

# 2013 Transportation Needs Survey

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

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This executive summary will provide a brief overview of key findings from the Huron-Perth Transportation Needs Survey released in November 2013 by the Huron-Perth Transportation Task Force. This survey sought to investigate transportation needs and travel demands across the two counties through questions regarding demographics, employment information, and transportation information.

Feedback from this survey will allow the Huron-Perth Transportation Task Force to identify sustainable transportation solutions that meet the travel needs of all individuals in our communities.

### Background

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The Huron-Perth Transportation Task Force is led by the United Way Perth-Huron and is made up of municipal representatives, transportation providers, and human service providers. The task force works to improve transportation across both counties through innovative solutions and community partnerships.

The task force includes:

- The Counties of Perth and Huron
- Huron County Health Unit
- Stratford Social Services
- Huron Perth Student Transportation Services
- Community Outreach Services, Milverton
- Huron Perth Children's Aid Society
- Victim Services Grey Bruce Perth
- Town of St. Marys
- ONE Care Home and Community Support Services
- Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance
- Clinton Business Improvement Association
- Huron County Planning and Development Department
- City of Stratford
- Gateway Rural Health Research Institute

In order to identify viable transportation solutions, the task force released a public survey to seek out the travel needs and wants of the community. This would allow

the task force to understand travel patterns, as well as the barriers that prevent individuals from travelling on a regular basis and/or accessing essential services.

## Methodology

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Surveys were distributed across public libraries, municipal offices, food banks, Centres for Learning and Employment and other locations across the two counties. In addition, the survey was posted online so that people could complete it from the convenience of their homes.

The survey began November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 and ended on December 20<sup>th</sup>.

A total of 590 surveys were received, and the majority of surveys were completed online. Although most of the surveys were only partially completed, the results were calculated using the number of total respondents instead of the actual number of people who responded to that particular question.

The Transportation Task Force also sought to understand the travel needs of the Anabaptist communities in Huron and Perth counties. Two separate surveys were drafted in consultation with the Huron County Health Unit and the Perth District Health Unit for the Huron Orthodox Mennonite and the Old Order Amish in Perth County. A total of 65 surveys were received. These responses captured the distinct needs of these communities, such as the importance of public transportation for accessing local and regional healthcare services. As per community wishes, the results will not be made public.

## Key Findings

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### ***Need for more public transportation in Huron & Perth counties***

- More than eighty percent indicated that both counties need more public transportation
- The following reasons prevent survey respondents from travelling on a regular basis:
  - Driving conditions (41%)
  - Access to public transportation (33.1%)
  - Access to affordable rail transportation (37.5%)
- 47% of respondents are unable to travel and/or access essential services, at least 'some of the time', due to lack of public transportation

### ***Use of public transportation in Huron & Perth counties***

- More than sixty percent indicated that they would use public transportation (including rail transportation such as GO Transit), if it was available
- Public transportation would be used mainly for:
  - Shopping (57.6%)
  - Recreation (57.5%)
  - Medical appointments (40%)
  - Employment (35.8%)
- Respondents would use public transportation to travel to:
  - GTA (65.1%)
  - London (57.6%)
  - Kitchener/Waterloo (53.9%)

### ***Choosing public transportation alternatives***

- Close to thirty percent indicated that they would participate in a carpooling website either as a driver or as a passenger
- Close to 16% indicated that they would join a car-sharing cooperative as a means of transportation

### ***Job loss***

- Nearly 15% indicated that they have quit or lost a job because it was difficult for them to get to work due to lack of reliable transportation

## **Conclusion**

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Survey results confirm the strong need for increased public transportation in Huron and Perth counties, both for regional and daily travel. Many individuals are unable to access essential services and/or cannot find reliable transportation to get to and from work. This has led to significant job loss which poses negative consequences for the local economy.

As a county-wide public transportation system may prove difficult to implement in the near future, innovative shorter term solutions that capitalize on existing resources should be further explored. This may include ride sharing and car sharing programs, or coordinated community transportation services, which would allow individuals to travel to and from employment on a daily basis, as well as travel outside of the counties.

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