

**Community Climate Conversations, Session 2, Transportation**  
**Thursday, October 24, 2024 City Hall Auditorium**  
**Comments from Participants**

**1. What would your ideal transportation system be?**

- small electric buses for industrial routes
- free transportation for everyone (making it accessible by being included in the city taxes)
- having an extensive transit system like Toronto (but on a smaller scale) would be great
- would hate to lose the small town charm
- timely public transportation to Kitchener, London, Toronto, that doesn't take forever and goes multiple times a day
- faster in town bus system
- bicycle system that is friendly for cyclists
- mix of transportation modes
- car-free city centre with ride-sharing, car pooling
- is there enough financing to support an ideal system
- more pedestrian traffic priorities (e.g., make sidewalks or multi-use paths from more areas to malls, grocery stores)
- fewer cars with combustion engines

**2. Have you ever ridden a bus in Stratford? What do you think would make it more desirable?**

- there is a bit of a stigma around who rides the bus
- concern about seeing empty buses running.
- high cost of fares.
- lack of shelters at bus stops.
- waiting for buses during peak hours. (Especially at specific stops like high schools, which makes you wait for the second bus but by that time you could just walk home)
- routes that run the same all day seem outdated idea. Possibly on demand for certain routes and certain times of the day (e.g., a place that switched to uber drivers to bring passengers into the city core to switch to buses -as an alternative idea)
- why are we looking at replacing the exact same kind of buses (size) when switching to electric buses - we should be looking at other alternatives.
- why do we not ask for more grant money when we know the upfront cost will increase?
- Perth Connect last trip is at 3 pm, who is that for? (Not helpful if you are commuting for work etc.)
- no reason to use the bus
- buses used a lot for students
- no because they are never on time
- direct routes would be helpful - on a 20 minute cycle
- having smaller buses on less used routes versus the busy high traffic routes

- making it free and pushing the environmental aspect of it
- multiple smaller trips
- (note: not many have ridden a bus in Stratford - some due to living close to the downtown, so it is walkable)
- bus routing is not necessarily an issue
- having the bus schedule run on time (often talk that the bus is late or not on time)
- prioritization of buses (might help with running on time - people don't always know that you need to yield to buses so that can slow things down more)
- more frequent service
- opinion that no one rides the buses
- we don't know about the on-demand service, publicize it, tell us how to use it

### **3. What would make cycling a more attractive option? Who should decide and why?**

- no bike lanes on busy roads
- downtown being a challenge for bikes to get through. (no safe way in city centre)
- having people riding on the sidewalk- doesn't instill confidence in the long term goals of the transportation plan.
- lack of education on using helmets, riding safely
- reverse riding is a possible alternative to bike lanes.
- drink+driving is a new issue because alcohol is now available in community stores
- having different bike options to help with aging - there is a fear of falling, e.g. electric
- making some of the new bike areas less confusing and including better signage and promoting how to drive/bike it
- more education on how to drive/bike
- make biking safer (lanes that are truly separate from car traffic are necessary)
- have designated bike routes
- designate north and west sidewalks for bike lanes
- use backroads - side streets
- free parking for bikes
- get trucks off bike routes
- normalize biking - have bike racks everywhere
- keep area close to the curbs free of potholes
- keep bike lanes free of debris (e.g., McCarthy St is often full of dirt and sand, so that cyclists are forced back into traffic to avoid piles of dirt)
- prioritize biking network (note Cycle Stratford has written a letter to the City, asking them to make the Priority Cycling Network a priority when considering areas to develop and maintain for cycling)
- the multi-use trail is a good addition to the cycling network and the one being developed on O'Loane is welcome
- children mentioned people backing out of driveways and people coming out of apartment buildings are safety concerns

- decisions about bike lanes are obviously best left to the municipalities who know the needs of their own communities best
- secure bike parking (system to register serial numbers to deter thefts), install more security cameras (note of garage529 app - register bike with security force)
- more penalties for safety of cyclists
- senior living complexes without elevators make it difficult to use bikes

#### **4. What will transportation look like in Stratford ten years from now?**

- electric options (technology is changing so fast so our options will look quite different 10 years from now)
- more bike options and being able to bike without feeling fearful
- cycling network built up on foundation we have
- more EV use in all modes of transportation, supported by better infrastructure, eg charging stations (question whether transportation industry can go electric given the extra cost and the fact that only a few people will pay extra costs for greener transportation – others just want cheaper)
- technology of EVs will continue to improve
- better public transit to destinations out of the city that would make people choose it (GO station in Baden was noted)
- buses, bikes, cars intermingling, sharing roads in designated lanes
- more walking, walkability
- use of different forms of renewable, net zero power, e.g. hydrogen
- more EV bikes as they become more affordable

#### **5. What is one thing you are doing or could do to reduce the pollution from transportation in your daily life?**

- condo is trying to put in EV chargers for electric vehicles
- driving an EV and have no regrets, more economical in the long run
- choosing to walk more
- walking and biking all over town whenever possible
- eating more local food, growing food in a community garden
- choosing responsible suppliers for the things we buy
- planning to get a heat pump
- next vehicles will be EVs
- not willing to give up flying because of family overseas
- use smaller vehicles
- be aware of emissions effect of idling, turn off the car
- stop using air conditioning in car when possible
- be conscious with your investments, ask if the companies are conscientious about the environment
- more bike-share/rent options

**6. Walking and biking are terrific for health and frequent in much of the world- How could we make that happen in Stratford?**

- make biking safer, having bike lanes on all the main/busy roads to encourage the use of bikes
- diverting the truck traffic to the outer roads in the city to keep the downtown safer
- education and experience, such as living in Toronto and walking versus living in smaller town and driving
- there is a bit more fear of sending kids to school alone and walking
- better publicity about bus riding
- more car-free days
- make Stratford a "15-minute city" - you can walk to services you need in 15 minutes

**7. Public transportation sometimes takes patience - can we do that?**

- no- unanimous opinion around the table
- so does waiting for infrastructure to catch up - we can't wait for a 20 year-old transportation plan

**Additional comments:**

- One participant discussed leaving right after the speakers were done as they weren't allowed to ask questions of the speakers, could have read everything at home and therefore wasn't interested in what was being presented, frustrated by lack of action by Stratford
- Consumerism needs to slow down in the first place
- Fossil fuel subsidies need to stop!