfville and Berwick runs the system. With five routes over almost 200 kilometres of Highway 1, it links several rural communities in the Annapolis Valley on Nova Scotia's north shore. Kings Transit offers service six days a week using low-floor, wheelchair-accessible buses equipped with bike racks. A significant proportion of customers are seniors, a market that the system has built through outreach and awareness building.

¹ Transport Canada. (2009). Improving Travel Options in Small & Rural Communities (pp. 1, pp 26). Ottawa: Publishing and Depository Services Public Works and Government Services Canada Ottawa.

² Northern Alberta Development Council, (2014). Developing sustainable transit options for small communities: A summary of best practices.



Building ridership can be difficult when costs to drive are low, with small distances, inexpensive parking, and little traffic.



Ontario Chamber of Commerce Report: Moving forward towards a strategic approach to Ontario's Transit needs

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce released a report in December 2018 outlining transportation recommendations to better serve residents and businesses.

It points out that 58% of Ontario businesses rated existing transportation infrastructure as fair or poor, with much of it built in the 1950s and 1960s and currently coming to the end of its useful life.

Additionally, in the report the authors explain that 50% of Ontario businesses view transportation infrastructure as critical to their competitiveness. Population growth is expected to put even more stress on the GTHA's transportation systems. The report notes that there is poor integration of public transit systems between communities and service operators. Rail transportation brings opportunities for mobility and trade with a high carrying capacity, strong safety, and lower environmental impact relative to congested roads.³

The recommendations given by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce in relation to transit solutions encourage:

- The support of municipal governments as they develop innovative solutions to address transit challenges,
- The support of municipal action on the first- and last-mile⁴ problem and other gaps in transit service through the development of less resource-intensive projects such as pedestrian, cycling, and carpool infrastructure, via capacity-building, incentive programs, and targeted funding,
- The empowerment of municipal use of public-private partnerships (P3s) through building awareness of successful P3s, developing guidelines for scaling local projects and converting pilot projects into permanent services, and creating a platform for municipal governments that wish to duplicate initiatives found in other communities.

³ Long-Term Transportation Plan Fundamental to Ontario's Diverse Transportation Needs | OCC. (2018). Retrieved 19 February 2020, from <https://occ.ca/mediareleases/long-term-transportation-plan-fundamental-to-ontarios-diverse-transportation-needs/>

⁴ First- and last-mile' describes challenge of getting people to and from transit stations and transit services to and from their home or workplace, without the use of a private automobile.



The report notes that there is poor integration of public transit systems between communities and service operators.



Detroit 24-hour public transit network

The Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) has increased the all-night bus routes from six routes in 2016 to 12 in 2019.

A 24-hour Bus transit network called ‘ConnectTen’ was introduced in - 2018 in Detroit under DDOT. Under ConnectTen, ten high frequency 24-hour bus lines were introduced at the frequency of one bus every 15 minutes during peak hours. The bus line targeted the late-night commute in order to cater the needs of employees who work nights.⁵

In addition to the bus line, a pilot program called “Night Shift” was introduced which pooled together - commuters to share rides with Lyft (ridesharing) or taxis in traveling to and from their bus stops at night. Under this program, riders received monetary credits (from the grant released for the program “Night Shift”) for using Lyft and taxi services, along ten night bus routes under ConnectTen. The pilot continued until the completion of two thousand rides in total.⁶

Schema of potential solutions for transit challenges

The Peel Halton Workforce Development Group has been investigating the issue of transit challenges for several years, which has led to a schema of potential solutions. This schema places proposed solutions along a spectrum from lower-investment to higher-investment responses: (below)

Educate, Accommodate, and Coordinate

Employers who inform and incentivize their employees to choose alternative transit options will have workers who get to work quicker, cheaper, and more easily, increasing productivity and employee satisfaction. (below)

The benefits of more commuting options

Commuter benefit programs help retain lower wage employees who might be struggling to afford the trip to work, whereas the cost of hiring new employees in that labour category may be more challenging. These programs They also allow

Educate, Accommodate, and Coordinate	Incentivize	Advocate and Provide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of more commuting options • Having a transportation coordinator • Providing information on transportation options • Partnering with local transit • Workers with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation vouchers and transit passes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanpooling • Shuttle and route extensions • Private/micro services • Guaranteed Ride Home Program

⁵ American Public Transport Association (APTA). (2019). Supporting Late-Shift Workers Their Transportation Needs and the Economy (p. 39). Washington DC. Retrieved from https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA_Late-Shift_Report.pdf

⁶ City of Detroit. (2018). Retrieved 20 February 2020, from <https://detroitmi.gov/departments/detroit-department-transportation/bus-schedules/nightshift>

employers to save on overhead costs associated with maintaining and expanding on-site parking for employees who would otherwise need to bring their own vehicle to work by encouraging shared rides to work.⁷

They increase employee retention because they give them a guaranteed and inexpensive way to get to work on time. They also allow employers to save on overhead costs associated with maintaining and expanding on-site parking for employees who would otherwise need to bring their own vehicle to work by encouraging shared rides to work.

Having a transportation coordinator

Some states (Washington and California) and some local governments require large business to have an employee transportation coordinator (ETC) on staff. ETC's perform several tasks, including:

- Providing commuting information to co-workers via newsletters, e-mails, workplace displays, websites, hiring materials, as well as through workplace orientation and other in-person meetings,
- Facilitating transportation needs of people with disabilities or employees with limited English proficiency,
- Coordinating ridesharing services such as carpools and vanpools or company car-sharing programs,
- Providing information on other commute options such as walking, biking, or alternative work schedules,
- Updating local transportation providers about how the company can be better served,
- Coordinating with transportation providers to market their services at the work site,
- Facilitating the purchasing and distribution of bus passes, vouchers, etc.⁸

Providing information on transit options

Employers can provide information on transit options to their employees in the following ways:

- Display bus and rail maps, schedules, and phone numbers of transit services in frequently accessed locations on site,
- Include the above-mentioned information in new employee orientation packages,
- Promote commuting information via company newsletters, e-mails, workplace displays, websites, and hiring materials.

Partnering with local transit

To best serve their employees, employers should partner with local transit to help make the commute to work as quick and as stress-free as possible. This involves understanding the commuting issues of their workforce. It is recommended that employers:

- Survey employees to learn commuting patterns and needs then discuss with local transportation provider/local business community to best provide for local transportation needs;
- Offer employees incentives to join ride-share, carpool, vanpool options,
- Designate a contact person for employees on commuting issues (ETC).⁹

Workers with Disabilities

Employers must acknowledge that the numbers of workers with disabilities are increasing. Those with disabilities need transportation accommodations when they are unable to drive themselves or when using regularly scheduled transit services is prohibitive.

⁷ CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document: Factsheet # 1, Employee Commuter Benefits

⁸ CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document : . Factsheet #4, Transportation coordinators

⁹ CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document: Factsheet #2, The power of partnerships.

Potential solutions:

- Encourage ridesharing via carpool or vanpool for employees with disabilities who may not be able to use public transportation or whose work shifts do not correspond with public transportation schedules,
- Provide preferential parking whenever possible,
- Provide flexible work hours/shifts that correspond with paratransit services.¹⁰

RELEVANT CASE STUDY

Apple Commute Alternatives Program, Apple Inc.: Apple pays \$100 per month to employees for personal bus, train, light rail, vanpool, and other transit costs through its Commute Alternatives Program. Apple supports employees who bicycle, walk, or run to work by providing lockers and showers. The company maintains a web database of addresses and work schedules for those interested in ridesharing. Apple also connects to the following regional transit providers: Caltrain, ACE train and VTA light rail with 16 passenger shuttles that further extends the regional transit network. In addition to supporting commuter choice through the Commute Alternatives Program, Apple implemented commuter shuttle service to transport personnel between strategic points in the Bay Area and its Cupertino campus.

Incentivize

Giving employees incentives often increases public transit use. It also makes it easier for employees who are struggling to afford it to get to work stress- and cost-free.

Vouchers and Public Transit Passes

Vouchers and Transit Passes can encourage employees who otherwise would not take public transit to do so, and can make it easier on employees who are struggling to afford the commute to work.

Some options include:

- Issuing vouchers to use as tickets or coupons for public transit use, or in the form of incentives to use van or car pools,
- Providing monthly transit passes (presto credit could be an option),
- Using employee IDs as transit passes¹¹

RELEVANT CASE STUDY

Transit Tax Benefit Program, Barnes Jewish and St. Louis Children's Hospital, St. Louis Regional Transit:

The passes offer unlimited travel for employees commuting to the hospital via MetroBus or MetroLink during the month of purchase. The organization offers a \$20 subsidy; employees who purchase a monthly metro pass by payroll deduction are eligible to receive a discount. Over 50 percent of hospital employees participate, including many who travel from rural communities outside of the St. Louis and Illinois area. In addition, the hospital operates a shuttle system that travels between local transit stations and the campus. One shuttle is dedicated to transporting patient families to and from the hospital.

Advocate and Provide

It is important that employers advocate for the use of transportation programs such as vanpooling (providing the space and information, a platform to coordinate drivers and riders, subsidizing costs, etc.) and providing other services such as shuttle and route extensions, or other micro-transit services.

Vanpooling

Vanpooling is becoming an increasingly efficient and popular way of commuting to work. Vanpool programs split the costs across many stakeholders, help co-workers get to know each other, and remove much of the stress of figuring out the commute to work.¹²

¹⁰ CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles//anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document: Factsheet #3, Workers with Disabilities

¹¹ CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles//anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document: Factsheet #9, Transportation Vouchers and Transit Passes

¹² CTAA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles//anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Fact Sheet used, Strength in Numbers: Why Employers Should Encourage Vanpooling

There are three types of arrangements:

- Employer-sponsored and operated programs
- Third-party vanpool programs
- Driver-owned and operated programs

Encourage Ridesharing

- Providing on-site matching forum to facilitate the creation of vanpools/carpools. This could be accomplished through the use of a bulletin board, or via e-mail, phone app, a list-serve communication system, an employee transportation coordinator (ETC), a third-party rideshare brokerage (Smart Commute provides some of these services in the GTA)¹³
- Paying part or all the cost of the vanpool expenses,
- Disseminating information about benefits,
- Providing financial incentives for those who participate in ridesharing programs.
- Having company leadership themselves use company ridesharing programs,
- Maintain an on-site company vehicle.

Shuttle and Route Extensions

- Communicate with local transit providers about from where workers travel, the different shifts they work, and where workers need to go,
- Collaborate with other businesses and the local transit agency to provide transit services to a business hub,
- Simplify the bus route to offer an express route to an industrial park/area eliminating the need to make transfers, in this way making the trip faster and less stressful,
- Facilitate links to Public transit stops by providing shuttle buses,
- Provide express buses to transport employees in hard to reach areas or at unsupported times – coordinate with local transit,
- Having the company contribute local matching dollars to launch services like these.

RELEVANT CASE STUDY

The Swan Island Evening Shuttle program is an example of a shuttle and route extension program:

Swan Island Evening Shuttle program provided connections to public transit for swing and graveyard shift workers. Companies on the island contracted a private company to operate the shuttle in the absence of any other transit service to facilitate the transportation of second and third shift workers work. Groups of employers co-operating to arrange these programs together with public transit providers offset the costs.¹⁴

Private/Micro Services

The program started as private sector intra-community mobility service for technology companies in Silicon Valley. Shuttle operation became substantial enough that it required routes and schedules, eventually connecting to existing public services in the area. Next was the development of increasingly specialized services that were more individual and individual than they were collective and fixed. Uber, Lyft, and then Bridj, an app for on-demand, curb-to-curb service in a mini-bus shared by between five to 12 other riders. The service takes advantage of the same technology that is used by Uber and Lyft (and who have since incorporated similar services – UberPool and LyftLine). Industry adaptations include connector services to fixed transit routes.¹⁵

Guaranteed Ride Home Program

This is a guaranteed ride home program can ensuring that, in the event of an emergency, employees who carpooled or used public transportation to get to work can travel to where they need to go. It is also available for people who unexpectedly need to stay late at work and have missed their ride home.¹⁶

¹³ CTA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles//anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5>. Fact Sheet used, Innovative Vanpool Programs

¹⁴ Friedman, Pamela (2014), "Meeting Complex Job Access Solutions with Community Partnership Buy In" in the Changing American Commute (CTAA, Community Transportation Digital)

¹⁵ Sampson, Rich (2015), "Micro-Transit: A Bigger Impact Than Its Name Suggests" in Unlocking the Secrets of Sharing Mobility (CTAA, Community Transportation Digital).

¹⁶ CTA (2012), "Transportation Toolkit for the Business Community" A series of fact sheets on commuting solutions for businesses.<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles//anviewer.asp?a=1442&z=5> . Factsheet used in this document: Factsheet #13 Guaranteed Ride Home Programs.

RELEVANT CASE STUDY

Commuteride, Ada County, Idaho:

Currently, 83 routes serve more than 900 participants. Participation is prearranged with riders sharing the cost of the vehicle and its operation by paying an equitable monthly fare. Commuteride oversees all maintenance and insurance, and it provides a fuel card to pay for gasoline. Van drivers are members of the vanpool, and many of them ride for free. Most routes either begin or end in rural communities. New vanpool members ride for free during their first month. Vanpool members are not obligated to continue if they decide not to do so.

Those who do are eligible for a \$20 subsidy in the form of a Transi-Chek for each of the first three months following the month they ride for free. Commuteride provides Transi-Cheks to area employers at no cost to encourage them to promote vanpooling by their employees. In addition, full-time monthly riders may qualify for a \$10-per-month rebate that is awarded quarterly. Some participating employers offer preferential vanpool parking and other incentives to encourage their employees to share rides to work.¹⁷

Intercity Transit's Vanpool Programs, Olympia, Washington:

In addition to traditional vanpool service, the agency supports two other programs, Connectivity Vans and Village Vans. These programs provide access to employment and community services to populations that may otherwise lack affordable transportation options. Community Vans provides retired vans to human service organizations and government agencies located in the transit service area for use to transport workers, volunteers, and customers. Village Vans assists low-income citizens with transportation to jobs or job search locations.¹⁸



¹⁷ Levihn, K. A., Kostelec, D., & Bowman, S. (2007). Local Innovative Financing, Transportation Funding and Fiscal Diversification for a Regional Transportation Agency in Boise, Idaho (No. 1428-2016-118581).

¹⁸ Community Transportation Association of America (2009), "Profiles of Innovative Rural Vanpool Programs Washington, D.C." http://webl.ctaa.org/webmodules/ebarticles/articlefiles/Profiles_of_InnovativeRural_Vanpool_Programs.pdf

Primary Data Analysis

One of the research methods employed in this study was the collection of primary data through interviews, surveys and focus groups.

These methods of data collection were applied to both employers and employees. Our interest in gathering the following data emerged from a worrisome statistic indicating that 94% of the Peel Halton employers surveyed at one of our community engagements had experienced qualified candidates refusing job offers due to commuting challenges, while 85% had seen employees resign due to commuting challenges.

Of this group of employers, only 48% of these employers had implemented innovative approaches to address community transportation challenges due to the numerous (mainly financial) challenges they faced as business owners.

Interviews with Peel Halton Employers

We discovered common themes in our interviews with Peel Halton employers. The following were the most frequently identified commuting challenges among respondents:

- Employees expressing to employers that they avoid working overtime hours due to their long commutes,
- Employers being concerned over how much commuting issues affect their productivity,
- Employers identifying the poor coordination between municipal transit systems as a problem; for example, too many bus transfers are required to get to work or a lack of schedule synchronization between municipal routes.

We asked employers how their employees deal with these issues. The most common responses included the following points:

- Employees carpool with colleagues and take advantage of the HOV lanes,

- Employees often rely on family, friends as well as services such as Uber to deal with commuting challenges.

Specifically with respect to hiring and retention, employers indicated that in some instances they could not hire people who rely on public transit, as it does not offer sufficiently frequent service, particularly in industrial areas. Employers also mention that they find it difficult to attract new employees when public transit is not efficient. As a result, employers have been forced to consider the geographic location of their candidates' residences before moving to hire.

It is important to point out that based on the interviews conducted, it was not perceived that this practice was done in a discriminatory manner but, rather based on employers' needs to ensure that their new hires will be able to stay in the job despite the lack of adequate public transportation to their places of work.

The way Peel and Halton employers respond to commuting issues their workforce faces is remarkable. The majority of employers interviewed are accommodating, reasonable and have already implemented some of the following initiatives to support their personnel:

- Work schedule leniency
- Flexible hours
- Telecommuting (when applicable)
- Salary increases
- Subsidized shuttle buses
- Relocation to other sites that have better access to public transit
- Promotion of carpooling routes
- Provision of company vehicles/Uber when working late or on weekends

Focus Group with Peel Halton Employers

In the focus group conducted with Peel Halton employers, it was evident that the employers were cognizant of the commuting challenges faced by their workforce. Employers ensured that candidates were aware of the commuting issues they could face when joining their respective company.

As a way to respond to these issues, employers offered incentives to potential candidates by providing the option of working from home or having a flexible work schedule. Other incentives included the slight increase of wages or providing a financial bonus to employees for not missing work (mainly for labour intensive jobs). The results of these initiatives yielded mixed outcomes.

General employee incentives (gift cards, subsidized shuttle, Uber) seemed to improve absenteeism; wage increases seemed to have a positive effect in terms of attendance and performance, but not in a significant manner. In relation to the option of working from home or flexible schedules, one of the limitations is that it does not apply to every position – especially in labour jobs where staff need to be present at their worksite.

Below are some employer quotes from the focus group:

“Employees are less interested in working overtime hours due to the inconvenient and long commutes. As a result, we are unable to commit to more orders, and end up turning business away. It’s so hard to expand our business when we don’t have enough [of a] labour force”.

“The bus service starts at 8:30am on the weekends, which means that employees are automatically late for our shift so they have to find alternative transportation. Some bus routes do not connect municipalities, so some employees pay twice to come to work”.

Interviews with Peel Halton Employees

Most residents/employees interviewed expressed their desire for a more frequent, efficient transit system in order to lessen their commuting times and stress associated with it. Interestingly, one employee indicated that if he had to choose lower wages over a long commute, he would not hesitate to take a pay cut. Another commonality among responses was the request of funding and collaboration from all levels of government to tackle ongoing commuting challenges.

Some residents emphasized driving to be their only option to get to work. If there is a public transit route to get to and from work, it means that their commute doubles or triples in duration. With respect to general comments made by employees at the end of the interview, some seemed to be surprised that there was no preliminary feasibility study done before their industrial zone was developed to consider factors such as transportation once businesses opened up.

Furthermore, respondents added that due to the lack of synchronization of services or schedules between smaller municipalities, taking a bus to work was simply unfeasible. Lastly, the residents who used public transit or shared a vehicle with family members highlighted that daily commute planning created additional stresses for them.

Focus Group with Peel Halton Residents

The research team held a focus group in the Town of Caledon to discuss transportation challenges faced by its residents. Among the most common issues were the following:

- Residents made it clear that owning a vehicle in Caledon is a necessity and not a luxury,
- Due to the lack of public transit options, it is very difficult to mobilize within Caledon,
- The only bus route offered does not provide frequent service and only covers one street (as of October 16, 2019); it is important to mention that since November 11, 2019, there is a new bus service in the Bolton area,
- There is a Go Transit station that can transport residents to other municipalities; however, some residents do not have access to public transit to get to the Go Transit station,
- Taxi service is very expensive,
- If you choose to walk, the distances are not reasonable in most cases,
- Residents often rely on family members to travel within the town.

With respect to the transportation shortcomings regarding workforce mobility, some residents explained that they had resigned from jobs located far outside of Caledon because of the huge toll of the commute to and from work. Moreover, residents indicate that jobs outside of Caledon are either too far to get to (long commutes) or it becomes too costly to cover commute-related expenses.

In order to mitigate these challenges, some residents have decided to work locally even if it means living on a lower income. Overall, residents are hopeful that, in the future, there will be a transit system that offers better route coverage, more frequent service as well as a subsidy from the municipality to alleviate some of the transportation costs when commuting to and from Caledon.

Below are some quotes from Peel Halton residents/employees that echo similar transportation challenges faced in Milton, Caledon and Halton Hills:

"I'd rather make less money than spend more time commuting".

"Before an area is developed, they need to consider how the public will get there (especially in industrial areas). Also, they need to offer public transit to these areas to ease the commute".

"More funding from the federal government is needed towards transportation solutions as they can facilitate more job opportunities".

"It takes me 2 hours to get to work by bus, and it only takes about 45 minutes by car. Sometimes, if I'm lucky, I get a ride with a friend or a co-worker. but, when I take the bus, I end up spending 4 hours a day commuting".

Secondary Data Analysis

Milton Commuting Patterns

Commuting to and from Milton for work

Table 1 provides the municipalities that Milton residents commute to for work as well as the source municipalities from where employees working in Milton come.

Only those municipalities representing 2% or more of commuters are presented in the table.

In total, 45,975 Milton residents travel to a usual place of work each day. Only slightly more than a quarter (27%) work in Milton, and a slightly larger amount (28%) work in Mississauga. The third biggest destination is Toronto (16%). At the same time, 30,495 individuals are coming to a usual

place of work in Milton. These include the 12,325 Milton residents travelling to work from Milton – they made up 40% of all commuters working in Milton. The next largest source of commuters to Milton comes from Mississauga, which contributes 10% of workers in Milton. Last, there is a scattering of commuters from municipalities surrounding Milton: Brampton, Burlington, Halton Hills, Oakville, Cambridge, Guelph and Toronto, each contributing between 3%-7% of workers employed in Milton.

In short, almost three quarters (71%) of Milton residents commute to just three destinations: Mississauga, Milton and Toronto. Meanwhile, half of the workers employed in Milton come from two places – primarily Milton and then Mississauga.

Table 1: Milton top commuting destinations and origins

Commuting from Milton to:			Commuting from Milton to:		
Municipality	Number	Percentage	Municipality	Number	Percentage
Mississauga	12,995	28	Milton	12,325	40
Milton	12,325	27	Mississauga	2,890	10
Toronto	7,180	16	Brampton	2,060	7
Oakville	3,085	7	Burlington	1,945	6
Brampton	2,885	6	Halton Hills	1,945	6
Burlington	1,830	4	Oakville	1,310	4
Halton Hills	1,235	3	Cambridge	955	3
Waterloo	995	2	Guelph	925	3
TOTAL	45,975	100	Toronto	865	3
			TOTAL	30,495	100

Commuting by skill-level of occupation

Although there are many occupations, it is possible to cluster them according to required skills.

Statistics Canada uses the following schema:

- **Skill Level A – Managers** (usually requires a university degree)
- **Skill Level A – Professionals** (usually requires a university degree)
- **Skill Level B – College or apprenticeship training** (usually requires a college diploma or an apprenticeship certificate)
- **Skill Level C – High school or job-specific training** (usually requires a high school diploma)
- **Skill Level D – On-the-job training** (usually requires no educational certificate)

The Milton data have been analyzed by three commuting groups:

- Milton residents commuting to jobs within Milton: M residents/Milton
- Milton residents commuting to jobs outside of Milton: M residents/outside
- Residents living outside of Milton commuting to jobs within Milton: Non-M residents/Milton

Chart 1 illustrates the actual number of each population group and for each skill category.

- The number of Milton residents commuting out of Milton is larger than the number of non-Milton residents commuting to Milton in all skill categories except for the lowest,
- The number of Milton residents commuting to jobs within Milton is less than the number of non-Milton residents commuting to Milton in all skill categories except for the lowest,
- The skill distribution profile for each of the three commuting populations is different: Milton residents commuting from Milton on average have a higher skill profile; non-Milton residents commuting to Milton generally are lower-skilled while Milton residents taking jobs within Milton have the lowest.

As Table 2 illustrates, The Milton residents commuting out of Milton have a notably higher proportion of A – Managers (18%) and A – Professionals (27%) than the other two commuting groups, and a much lower proportion of workers in the D – On-the-job training category (4%).

Chart 1: Milton related Commuting Patterns by Skills Category, All Industries, 2016

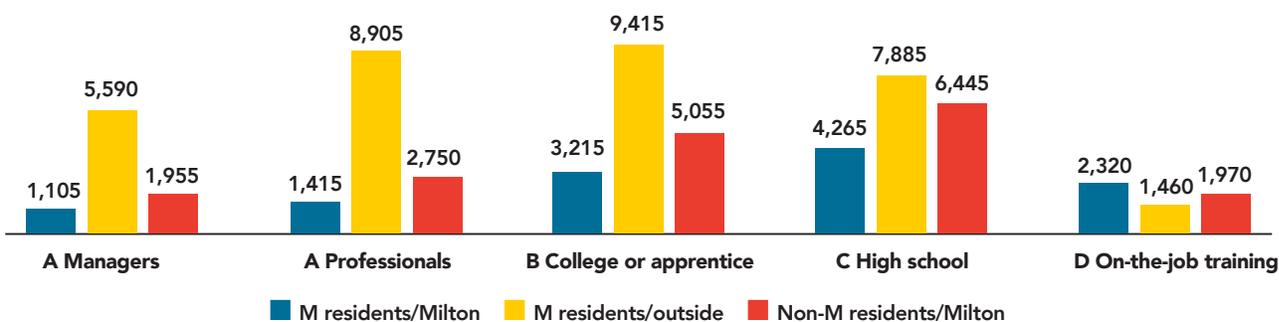


Table 2: Distribution of skills by Milton commuting populations, All Industries, 2016

	A Managers	A Professionals	B College or apprentice	C High school	D On-the-job training
M residents working within Milton	9%	12%	26%	34%	19%
M residents working outside of Milton	18%	27%	28%	23%	4%
Non-M residents working within Milton	11%	15%	28%	35%	11%

Halton Hills Commuting Patterns

Commuting to and from Halton Hills for Work

Table 3 provides the top municipalities that Halton Hills residents commute to for work as well as the source municipalities from which employees commute who are working within Halton Hills. Only those municipalities representing 1% or more of commuters are represented in the table.

In total, 27,265 Halton Hills residents travel to a usual place of work each day. Almost one-third (32%) work in Halton Hills, 23% work in Mississauga. The third biggest destination is Brampton (13%). At the same time, 17,810 individuals are coming to a usual place of work within Halton Hills. Nearly half (49%) of those commuters are Halton Hills residents traveling to work within Halton Hills. The second largest (14%) source of commuters to Halton Hills come

from Brampton. Commuters from Mississauga contribute 7% of the workforce in Halton Hills.

In short, roughly 79% of Halton Hills residents commute to just four destinations: Halton Hills, Mississauga, Brampton and Toronto..

Commuting by Skill-level of Occupation

The skill level occupations in Halton are categorized into five groups as mentioned above in the table on Milton and is based on a schema used by Statistics Canada.

The Halton Hills data have been divided into three commuting groups:

- Halton Hills residents commuting to jobs within Halton Hills: HH residents/Halton Hills
- Halton Hills residents commuting to jobs outside of Halton Hills: HH residents/outside
- Residents living outside of Halton Hills commuting to jobs within Halton Hills: non-HH residents/Halton Hills

Table 3: Halton Hills Top Commuting Destinations and Origins

Commuting from Halton Hills to:			Commuting to Halton Hills from:		
Municipality	Number	Percentage	Municipality	Number	Percentage
Halton Hills	8,775	32	Halton Hills	8,775	49
Mississauga	6,235	23	Brampton	2,465	14
Brampton	3,505	13	Mississauga	1,260	7
Toronto	2,950	11	Milton	1,235	7
Milton	1,945	7	Guelph	550	3
Oakville	1,040	4	Erin	460	3
Vaughan	475	2	Toronto	445	2
Guelph	455	2	Oakville	390	2
TOTAL	27,265	100	Guelph/Eramosa	325	2
			Caledon	290	2
			TOTAL	17,810	100

Chart 2: Commuting Patterns Related to Halton Hills by Skills Category, All industries 2016

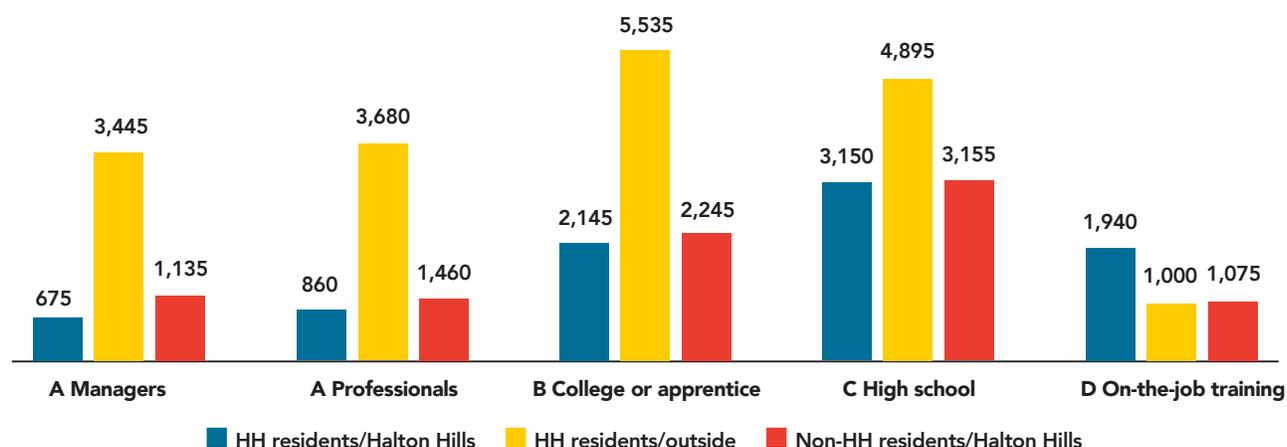


Chart 2 provides commuting patterns by skills category for all industries:

- The number of Halton Hills residents commuting to jobs within Halton Hills is nearly equivalent to the number of non-Halton Hills residents commuting to Halton Hills for work;
- The number of Halton Hills residents commuting out of Halton Hills is larger than the number of Halton Hills residents commuting to jobs within Halton Hills in all of the skills level categories except for on-the-job training,
- Moreover, the number of Halton Hills residents commuting to jobs within Halton Hills is also less than the number of non-Halton Hills residents commuting to Halton Hills in all skills categories except the lowest – on the job training.

- Last, the skills distribution profile for each of the three commuting populations is different: Halton Hills residents commuting out of Halton Hills on average have a higher skills profile; the non-Halton Hills residents commuting to Halton Hills have a lower skills profile and the Halton Hills residents taking jobs within Halton Hills have the lowest skills profile.

As table 4 illustrates, the Halton Hills’ residents commuting outside of Halton Hills have a higher combined proportion of A-managers (19%) and A-professionals (20%) than the other two commuting groups; the proportion of workers in the D-On-the-job training category (5%) is significantly lower than the other two commuter groups.

Table 4: Distribution of Skills of Halton Hills’ Commuting Populations, All Industries, 2016

	A Managers	A Professionals	B College or apprentice	C High school	D On-the-job training
HH residents commuting within Halton Hills	8%	10%	24%	36%	22%
HH residents commuting outside of Halton Hills	19%	20%	30%	26%	5%
Non-HH residents to Halton Hills	13%	16%	25%	34%	12%

Caledon Commuting Patterns

Commuting to and from Caledon for Work

Table 5 provides the top municipalities that Caledon residents commute to for work as well as the source municipalities from which employees working within Caledon commute. Only those municipalities representing 1% or more of commuters are represented in the table.

In total 28,680 Caledon residents travel to a usual place of work each day. Almost one-fourth (23%) work in Caledon, 19% work in Toronto.

Tied with Toronto for the second biggest destination is Brampton (19%). At the same time, 19,750 individuals are commuting to a usual place of work in Caledon. One-third (33%) of those commuters are Caledon residents traveling to work from within Caledon. The second largest (21%) source of commuters to Caledon come from Brampton. Commuters from Toronto contribute 8% of the workforce in Caledon. In short, roughly 79% of Caledon residents commute to just four destinations: Caledon, Toronto, Brampton and Mississauga.

Table 5: Caledon's Top Commuting Destinations and Origins

Commuting from Caledon to:			Commuting to Caledon from:		
Municipality	Number	Percentage	Municipality	Number	Percentage
Caledon	6,615	23	Caledon	6,615	33
Toronto	5,470	19	Brampton	4,155	21
Brampton	5,350	19	Toronto	1,600	8
Mississauga	5,035	18	Mississauga	955	5
Vaughan	2,960	10	Orangeville	815	4
Orangeville	545	2	Vaughan	805	4
TOTAL	28,680	100	New Tecumseth	705	4
			Adjala-Tosorontio	385	2
			TOTAL	19,750	100



In short, roughly 79% of Caledon residents commute to just four destinations: Caledon, Toronto, Brampton and Mississauga.

Commuting by Skill-level of Occupation

Similarly, the skill level occupations in Caledon are also categorized into five different groups based on schema used by Statistics Canada as described above in the profile on Milton.

The Caledon data have been analyzed by three commuting groups:

- Caledon residents commuting to jobs within Caledon: C residents/Caledon
- Caledon residents commuting to jobs outside of Caledon: C residents/outside
- Residents living outside of Caledon commuting to jobs within Caledon: non-C residents/Caledon

Chart 3 represents commuting patterns by skills category for all industries:

- The number of Caledon residents commuting outside of Caledon is larger than the number of non-Caledon residents commuting into Caledon;

- The number of Caledon residents commuting outside of Caledon is larger than the number of Caledon residents commuting to jobs within Caledon in all skills categories. Moreover, the number of Caledon residents commuting to jobs in Caledon is less than the number of non-Caledon residents commuting into Caledon all skill categories.
- Last, the skills distribution profile for each of the three commuting populations is different: Caledon residents commuting outside of Caledon on average have a higher skills profile; the non-Caledon residents commuting to Caledon have a lower skills profile, and the Caledon residents taking jobs within Caledon have the lowest skills profile.

As table 6 illustrates, Caledon residents commuting outside of Caledon have a higher combined proportion of A-managers (18%) and A-professionals (18%) than the other two commuting groups and the lowest proportion of workers in the D-On-the-job training category (7%).

Chart 3: Commuting Patterns to/from Caledon by Skills Category, All Industries, 2016

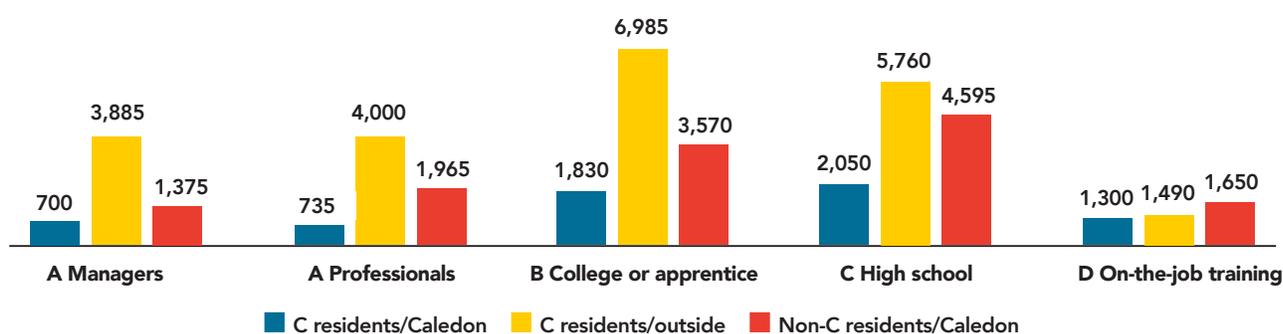


Table 6: Distribution of Skills of Caledon Commuting Populations, All Industries, 2016

	A Managers	A Professionals	B College or apprentices	C High school	D On-the-job training
C residents to Caledon	11%	11%	28%	30%	20%
C residents to outside	18%	18%	31%	26%	7%
Non-C residents to Caledon	10%	15%	27%	35%	13%

Commuting Patterns key insights

- There is mass commuting occurring between all municipalities in Peel and Halton, as well as neighbouring areas. Interregional or inter-municipal commuting is a part of many Peel and Halton residents' daily lives.
- Approximately 7 out of 10 people in Milton, Caledon, and Halton Hills work outside of their residential municipalities. This trend indicates a need for an interregional transit system to facilitate mass commuting.
- Approximately three quarters of Milton residents commuting outside are working in higher skill level occupations (skill levels A and B). This suggests that residents in higher income occupations are able to commute more frequently because they are more likely to own and afford personal vehicles.
- More than half of the residents who commute within their own municipalities are in lower skill level jobs, which suggests that this group of workers could be more dependent on municipal public transit to commute to work.
- Nearly half of the non-residents who commute to the three municipalities are also in lower skill level jobs, which suggests their possible dependency on inter-municipal public transit system.
- Peel Halton residents in lower skill and lower wage jobs are the most vulnerable to potential employment issues emerging from commuting challenges.



Interregional or inter-municipal commuting is a part of many Peel and Halton residents' daily lives.

Powered by Uber | Innisfil

Transportation Project Case Study

Introduction

After considering options for fixed-route bus services, the Town of Innisfil determined it would be too costly and service would be limited.

Instead, it looked for a transit system that was on-demand, affordable and could service the needs of all community members. The result was a partnership with Uber to develop Innisfil Transit—an on-demand, shared-ride platform powered by Uber and subsidized by the town. This ridesharing transit service launched May 15, 2017 and continues to operate in Innisfil with incredible results.

Service Delivery

The Innisfil Transit service is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week. There are two different types of trips that can be taken either using the Uber service (for general trips) or Barrie Taxi service (for wheelchair accessible trips):

- \$4 for any trip to/from Innisfil Recreational Complex/Town Hall area
- \$4 for any trip to/from the Innisfil ideaLAB and Library, Lakeshore branch (967 Innisfil Beach Road).
- \$4 for any trip to/from the South Innisfil Community Centre (Lefroy)
- \$4 for any trip to/from the Innisfil Community Church/Innisfil Food Bank (1571 Innisfil Beach Road).
- \$5 for any trip to/from closest GO bus stop along Yonge Street
- \$6 for any trip to/from Barrie South GO train station
- \$6 for any trip to/from Innisfil Heights Employment Area and Highway 400 carpool lot
- When you travel anywhere else, going within Innisfil boundaries you will save \$4 off your fare.

Motivation

- This initiative was founded under an equity-based strategy focused on quality of life.
- No other municipality has implemented this initiative in North America, if not the world.
- Innisfil enjoys a large driver supply due to its proximity to municipalities such as Newmarket and Barrie.
- Innisfil also has a significant number of drivers who are willing to work for Uber and as a result, this local supply creates a notion of community as the service is door to door; this means that you often get to know community members on a more personal level.
- Demographics show that the immigrant population is growing fast in the Innisfil community.
- With support from Uber, the system can be structured to support low-income residents and can help to drive support for citizens in other areas such as subsidies for programs and services.

Outcomes

- The results from end-user surveys indicated that the number of trips were relatively stable in relation to the cost of the service (as opposed to the initial stages in which there was a very high number of trips taken by residents and costing the municipality a significant amount).
- The stabilization of trips emerged from measures such as increasing the fare and having a 'soft' monthly cap of trips (30), which residents can apply to be exempt.
- The high pooling rates of the Town of Innisfil (e.g. upwards of 50% in recent months) have been positively recognized by Uber offices in Toronto and San Francisco.

- Important data have been gathered showing the potential fixed routes that are most economically viable.
- Innisfil Heights, which is an industrial area and the top destination for users in addition to the Go station, implies that many of the users could be using the service for employment, which would represent a positive economic outcome.

According to the *Innisfil Transit – Community Satisfaction Survey (2018-2019)*, Innisfil residents made the following remarks when asked about their transit service:

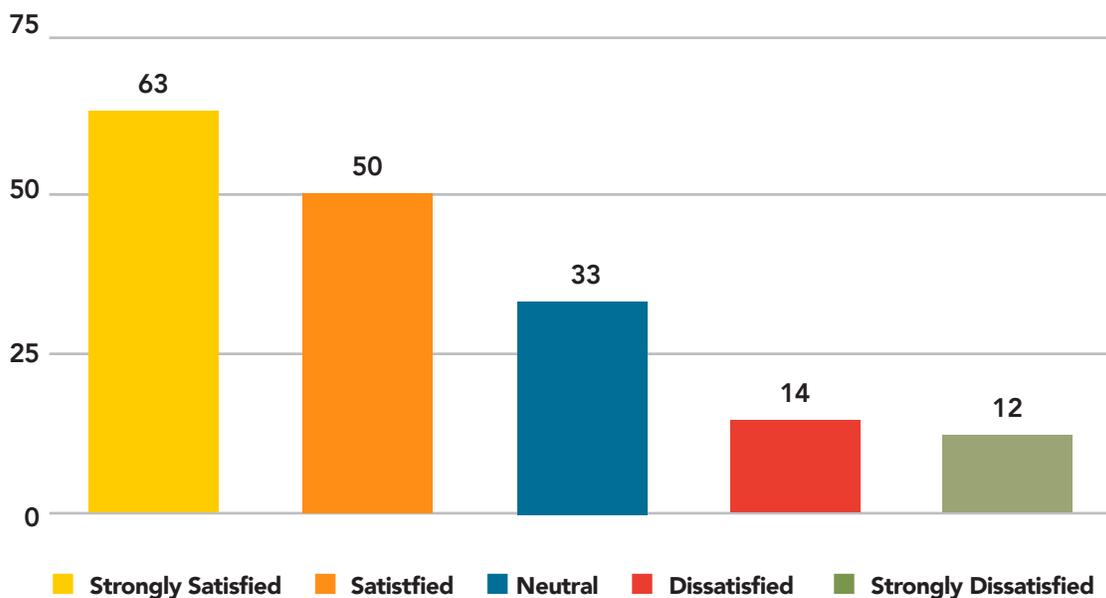
- “Affordable, fast, friendly, easy...nothing bad about it.”
- “The best and lowest cost transit solution for our Town at this time.”
- “It is a cost-effective solution to public transit in a geographically large town that cannot support a bus system. ALL residents can use it rather than everyone paying for a bus system that only services a few areas.”

Challenges

Some challenges have emerged based on the rapid growth of the system, which demands the Town of Innisfil to provide solutions to the following questions:

- How will the town deal with growing costs?
- Is it a sustainable service? What is the social impact?
- Extra data is required to enhance the program. Ensuring that the subsidy goes to those who need it the most (mainly youth and seniors). Youth and seniors have been able to have job opportunities through this service as well as connect and socialize more.

How would you rate your satisfaction with Innisfil Transit?



172 Responded, 3 Skipped

Source: *Innisfil Transit – Community Satisfaction Survey (2018-2019)*.

Solutions

- Due to the popularity of the survey as found through the end-user surveys conducted in the last couple of years, the Town of Innisfil realized a larger investment had to be made to continue this transportation initiative. Furthermore, the Town of Innisfil has worked closer with UBER to improve the operational side of the project. At the same, Innisfil is working with Ryerson to better assess and understand the relationship between functionality and community value.
- A 'soft' monthly use cap was introduced in order to reduce costs. The cap could be exempted for residents who depended on the service – all residents who applied for the exemption were approved. The average ridership growth and cost per trip has somewhat stabilized which demonstrates the success of the project.

Future plans

While the stabilization is a good result of the measures taken, it is important to mention that the Town of Innisfil continues to experience population growth, which begs the question: what are the next steps in their partnership with Uber? Possible solutions might have to do with having higher capacity vehicles and/or increasing the time to match trips (time that the Uber application will match you with a trip going to the same direction), which has already been implemented, with the intention of alleviating costs. Some of the limitations to these ideas include certain areas that are not as highly populated and the lack of vehicles/drivers.

Additional questions in relation to the next steps are: what is the appropriate subsidy rate? How many rides should be planned for on an annual basis? These are the results of having a successful system that is growing, making changes, and in high demand.



The average ridership growth and cost per trip has somewhat stabilized which demonstrates the success of the project.

Pantonium – On Demand Public Transit | Belleville

Transportation Project Case Study

Company overview

Founded in 2010, Pantonium is an optimization company that uses algorithms to solve the most challenging problems in computer science for people and transportation fleet operators. It aims to move people efficiently in an on-demand world. The company mainly focuses its service in North America. In 2014, there were more than one million trips dispatched, and Pantonium has expanded its services into public transit and autonomous vehicle markets in 2018.

The City of Belleville and Pantonium's Management initiated discussions in September 2017 in order to find transportation solutions for said municipality, and the contract was signed in December 2017. Pantonium was officially appointed by the City Council and started the project in September 2018.

Motivation

- Belleville, similar to other small towns in Ontario, faces challenges in transportation, which includes low demand transit and dispersed population.
- Pantonium discovered that their services improve transit accessibility particularly in low-density areas. The technology used by Pantonium helps allocate vehicles efficiently on-demand, which is applicable to Belleville's context.
- Belleville is well suited for an on-demand service as it is a small city with a scattered population, which enables the application to work very efficiently.

Project Goals & Scale

- The project's main goal was to increase rider accessibility by pairing up with Belleville's existing transit in order to build a reliable system. This project emerged as an innovative approach to the City's transportation challenges as part of a Research and Development initiative.
- The technology used also aimed to disrupt the on-demand transit system market.
- The project's performance is measured by comparing the system's rides per hour to other public transit services around the world.
- The stakeholders involved are Pantonium, Belleville, University of Toronto, Ryerson University, and the Ontario Center for Excellence.
- The services are presently focused mainly in North America. Pantonium is planning to expand its business to Europe and Japan in the future.

Service Delivery Structure

- The phone app aims to deliver a more direct and convenient experience to Belleville users. It enhances the transit system allowing users to book a trip at any time (even days before the trip). A large service area was planned; therefore, users can get to any bus stop in the city on one bus without any transfers. A notification including the estimated time of arrival (ETA) for the bus is displayed on the user's app indicating the proximity of the bus. Once a passenger gets on the bus, the ride experience is the same as taking an ordinary

bus (i.e. same fare payment method). The drop-off location and the route that the bus is to drive is to appear on the app. Buses only take calculated routes based on the demand (ordered trips); these routes may slightly differ based on the demand.

- Both short-term and long-term measurements were conducted to assess the impacts. Statistics obtained in relation to ridership measurement suggested that the system was operating at capacity in the early days, which caused an increase in waiting time. An extra bus was added to the service in November 2018 after two months of operation in response to the demand and another 2 buses were added after 6 months to handle the increased demand.
- Long-term evaluation plans include a research partnership with the University of Toronto to assess the origin-destination pairs for riders.

Outcomes

- The results from the first two months of operation indicated that ridership had a drastic increase, which suggested that the project created a significant impact on Belleville's transit.
- Belleville has experienced a shortage of labour due to its small population, but the app allowed labour residing far away from their workplace to get to work by bus efficiently, thus allowing employers to increase their labour pool.
- The transportation concerns of lower-income Belleville citizens are alleviated. While some users were employed, they still could not afford a vehicle. The app lessened their financial and other burdens to commute by providing a reliable and affordable means of transportation.
- Research conducted by Ryerson University indicated that 50% of the riders commute to work via the app, while 50% use it for leisure activities. The app allowed all users to gain access to any stop in the city through the service in contrast to the previous fixed route service, which only served certain stops therefore limiting access within both groups.

Challenges

- When introduced, the app became more popular than expected, which created some challenges in dealing with the surging demand in the first few months.
- Designing the proper service area was challenging for Pantonium, as the company had to take the market demand and demographics into account in determining the best-suited area to locate the service.
- Ride training had to be arranged to familiarize drivers with the app. Initially, Belleville had approximately 30 drivers, of whom only 5 or 6 were trained. Pantonium trained additional drivers to ensure the smooth delivery of the service.

Future Plans

While the surge in demand is a good indicator of the popularity and impact of the system, Pantonium is also implementing on-demand service in Deseronto, which is a city close to Belleville. By coordinating the transit agencies in both cities, Pantonium seeks to form a regional transportation service using new technology platforms that will increase the areas covered by the system and allow riders to commute between Deseronto to Belleville. Belleville also plans to expand service to its Ward 2. Pantonium is working with other municipalities in Ontario, the rest of Canada and in the US.

Meanwhile, Pantonium is planning to start a project with Via Colorado in Boulder to help reduce the cost for cities to provide paratransit (non-fixed route and individualized) service. The goal is to use the technology platforms to combine paratransit and conventional transit vehicles in order to use paratransit vehicles more efficiently, in this way reducing costs of paratransit services as cities face the challenge of an aging population.

Employer Individualized Marketing (EIM) | Region of Peel

Transportation Project Case Study

Introduction

Traffic problems in the Region of Peel negatively affect businesses, employee quality of life, and the environment. The Region of Peel has been a leader in the implementation of transportation demand management strategies and through its delivery of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs since 2003. These programs have ensured the efficient utilization of its transportation system and have encouraged the use of sustainable transportation modes such as transit, carpooling, teleworking, biking and walking. The Region of Peel implemented the first large-scale Employer Individualized Marketing (EIM) campaign in 2010, in a successful bid to move commuters out of their cars and into more sustainable means of transportation.

Motivation

There are two perspectives from which to view problems related to transportation in the Region of Peel. The first is at the level of the individual, such as traffic and parking congestion, or the challenges non-driving commuters experience in areas designed mainly for automobile transportation. The second perspective is that of market distortions, which result in excessive automobile use, such as Emergency Preparedness, or major events, such as the Pan Am Games. Since

employed individuals are most likely to commute in single-occupancy vehicles, educating employees to switch to greener commuting alternatives has the potential to be the most effective way to tackle reducing the carbon footprint and traffic congestion at the same time.

Program Goals and Scale

- The EIM project was focused on reducing single-occupancy vehicle travel in the Region of Peel by implementing EIM programs at six employment sites and reaching approximately 9,500 employees.
- In order to measure the success of the project, a comprehensive evaluation process was created to include both a before-and-after survey. The evaluation process will identify the mode split¹⁹, the number of single-occupancy trips reduced, the number of vehicle kilometres of travel reduced, as well as employees' experiences and satisfaction with the program.
- The project consisted of two phases: the first phase engaged two large employers in Mississauga – HATCH and the Greater Toronto Airport Authority, as well as the Region of Peel in Brampton. The second phase of the project engaged with two organizations in Caledon: Mars Canada and the Town of Caledon, and one organization in Brampton, which was Nestle Canada.

¹⁹ Mode split indicates the percentage of travellers using a particular type of transportation or number of trips using this said type. Modal split can also be applied to the choice between the different public transportation modes.

Service Delivery Structure

- The EIM campaign consists of three steps:
 1. Survey and Segmentation
 2. Motivation and Information
 3. Evaluation
- In order to measure the project's success, each workplace was given a before and after survey identical in nature. The before survey helps to classify respondents into three categories: Interested, Regular Users, and Not Interested. The campaign focused on the respondents who chose "Interested" in changing their travel behaviour.
- In the second step, the segmented audience ("Interested" respondents) is to be provided with suggestions (interventions) to practice more sustainable travel behaviour. To further motivate individuals to change their commuting habits, incentives were used to achieve very high response rates. The motivating gifts were Tim Hortons gift cards, or gifts provided by the organization. A follow-up survey measured the degree to which these suggestions were taken up by commuters. It measures the effectiveness, in a follow-up survey, after the implementation of the first-survey suggestions provided by commuters.
- The third step ensures that the intervention has measurable indicators for effectiveness and transportation modal change towards more sustainable travel options. Also, the last step also allows implementers to determine the lessons learned from the project from collected data.

Outcomes

- The project increased employee awareness of greener commuting alternatives available to them either from their own organization or from options available to them publicly, thus allowing for the overall decrease in the use of single-occupancy vehicles.
- Transportation options have since increased within the region, providing commuters with a new and faster option of public transportation, carpooling, car sharing, and teleworking, and more multi-use trails for walking and biking.

- By taking public transit, participating employees have saved on gas and other expenses related to single occupancy driving. Alternative transportation modals have also reduced the contribution to traffic congestion, or through the greater use of High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in Peel.

Challenges and Potential Solutions

- Although there is a large portion of EIM survey respondents who indicated that they are "interested" in changing their mode of transportation, there remain employees who are "not interested" and who are not willing to switch to a greener commuting alternative.
- The factors leading to the disinterest are unknown, but potential reasons might include that the provided incentives (gifts) provided are not appealing enough, or that there exists a potential unwillingness to share vehicles with others or, in most cases, the employee has other existing family-related responsibilities that make changing their modal too challenging at this time.
- A new approach might be required to develop interest in the program among employees who have not shown any interest in joining, yet.
- Carpooling seems to be one of the best alternatives for employees in terms of comfort and commuting time. Most of the employees who are willing to change their behaviour tend to choose carpooling over other alternatives. It is challenging to promote other means of public transportation, especially when the options remain limited.
- Working from home is also another alternative for employees because commute time is eliminated and is cost-saving to both for the employee and employer. Each respective organization would need to assess who could qualify to work from home and under what conditions.

Transportation Forum

“Transportation challenges are a huge barrier to local employers and workers alike”, said Shalini da Cunha, Executive Director of PHWDG.

Da Cunha further stated that, “local employers have suggested that their bottom line is being affected as potential workers are unable to get to work due to transportation limitations.”

The Peel Halton Workforce Development Group (PHWDG) hosted an invite-only Transportation Forum attended by approximately 80 Peel and Halton key stakeholders from the private, public, academic and non-profit sectors. The event was held in Mississauga, Ontario at the Living Arts Centre on January 31st, 2020. Among some of the attendees was the Honorable Kinga Surma, Associate Minister for Transportation (GTA) & MPP for Etobicoke Centre, who presented transportation related updates from the Province and indicated, “There has been a service increase along the Go rail core lines by 21%”. Additionally, the Minister added that her Ministry is currently doing construction work on Highway 401, as “we want to reduce traffic congestion as much as possible in our traffic network”.

The main objectives of this forum were to highlight innovative approaches to transportation challenges and encourage collaboration between the stakeholders to respond efficiently to these challenges. Specifically, PHWDG presented key findings that emerged from this transportation study in order to elucidate the realities faced by Peel and Halton’s workforce in relation to their challenges. Moreover, cutting-edge initiatives from other municipalities in Ontario were showcased, such as the Town of Innisfil’s partnership with Uber to address their local transportation challenges as well as the City of Belleville’s association with Pantonium Inc. - a Canadian phone application that optimizes the existing transit infrastructure. Moreover, the Region of Peel presented the Employer Individualized Marketing project, which

utilizes social marketing techniques to change travel behaviour using survey tools and incentives. The transportation key findings in conjunction with the above-mentioned innovative approaches provided an opportunity to encourage discussions to tackle the most pressing transportation issues in Peel and Halton.

Feedback Points

The Transportation Forum attendees self-identified as follows: Business/Industry (54%), Government (29%), Education and Training (4%) Community Service Providers (4%) and other (9%). 83% of the participants indicated that they agree or strongly agree that the forum was very informative. Through our event feedback sheet, attendees were also asked about innovative transportation solutions that they believe to be beneficial within Peel and Halton. Some of the responses included but were not limited to:

- Multiregional collaboration for improved public transportation
- Carpooling – encouraging multi-passenger commuting
- Walking and Biking (where feasible)
- Private Transit – shuttle buses, school buses and other transit services

With respect to further research, we asked the audience to list their three main workforce challenges they are currently facing. The most common challenges among respondents included:

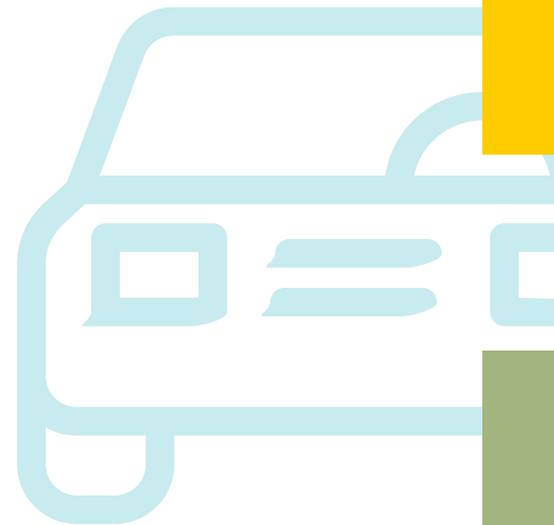
- Limited public transit access for employees
- Lack of inter-municipal transit connectivity
- High turnover rates/retention issues due to long commuting
- Lack of night bus services (Night Shifts)
- Staff absenteeism and attendance
- General recruitment difficulties
- Aging population challenges – absence of succession plans
- Greenhouse Gases Reduction/Climate Change

Moreover, through Slido (polling platform), the audience was asked various transportation-related questions. Among the feedback gathered, it was revealed that 62% of the respondents found that the most unfavourable outcome that commuting generates among employees is high turnover.

More than half of the respondents indicated that commuting challenges largely affect the mental health of their workforce. Moreover, 50% of the respondents indicated that the top solution that they have implemented to alleviate commuting issues at their workplace is schedule leniency, followed by assembling a task force to find transportation solutions (33%) working with their municipality (33%), and offering a shuttle service (29%). Other solutions mentioned included financial incentives and worksite relocation. On average, respondents indicated that their employees commute 1-2 hours each day (home to work and vice-versa).

Furthermore, respondents indicated that some of the incentives they had considered to ease the difficulty of their workforce commuting included carpooling (68%), telecommuting (41%), public transit monthly pass (24%), preferred parking (21%), gas/mileage incentive (15%), prizes (12%), and a highway toll subsidy (6%). *Note: when added together, percentages add to more than 100 percent simply because the respondents were given the option to select all the options that applied.*

Overall, the event's feedback was highly positive and over 70% of the respondents indicated that they are willing to collaborate with other stakeholders after the forum, which satisfies the aim of the event. In addition, numerous informal conversations took place during and after the forum in relation to potential partnerships emerging from the event. However, in order to provide a fair measurement, it would be ideal to track these partnerships over the long-run to evaluate the impact of the event in relation to stakeholder collaboration.



More than half of the respondents indicated that commuting challenges largely affect the mental health of their workforce.

Conclusion

The current transportation challenges experienced in the Peel and Halton region reflect the need for a monumental shift in suburban life.

These challenges are negatively affecting the workforce to a point that it requires close attention and action by all relevant sectors (public, private and non-profit). Employers and employees alike concede that commuting to and from work needs to be facilitated through a public transit network that is frequent and efficient, that responds to the particular needs of top industries in respective municipalities.

This study dived deeply into the quantitative data to better frame the issues and also explored qualitative research to analyse first-hand accounts of both employer and employee perspectives and realities. Through the key findings of this research study, it was determined that collaboration between key stakeholders from all sectors is necessary in order to enhance workforce conditions in Peel and Halton, with a particular interest in transportation/commuting solutions and best practices.

The Transportation Forum organized and hosted by PHWDG served as a productive space for key stakeholders from public, private and non-profit sectors towards continuing the conversation around transportation challenges in Peel and Halton. As previously mentioned, three innovative transportation approaches were highlighted to encourage dialogue, action and increase collaboration between all stakeholders. This was to ensure that solutions were discussed with the ultimate goal of improving labour market conditions in Peel and Halton. As one forum attendee commented, "This is an excellent forum discussion to begin finding solutions to transportation challenges."



"This is an excellent forum discussion to begin finding solutions to transportation challenges."

Recommendations

Based on the findings gathered in this research study, the PHWDG presents the following recommendations to enhance transit access to Peel Halton residents, particularly in smaller municipalities:

- Increase collaboration between the public and private sectors (municipal governments and local employers) in order to find short-term transportation solutions.
- Strengthen partnerships between small municipalities and provincial/federal governments to enhance funding opportunities for transit infrastructure.
- Incentivize transit innovation for municipalities from the provincial and federal level.
- Promote the creation or improvement of inter-municipal agreements to capitalize on the strengths of each municipality.
- Encourage employers to develop and participate in transportation/commuting strategies through the provision of incentives such as tax credits and grants.



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