

STARTING A TRANSPORTATION SERVICE: *Plan, Do, Study, Act*

PLAN

What is the goal: Desired transportation services are broadly defined by the *Making the Connections* grant and the Community Compact Cabinet Best Practice.

For whom are services to be provided: Grant target groups include seniors, people with disabilities, the financially insecure, and veterans.

Why are these services important: Findings from the Livable Sudbury needs assessment (see Appendix) provide data on many of the particular transportation challenges for residents in the above groups.

DO

Contract with transportation provider(s); enroll target residents; start service...

STUDY

Determine target measures, milestones, timeframe, processes: Continuously assess/analyze all aspects of service.

ACT

Over course of pilot, change/modify/adapt as indicated by measures and milestone achievements.

Example:

- 42% of residents with a participation limitation reported they “had missed, canceled, or rescheduled a medical appointment due to lack of transportation.”
- Potential number of adult residents in this category (based on CDC data for our region):
 - Of adults 65 years and older (approx. 4,000), 60% report at least one basic action difficulty or complex activity limitation;
 - About 9% of all adults report vision trouble.
 - Cognitive disability of older adults averages 15%
 - Emotional and other disabilities not known.
- Measures, etc., indicating performance-to-goals
 - Objective: reduce percentage of target residents missing/canceling/rescheduling appointments due to lack of transportation
 - Goal: at conclusion of 12 months of pilot services, fewer than 25% of target population reports lack of access
 - Measures: surveys, online/telephone feedback, focus groups, etc. (feedback continuously sought; surveys monthly; focus groups bimonthly, etc.)
 - Milestones: percentages reporting lack of access monthly
 - Process: reduction in percentages reporting lack of access, indicating goal will be met at end of pilot.

Appendix: FINDINGS FROM THE LIVABLE SUDBURY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

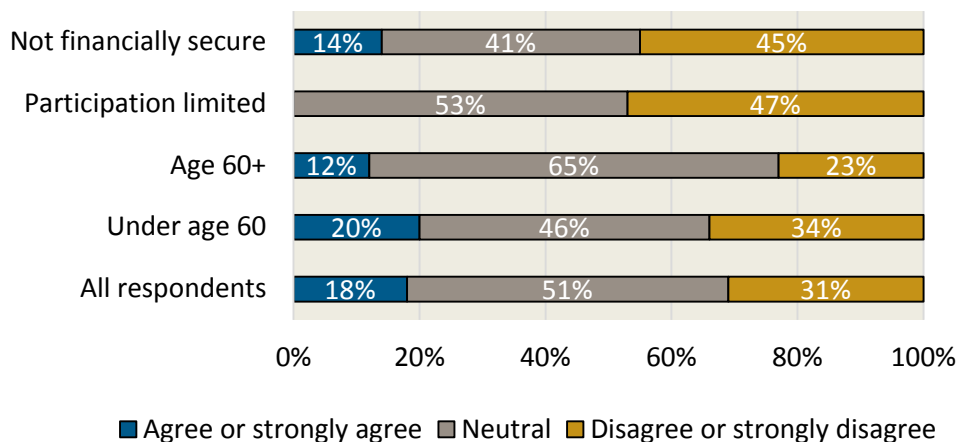
Housing and financial security. ... discussion of affordability arose routinely in focus groups and interviews. . the share of “cost-burdened” householders is similar among homeowners and renters, at about 25% (with lower shares occurring among homeowners with no mortgage), indicating that housing costs may pose challenges for about one out of four households in Sudbury, impacting homeowners and renters alike.

Median household income is ... over \$178,000 for those with a mortgage, and about \$163,000 for owners without a mortgage

Median household income among renters is far lower than that among homeowners, at \$34,545

Civic engagement and employment. Sudbury offers many opportunities for residents to volunteer and be involved in local civic life, although some study findings suggest a lack of awareness among community members about opportunities to participate. In contrast, clear shortfalls in availability of employment opportunities in Sudbury are evident....

Figure 50. "There are adequate employment opportunities available to residents in Sudbury"



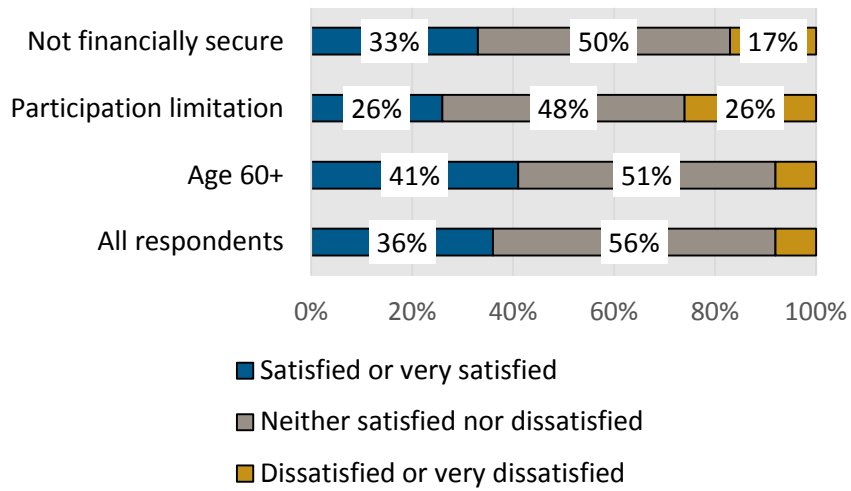
Transportation ...Being able to get where one wants and needs to go helps people maintain social ties, obtain needed goods and services, access local amenities and be engaged with the community.

In this study, transportation issues relating to driving barriers, traffic, walkability, and overall satisfaction with available transit options emerged as significant issues....

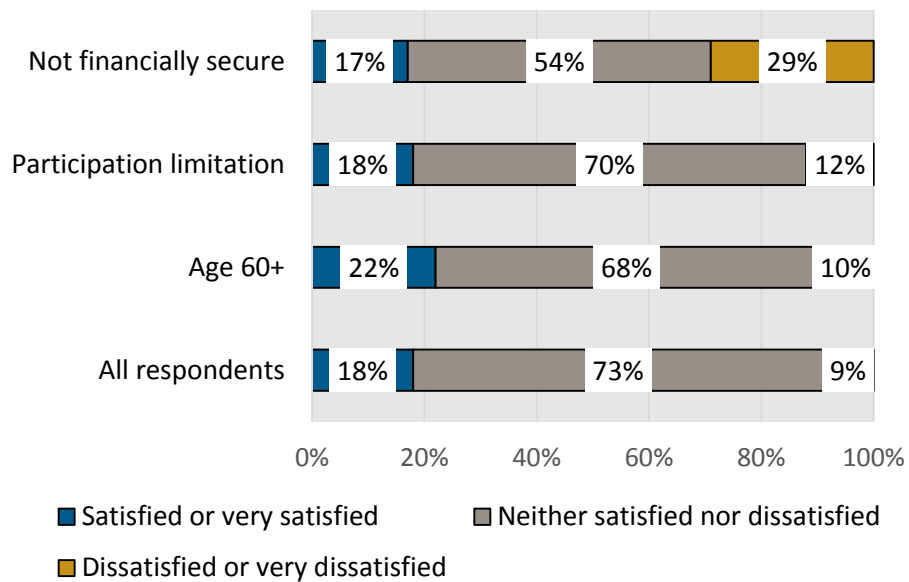
- **Transportation is identified as crucial by a wide range of stakeholders:**
 - Families with children under 18 years
 - Residents age 60+
 - Residents of all ages with a participation limitation
 - Residents of all ages who are not financially secure.
- **The range of specific transportation needs identified implies a variety of options to meet them**
 - After-school transportation for children and youth (fixed route, vans)
 - Transportation to medical appointments, social service appointments, respite opportunities such as adult day care, etc. (scheduled and on-demand)
 - Transportation to shopping, appointments, evening, and weekend services, meetings, and socialization opportunities (shuttles, vans, etc.)
 - Affordable transportation to employment venues, childcare facilities, commuter rail, MBTA routes, as well as services similar to the preceding.
- **A number of the transportation options must be both affordable and accessible**
 - 42% of residents with a participation limitation¹ reported they “had missed, canceled, or rescheduled a medical appointment due to lack of transportation.”
 - More than a third of residents who are not financially secure are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”
 - Nearly half of residents 60+ are not satisfied with their “ability to get where they want to go.”
- **Transportation gaps affect all livable domains, reducing the overall “livability” and long-term attractiveness of the town**
 - Lack of transportation limits *social participation*
 - Lack of transportation affects overall well-being (*domain of community and health services*)
 - Lack of transportation affects *housing* options and limits access to *outdoor spaces*
 - Lack of transportation limits *civic participation and employment*
 - Lack of transportation can result in segments of the town population “not feeling welcomed” (*respect and social inclusion*).

¹ To identify people who may benefit from some level of accommodation based on health or disability, the following question was asked in the survey conducted for the Livability study: “Do you have an impairment or condition that limits your ability to participate in your community?” Individuals answering “yes” are included in the category of those with “participation limitations.”

Satisfaction with access to physical health services for residents



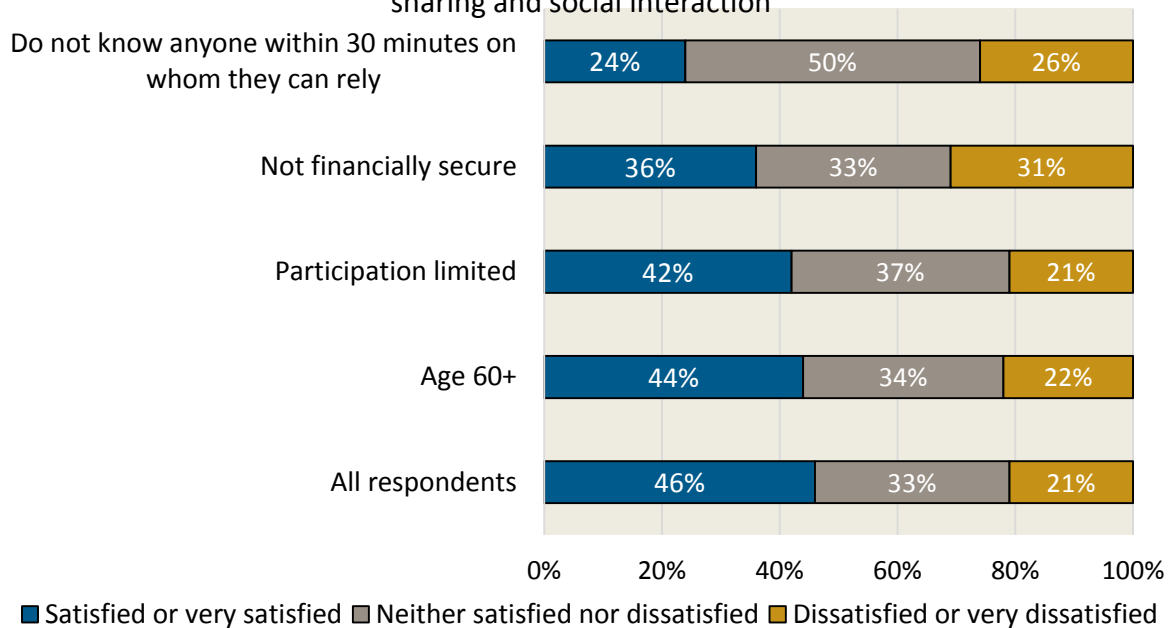
Satisfaction with access to mental or behavioral health services for residents



1. On an almost weekly basis the town social work office receives calls about seniors or others with complex medical needs who do not have transportation to medical appointments and are in a state of crisis. People often have to cancel appointments or are not able to schedule appointments within the medically suggested time frame due to lack of transportation. This often leads to high anxiety as well as health issues.
2. The cost of a taxi or Uber/Lyft is often unmanageable for low income residents and seniors on a fixed income. People have to choose between a medically necessary appointment and another essential need such as food or utility bills. There is at time concerns that the financial stressors related to transportation to medical appointments leads to exacerbation of physical and mental health symptoms.
3. Residents, providers and even a local taxi driver have expressed concerns that residents without transportation do not have an affordable option to get home from the hospital, often when already in a state of emotional and physical distress. A local taxi driver reported that the hospital has called a cab for a resident, only for the taxi driver to discover upon arrival that the resident does not have any way to pay for the cab service.
4. All of the above has left providers in Sudbury, particularly the Senior Center, Board of Health and local clergy scrambling to find finances, volunteers or other creative solutions to address these needs. Because these needs are immediate, providers have to stop current tasks to manage the crisis, and it is often a time consuming process.

Social participation. Being engaged and participating in community events—through learning opportunities, fitness programs, and social activities—helps community members build and maintain social support, remain active, and avoid isolation. ... Lower satisfaction was reported among some segments of the community, especially those who are not financially secure.

Figure 48. Accessible opportunities in your neighborhood for informal sharing and social interaction



Inclusion and respect. Feeling respected and included promotes participation in the community and facilitates effective use of services and amenities. Themes relating to exclusion and marginalization were identified as important issues to capture in this study, as organizers of the initiative specified equity and access as key elements of Sudbury’s framework. Study findings suggest that these themes are important, and 30% of the survey respondents reported that they have felt excluded on one or more dimensions.... Two groups that appear to be systematically impacted are those with participation limitations and those who are not financially secure. ... Considering accessibility issues when planning community events may also be helpful, including taking into account the cost of participation.

Method of Continuous Quality Improvement: The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle is shorthand for testing a change in the real world setting — by planning it, trying it, observing the results, and acting on what is learned. This is the scientific method adapted for action-oriented learning.

The Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle was originally developed by Walter A. Shewhart as the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle. W. Edwards Deming modified Shewhart's cycle to PDSA, replacing "Check" with "Study." [See Deming WE. *The New Economics for Industry, Government, and Education*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press; 2000.]