

Transportation Choices for Seniors in Rural Ottawa

Report of three information events
hosted by the Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee
of The Council on Aging of Ottawa, in partnership with
Community Support Service Agencies, OC Transpo,
Ottawa Public Health and Safer Roads Ottawa

May 2015



Transportation Choices for Seniors in Rural Ottawa

Transportation Choices for Seniors in Rural Ottawa describes a collaborative project led by The Council on Aging of Ottawa (COA) Ottawa Seniors Transportation Committee (OSTC) and partners to inform rural seniors in Ottawa of transportation choices and options. Three events were carried out in April and May 2015.

OSTC works with representatives from public, private and volunteer transportation services, seniors' organizations, and interested community members to improve the transportation options for older adults and persons with disabilities in the city of Ottawa. OSTC was formed following a Successful Aging forum at COA in 2005.

The COA works in partnership with the City of Ottawa's Older Adult Plan in the Age-Friendly Cities initiative to address the eight components defined by the World Health Organization of an Age-Friendly City. One of these components is Transportation and Mobility. OSTC is actively involved in identifying barriers to accessibility and gaps in transportation service particularly relating to Ottawa seniors and those with disabilities.

Rural seniors are proud of their local identity and are accustomed to driving to get most services. At budget time, they reinforce to their elected representatives that they want their roads to be well maintained. In rural areas, finding ways to get to destinations is a greater challenge because of the distances, sparse populations, and economies of scale. Family and neighbours often help out, providing transportation when health-related or other conditions impact a senior's daily routine and independence.

Since amalgamation in 2001, the geographic profile of the City of Ottawa has changed with eighty percent of the land area considered rural, with approximately 10 percent of the total population. Seniors (65+) account for 12.5% of the total rural population (Census 2011). The 65 and over age group is now the fastest growing population group in Ottawa. In 2011, approximately 13% of the population was over 65. By 2031, it is expected that the 65 and over age group will make up 22% of the city's population.

There are twenty-six villages in rural Ottawa, ranging from large (3,000+), mid-size (1,000-3,000) and small (<1,000) population. The three largest villages are Manotick, Greely and Richmond. Fourteen villages have populations less than 700.

In January 2012, OC Transpo implemented changes to rural Para Transpo service. Rural to rural trips for rural Para registered clients were discontinued. Four new rural shoppers' bus routes were added to the existing bus routes, and contribution funding was allocated to three rural Community Support Service (CSS) agencies to increase their capacity to provide more transportation to rural seniors. (See *Improved Transit Services for Seniors and Adults with Disabilities in Rural Areas*, ACS 2011-ICS-TRA-0021 and *Services for Seniors and People with*

Disabilities in Rural Areas – Post-Implementation Review of 2011 Changes, ACS2013-COS-TRA-0007).

OSTC's sub-committees - Information Events and Rural Transportation - jointly committed in the 2014-2015 workplan to host three transportation events for rural seniors in west, south and east locations of the city. This followed similar successful similar events OSTC hosted in urban and suburban Ottawa in 2012 and 2013.

The goals for these transportation information events in rural Ottawa were to:

- present information on transportation choices, and options which can vary, depending on the occasion, need or season.
- provide resource materials.
- learn how rural seniors get out and about and how they foresee future needs in order to stay in their rural homes, using a questionnaire.

OSTC partnered with the three CSS agencies whose catchment areas include rural Ottawa: Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre (WOCRC), based in Kanata, Rural Ottawa South Support Services (ROSSS), based in Manotick, and Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre (EORC), based in Orléans.

Other partners were OC Transpo, Ottawa Public Health and Safer Roads Ottawa. Three CSS agencies from neighbouring counties also participated: Arnprior-Braeside-McNab Seniors At Home (ABMSAH), Carefor Health and Community Services Renfrew County, and Services Communautaires de Prescott-Russell Community Services.

The three events were held within a two week timeframe. The first, in West Carleton, was at the Galetta Community Centre on Friday, April 24. The Ottawa South event was at the Manotick Arena, on Friday, May 1. The Ottawa East event was held at Bearbrook Community Centre, in Vars, on Tuesday, May 5.

OC Transpo provided the expertise for poster design, translation and printing. Volunteers took on design and translation of the questionnaire and evaluation forms, local distribution, marketing and publicity and media notification. CSS agencies provided notices to their clients. The outreach message noted that anyone requiring wheelchair accessible transportation would be accommodated and simply needed to indicate this when registering. Rural councillors were invited to attend the event in their area. CSS rural partners covered the costs for meals and refreshments. They also donated vouchers for one free trip with their CSS transportation program. Five draws were made at each event.

Information packages were given out to all who attended these events. Each package included the power point presentations of the two speakers, as well as *Transportation CHOICES for Ottawa Seniors, Rural Transportation OPTIONS* brochure, the local CSS agency's materials, falls prevention advice, a caregiver resource guide, a questionnaire and an event evaluation form.

OSTC's questionnaire was developed with input from the organizing committee. It was designed to help partners understand how rural Ottawa seniors get around. It asked whether they use existing transportation services and how they expect to remain in their rural homes safely and independently as they age. The questionnaire was anonymous. A summary of the participant responses from all events is found in the Appendix.

At each event, COA, OPH, OC Transpo, Safer Roads Ottawa and CSS agencies were available to answer questions. Walk Ottawa participated at the event in Manotick.

OC Transpo Accessibility Specialist, Kathy Riley, focussed on seniors learning about the choices they have for public transportation services, and the options available with a mix and match.

OC Transpo offers:

- Rural shopping bus routes one day/week, available to everyone.
- Rural partner routes for commuters from Lanark and Renfrew County locations.
- Ride Free Wednesdays on all its routes and the O-Train.
- Accessible taxis under contract to Para Transpo.
- Para Transpo for specialized transport needs rural to urban destinations.
- Para Transpo Taxi Coupon program for 40% savings on regular taxi fare for persons registered with Para Transpo.
- Travel Training at no charge for seniors to learn how to travel safely and independently.

CSS transportation program staff spoke at each event about their transportation programs for seniors for medical and other essential needs, enrolment and financial assistance, how drive requests are matched, how fees are calculated and how invoicing is done.

- Priority is given to requests for medical and health-related appointments. Other essential services for which drives are provided include groceries, banking, legal, library, etc.
- The driver will be matched and a driver can escort a person who needs help with stairs or elevators at the destination.
- Several days' notice is requested but sometimes a drive can be arranged on one day or same day notice. Fees apply but subsidies are available thanks to generous donors; clients are encouraged to ask. Agencies invoice at end of month.
- At hospital parking garages in Ottawa, there is no parking fee for the volunteer driver services. This is not the same as in a private parking lot.
- The cost is calculated by the kilometre, on the distance driven, starting from the client's home and back. The rural CSS agencies use the same fee structure.
- The partnership with West Way Taxi is for transportation for seniors and adults with physical disabilities in wheelchairs for travel from one rural area to another rural area within Ottawa. CSS rates apply.

Details of each event are presented below.

GALETTA COMMUNITY CENTRE, FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 11 30- 1 30

Galetta Community Centre was the venue for the event on Friday, April 24. This was the regular Diners Club of WOCRC.

53 people attended, 43 enjoyed the lunch. The remainder registered for the talk.

Information tables were staffed by: COA, Older Drivers subcommittee of OSTC, OPH, WOCRC, and two neighbouring county CSS agencies.

Carefor Health and Community Services Renfrew County was represented by Alice Grenon, Manager, CSS. Carefor offers transportation services to seniors across the Champlain area (Renfrew, Ottawa-Carleton and Eastern Counties) and has a vehicle stationed in Arnprior.

Arnprior-Braeside-McNab Seniors At Home Support (ABMSAH) was present with Dennis Harrington, Executive Director and Tammy Mondor, Executive Assistant and Transportation Coordinator. ABMSAH coordinates transportation requests locally as well as in its catchment area.

Representatives from elected officials, other community support partners, local community associations and media who attended this event were:

Kelly Bourgaize, Councillor Eli El-Chantiry's office, West Carleton-March, Ward 5.

Nathalie Mehrer, community health worker, Primary Care Outreach for Seniors.

Jennifer Lockyer, volunteer coordinator, Hospice Care Ottawa with Inge Kelly, hospice volunteer who coordinates transportation for west end day hospice clients.

Ian Glen, president, Constance and Buckham's Bay Community Association.

Jessica Cunha, Metroland Media reporter, *West Carleton Review*.

Speakers at this event were Cristina DiTomaso, manager, community support services at WOCRC and Kathy Riley, OC Transpo accessibility specialist.

Cristina DiTomaso described WOCRC's transportation program for seniors. A volunteer driver drives a client to an appointment locally or into the city and back. A client can register for this program by phone. Fees apply based on kilometres from home to the appointment and return. Financial assistance is available. WOCRC recently recruited 11 more volunteer drivers from West Carleton. Requests for drives can be made a week or more in advance.

Kathy Riley encouraged West Carleton seniors to know what choices they have for OC Transpo and Para Transpo services. The OC Shoppers' Bus is Wednesday for West Carleton; anyone can use it to travel into the city at no cost. All OC bus routes and the O-Train are free on Wednesday for seniors; this is an opportunity to explore the city by public transit or get to appointments.

Several questions were raised at the Galetta event.

Kathy Riley confirmed an application to Para Transpo is valid for 18 months and that bookings are only 24 hours ahead. The rural Para Transpo cash fare is for a one-way trip and increases to \$8.80 at July 1. A Para Transpo application has to be verified by a health professional. Functional mobility is one criterion. If a senior uses a mobility device some or all of the time, there is a good chance that the application will be approved.

For those seniors able to ride conventional transit, she suggested they might enrol in the free OC Transpo Travel Training program to increase their comfort and independence to use conventional transit.

A senior from Constance Bay identified that more seniors might use the Shoppers' Bus if it stopped in the village.

Results of the questionnaires seniors completed at the Galetta event are found in the Appendix.

MANOTICK, FRIDAY May 1, at Manotick Arena, 2nd floor, 12.45 - 2.15

Tea Talk, the social program ROSSS runs on the first Friday of the month at Dr. Leach apartments in Manotick, was relocated to the arena for this day only.

35 seniors registered for this event. Two ROSSS drivers were outside with two vehicles: a KIA sedan and a new 8-seater passenger van equipped with turney seat for wheelchair clients who can transfer.

ROSSS staff at this event included Judy Bedell, Transportation Program Manager, Cathy Beckwith and Jeanne Sangster who coordinate transportation, and Carolyn Cruikshank, Program Coordinator, ROSSS Connections.

Information tables were staffed by Walk Ottawa, COA, Older Drivers subcommittee of OSTC, OPH, ROSSS and a CSS agency member of the Ottawa Community Support Coalition.

Representatives from elected officials, other community support partners and local community associations who attended the event in Manotick included:

Councillor Scott Moffatt, Rideau-Goulburn, Ward 21.

Councillor George Darouze, Osgoode, Ward 20.

An occupational therapist with Champlain Community Care Access Centre.

A community worker with the City of Ottawa's Essential Health and Social Supports Program.

Klaus Beltzner, President, Manotick and Valley Community Association.

Speakers at this event made these points to the audience, supplementing the material in their power point presentations provided in the information packages. Judy Bedell, transportation

manager for ROSSS, highlighted that ROSSS serves seniors over 60 years of age in rural Ottawa south. ROSSS serves an area approximately 1/3 the size of the city of Ottawa. She wanted the audience to know “we will do whatever we can to meet a client’s need”. A client has to register in order to obtain services. ROSSS’s KIA sedans are higher off the ground and easier to enter. Its 8 seater van with turney seat takes wheelchairs (for clients who can transfer). ROSSS’s grocery bus service is \$10. The grocery shopping service in Richmond to the IDA every second and fourth Friday morning is free thanks to the support of the Richmond Village Association.

Kathy Riley, accessibility specialist, OC Transpo, spoke about knowing what options are best to meet one’s needs and how these can vary, depending on the season and particular circumstances. For example, to make connections to conventional transit for a day outing in the city, a senior has the option to use the free Park & Ride lots of OC Transpo if it is feasible to drive to a lot or arrange a ride. The OC Transpo website shows all the Park & Ride lots and their capacity.

Kathy Riley recommended that a senior obtain personalized help from the OC Transpo info line staff for detailed bus information and times, including connections and walking distances. She offers Travel Training, designed to assist seniors to gain confidence to travel safely and comfortably on conventional transit. The Olde Forge Community Support Service agency at Richmond Road and Carling Avenue is partnering with OC Transpo in June 2015 to offer several travel training sessions.

Seniors, councillors and ROSSS staff made these points following the presentation:

- A Metcalfe senior stated the OC Transpo Shoppers’ Bus is not known well enough or that the weekly service is free to everyone. The route map is now displayed in the Metcalfe post office.
- In response to a question whether OC Transpo would consider a weekly bus service connecting the villages, Councillor Scott Moffatt responded that OC Transpo implements services in response to demand and the demand has to be sustained and predictable. Residents in rural Ottawa south are in Rural Transit Area A. The transit taxes they pay go to Park & Ride, Para Transpo and the commuter express buses (AM and PM service). Additional service would mean a higher cost in the transit portion of the property taxes collected.
- Carolyn Cruikshank, program coordinator, ROSSS Connections, reminded the audience that ROSSS hosts “meet ups” in the different villages: e.g., breakfast and lunch clubs. These outings are open for any ROSSS registered client to attend.
- Councillor George Darouze drew attention to his weekly e-newsletter which always includes ROSSS activities.

See the Appendix for detailed findings of the questionnaires from the Manotick event.

VARs, Tuesday, May 5, Bearbrook Community Centre, noon to 2 P.M.

This event was hosted by The Pioneers Club, a social club celebrating 42 years. The Pioneers Club president reached out by phone to every member encouraging their attendance at this event.

45 registered, of whom 10 live in villages in the adjacent counties of Prescott and Russell.

Staff from EORC at this event were:

Natasha Da Silva Sarazin, community support worker and transportation coordinator, EORC.

Vanessa Brousseau, regional transportation coordinator, EORC.

Michelle Lemieux, community development coordinator, EORC.

Information tables were staffed by COA, OPH, Safer Roads Ottawa and EORC. Representing Services Communautaires de Prescott-Russell Community Services was Madeleine Besner, one of four transportation coordinators, and volunteer Joseph L'Hajj, with information on their services.

Speakers made these points to the audience, in addition to the material in their power point presentations provided to everyone in their information package:

Natasha Da Silva Sarazin identified that EORC serves east end Ottawa clients up to the edge of St. Laurent Boulevard. Fee assistance is available for any of its community support programs.

Kathy Riley, OC Transpo accessibility specialist, talked about options that rural Ottawa east seniors might consider, for instance, booking a ride with a CSS volunteer driver to an OC Transpo stop on the Shoppers' Bus route. Kathy can coordinate a Travel Training program between her office and a local agency for seniors to gain confidence to ride conventional transit.

Questions raised by the audience at the Vars event were about footcare services and how financial assistance is determined. Natasha Da Silva Sarazin indicated financial need and level of assistance can usually be determined in a phone interview if the senior has the required documentation at hand. EORC invoices at end of the month.

See the Appendix for detailed results of the questionnaires completed at the Vars event.

CONCLUSION

Seniors who attended the rural transportation events in west, south and east end Ottawa have strong attachments to their villages and are proud of their rural roots. Those who participate in social and recreational activities with CSS hear guest speakers and receive information on programs and services available to them. Agency policy is for individuals to self-refer.

Those living in larger villages have the benefit of local medical, dental, grocery and banking services. It is accepted that transportation options are necessary for specialized services and hospital care. The majority of seniors who completed questionnaires at these events are still driving.

The question about distance for groceries and family doctor asked respondents to provide an approximate figure for round trip. The lowest average round trip for groceries reported was 10.5 km. from respondents in the Manotick area, and for family doctor, 13 km. For seniors living in west and east end Ottawa, the combined averages reported were 27 and 33 km. round trip for groceries and visit to family doctor.

Seniors who are not driving tend to rely on family or friends for transportation needs. A total of six respondents reported they use the CSS transportation program and they are all registered as clients of ROSSS. (Of note: ROSSS's entire catchment area is rural Ottawa, while WOCRC and EORC serve both suburban and rural areas).

None of the respondents indicated they had used the West-Way accessible taxi, the partner service which CSS agencies book for rural-to-rural trips for wheelchair clients or after hour trips.

CSS rural agencies made an important policy change recently. Since April 1, 2015, mileage is calculated from the client's home to appointment and return, not from the volunteer driver's home. This policy change will translate into a lower cost to a client.

Carefor Health and Community Services offers transportation services across the Champlain Region and keeps a van stationed in Arnprior. When WOCRC cannot fill a client's drive request, it can look to its partners in Renfrew County.

For the past five years ABMSAH has operated its Care Coach and will travel into West Carleton for a senior's medical appointment in Arnprior, or into the city. It offers services to residents of Galetta, Fitzroy Harbour, Woodlawn, Dunrobin and Constance Bay, depending on availability. Fees apply, based on kilometres. The Care Coach is the only vehicle serving the area for persons of all ages who require specialized para transit (wheelchair) transportation to any area. The 10,000th ride in the Care Coach was for a Dunrobin resident.

The weekly OC Transpo Shoppers' Bus service is not yet well known. The minority who reported using it found it valuable. Seniors living in Constance Bay, Kars and Navan indicated they do not use the service because the stops are not convenient. OC Transpo surveyed riders using the free service in August 2014. It is believed that another rider survey will be carried out in 2015. Comments from seniors about the Shoppers' Bus service (Q. 5 of the questionnaire) are reported in the Appendix. It is hoped this information will assist OC Transpo service planning managers when recommending any changes to the current routes.

None of the seniors at these events is registered with Para Transpo. The Para Transpo taxi coupon program (\$24 for a booklet of coupons, a savings of 40%) is not used by the rural seniors

since none of the respondents is registered with Para Transpo. (Of note: Since 2012 there has been no rural-to-rural Para Transpo service. However, service is provided from rural to city). There are approximately 200 rural residents registered with Para Transpo.

Eleven participants responded that there were times they needed a ride to an event but did not go due to the cost of transportation. The question did not distinguish what type of event. CSS transportation service is weekdays only.

OSTC has recommended fare equity as a measure to keep costs down for rural seniors. A presentation to Transit Commission pre-budget hearing on February 18, 2015 recommended that rural Para Transpo customers pay the Para Transpo rate of no more than \$8.60 (July 1 rate will be \$8.80) for each rural-to-rural trip provided by CSS or accessible taxi service for an equitable 'fair fare'. The difference between \$8.60 per trip and the CSS cost would be covered by funding in the contribution agreement between OC Transpo and the three rural CSS agencies.

October is CSS month. The motto of the Ottawa Community Support Coalition is: "Be healthy. Be independent. At home and in your community." The transportation services provided by the rural CSS agencies are increasingly valuable as the population grows and ages. It is important that the community-at-large is made aware of these important resources.

This project is evidence of a fruitful partnership with local CSS rural agencies, OC Transpo, Ottawa Public Health and Safer Roads Ottawa to bring expert speakers to present information about transportation choices to seniors in rural Ottawa and to learn how seniors foresee aging independently and safely in their rural homes. Evaluations were uniformly positive about the information content and the calibre of the speakers.

OSTC's volunteers will continue in 2015-2016 to educate and inform Ottawa seniors about transportation options and to seek other partnership opportunities which address the transportation and mobility domain of an Age-Friendly City.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

COA OSTC benefitted from the dedication of staff of the partner organizations and the passion of volunteers to plan and stage the three transportation events. They are:

Galetta Event

Colleen Caldwell, WOCRC
Cristina DiTomaso, WOCRC
Volunteers of the Diners' Club, WOCRC
Rob Wilkinson, Safer Roads Ottawa
Kim Ou, Ottawa Public Health
Kathy Riley, OC Transpo + OSTC
Bonnie Murphy, OSTC
Dianne Breton, OSTC
Lisa Bornn, OSTC
Vanessa Brousseau, OSTC
Ardyth Elliott, OSTC
Margaret Dunn, OSTC
Adele Muldoon, OSTC
Chris Bradshaw, Older Drivers Subcommittee of OSTC
Joan Kennedy, Older Drivers Subcommittee of OSTC
Alice Grenon, Carefor Health and Community Services Renfrew County
Dennis Harrington, Arnprior-Braeside-McNab Seniors at Home
Tammy Mondor, Arnprior-Braeside-McNab Seniors at Home

Manotick Event

Judy Bedell, ROSSS
Cathy Beckwith, ROSSS
Jeanne Sangster, ROSSS
Carolyn Cruikshank, ROSSS
Keith Porteous and Sudhir Ruparellia, ROSSS drivers
Vinh Nguyen, Safer Roads Ottawa
Barbara O'Brien Litten, Ottawa Public Health
Kathy Riley, OC Transpo + OSTC
John Woodhouse, Walk Ottawa + OSTC
Bonnie Murphy, OSTC
Dianne Breton, OSTC
Lisa Bornn, OSTC
Vanessa Brousseau, OSTC

Manotick Event (continued)

Margaret Dunn, OSTC
Adele Muldoon, OSTC
Alistair Hensler, Older Drivers Subcommittee of OSTC
Eileen Bond, COA
Yolande Rhéaume, COA

Vars Event

Mme. Jeanne Suprenant, President, The Pioneers Club
Vanessa Brousseau, EORC
Natasha Da Silva Sarazin, EORC
Vinh Nguyen, Safer Roads Ottawa
Monique Traversy, Ottawa Public Health
Kathy Riley, OC Transpo + OSTC
Sharon Thompson, OC Transpo
Bonnie Murphy, OSTC
Dianne Breton, OSTC
Margaret Dunn, OSTC
Adele Muldoon, OSTC
Ardyth Elliott, OSTC
Louise Brunelle, OSTC + Older Drivers Subcommittee
Claire Caron, COA
Alina Kinastowksi, COA
Madeleine Besner, Services Communautaires de Prescott-Russell Community Services
Joseph L'Hajj, Services Communautaires de Prescott-Russell Community Services

APPENDIX

The questionnaire which seniors completed at the transportation events appears on the following page, reduced in size. It was distributed in legal size format. 111 questionnaires were handed in; some were incomplete.

Questionnaire responses and comments are on the pages after the questionnaire.

**WEST CARLETON TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR RURAL SENIORS EVENT, GALETTA
COMMUNITY CENTRE, GALETTA, Friday April 24, 2015**

48 questionnaires were completed of 53 registrations. Seniors from the villages of Carp, Kinburn, Galetta, Fitzroy Harbour, Dunrobin, Woodlawn and Constance Bay attended. Three came from Stittsville. Three did not provide a community or postal code on the questionnaire.

Characteristics of Respondents: From Section B of Questionnaire "About You"

35 women and 12 men. 23 are 75-84 age range; 11 in 85+ age group; 10 in the 65-74 age and three in the 45-64 age range.

24 live with their partner, 14 live alone and 8 with family.

31 do not use a mobility device. Fourteen use a cane. Seven use a walker (some also are using a cane); one uses a wheelchair.

Questions 1-4

35 are driving, 13 do not drive. Family and friends provide the drives. The average round trip for groceries is 28 km, and for the family doctor, 32 km.

Q.5: OC Shoppers' Bus

Six respondents have used the OC Transpo weekly Shoppers Bus.

Comments on the OC Shoppers' Bus

"Did not know it was still going."

"Plan to use it soon."

"Because the rural shoppers' bus does not come to Constance Bay it is no good to me."

"Would require transport to bus."

"We did not know about it."

Q 6 Community Support Service volunteer driver program for essential services

No one reported using the CSS service.

Comments on the CSS service

"Used CSS volunteer driver program all the time when my husband was sick. Now just twice a month for luncheons. I don't think I could afford it now if I had a lot of medical appointments. For my husband, they took donations."

"I do not need a driver now as my son has retired."

Q. 7 Para Transpo registration

No one is registered with Para.

Comment on Para Transpo

“I feel it is too difficult to use. I used it as a teacher for disabled students, to call on the day is too risky.”

Q.8 Were there times you needed a ride to attend an event but did not go due to cost of transportation?

Three replied yes.

Q 9 How do you foresee staying in your own home safely and independently?

Themes from responses: Several said “don’t know” or wrote “???” to this question. Others identified future needs for transportation (including volunteer drivers and more frequent bus service), home maintenance, house cleaning, personal care and home adaptation.

Comments from seniors attending Galetta event

“Doing fine, don’t know what I want in future.” (Respondent 85+).

“More affordable transportation if I have more doctors’ appointments and my friends are not available.”

“Somebody who comes in and gives me a bath or nursing help. As long as I live with my children, I have help.” (Respondent 85+).

“Fortunately my family support is great but I have only one daughter and I foresee the day when this will not work out. I have recently engaged a cleaning lady but transportation will be a problem if I am left alone as I have a brain injury which severely limits my driving to a few minutes.” (Respondent uses three mobility devices: cane, wheelchair and electronic walk aide.)

“Recent widow, will get licence so I can continue my volunteer services”. (Mostly friends drive her now).

“If I were to lose the ability to drive, I would require transportation for shopping, medical, etc.”

“Husband has Parkinson’s, still driving but may not be much longer. He will need many doctor and hospital appointments. Other problems than Parkinson’s.” (She does not drive. Both are 85+).

“Constance and Buckham’s Bay Community Association is working towards providing health services in the Bay. We also started a “need-a-share-a-ride” website (Facebook) to match drivers with needs.”

OTTAWA SOUTH TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR RURAL SENIORS EVENT, MANOTICK ARENA, May 1, 2015

29 questionnaires were completed (one as husband and wife; counted as one) of 35 registrations. Seniors attending were from the villages of Manotick, Metcalfe, Vernon, Osgoode, North Gower and Kars and the neighbourhoods of Riverside South and Stittsville.

Characteristics of Respondents: From Section B of Questionnaire “About You”

Women outnumbered men, 26 to 3. Sixteen are in the 75-84 age range; nine in the 65-74 age range. Two are in the 45-64 group and two are over 85.

21 live alone, six with a partner, two with family.

24 do not use any mobility device; five indicated they use a cane and two also use a walker.

Questions 1-4

19 of the 29 are driving; 10 are not. Friends and family and ROSSS are used for drives. The average round trip for groceries is 10.5 km. and to the family doctor, 13 km. ROSSS has a grocery bus service for \$10.00; two respondents identified using it.

Q. 5: OC Shopping Bus

Five indicated they use the OC Transpo shoppers’ bus.

Comments on Rural Shoppers’ Bus

“No: would need a ride into Manotick.” (Has Kars postal code but does not live near Kars).

“Sometimes; Friday walk interferes with it.”

“Good.”

“Excellent – fantastic driver Ken.”

“Wonderful service, needed in the community.”

“I have used it but not weekly.”

Q.6: Community Support Service volunteer driver program for essential services

Six indicated yes, 22 said they do not use it and one did not respond.

Comments on the CSS service

One respondent stated it is never a problem to get a ride. The average cost is \$31.00 for one respondent, for another, \$16.00.

Q. 7 Para Transpo registration

No one is registered with Para Transpo.

Q. 8 were there times you needed a ride to attend an event but did not go due to cost of transportation?

Six said yes.

Q 9 How do you foresee staying in your own home safely and independently?

Themes from responses: Some respondents do not know or did not answer. For those who did, they identified transportation, home maintenance/lawn care, house cleaning and Meals on Wheels.

Comments from seniors attending Manotick event

“With more help from ROSSS.”

“I intend to stay living in Manotick even if I downsize mainly due to the facilities provided by ROSSS.”

“I live alone in the village of Vernon. Wondering if in the foreseeable future, there are any plans in the works for basic transportation for those of us who live outside the Greenbelt. At the moment, there is a workers bus which leaves at 6.45 AM and returns later in the PM – certainly better than nothing, just wondering.”

“Yard work, raking and cutting grass.”

“It is difficult for me to guess what I might need in the next few years as I am completely able to get around myself. However, I appreciate all the information supplied today.”

“We are going to have lawn and garden care in summer 3 to 4 years away.”

“I may need a cleaning service but able to do it all yet.”

“Staying well, having good people supply the services: plumbing, electricity, lawn and snow removal.”

TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR RURAL SENIORS EVENT, BEARBROOK COMMUNITY CENTRE, VARS, May 5, 2015

34 questionnaires were completed of 45 registrations. 24 questionnaires were completed by seniors with post codes for Cumberland, Navan, Orléans, Vars and Carlsbad Springs. Eight questionnaires were for villages in Prescott and Russell Counties: Russell, Embrun, Bourget and Hammond. One respondent lives in Ottawa but grew up in the area; one respondent did not give a postal code or community.

Characteristics of Respondents: From Section B of Questionnaire “About You”

28 women, six men. 12 are in the 85+ age range; nine in the 75-84 age range; nine in the 65-74 age range, and four in the 45-64 group.

14 live alone, 13 with a partner and seven with family.

22 do not use a mobility device. Five say they use a cane but just sometimes. One uses a walker.

Questions 1-4

29 are driving, five are not. Family and friends provide the drives. The average round trip for groceries is 26 km. and for family doctor, 35 km.

Q.5: OC Shoppers' Bus

One respondent uses the OC Shoppers' bus.

Comments on the OC Shoppers' Bus

"No: it leaves from Navan, 15 km away."

"Certainly convenient."

Q 6 Community Support Service volunteer driver program for essential services

No one reported using this CSS service.

Q. 7 Para Transpo registration

No one is registered with Para Transpo.

Q.8 Were there times you needed a ride to attend an event but did not go due to cost of transportation?

Two said yes.

Q 9 How do you foresee staying in your own home safely and independently?

Themes from responses: Personal care, home/lawn care and snow removal, house cleaning, Para Transpo and home adaptation.

Comments from seniors attending Vars event:

"Have Medic Alert. Have neighbours checking in. Doing well. In very good health. When not driving, will need transportation". (Respondent 85+ lives alone).

"Rides to different events."

"Financial help; transportation to essentials."

"Help with snow, grass, clean windows."

"Transportation if not driving." (90 year old, lives alone).

"Stay with family."