



Can't get there from here

Stranded in Burlington

Report from the Burlington Town Meeting
Transportation Committee

Imagine...



Every vehicle in your household is broken... for the next 30 days.

What will your life look like?

Milk runs out in 2 days.

Shelves and freezer empty in 2 weeks.

Can't refill your prescriptions.

Toiletries run low.

You are out of Cabernet.

Forget about after school programs.

No more shopping. You can't carry anything home.

Quit your job... if you can't work remotely.

What can you do?

Have food and meds delivered. Gets expensive.

Call an Uber. Gets more expensive.

Beg rides from friends and family. Gets old.

Walk or ride a bike. Gets dangerous.

Rent a car. Maybe two. Sure. Do the math.

Face it.

Without access to an automobile, you are... stranded in Burlington.



This committee was formed to think about the problem.

The Burlington Town Meeting Transportation Committee

Committee charter

The Town Meeting Transportation Committee will assess public and private transportation demand and proposed options available to Burlington residents and others who travel to, from, and within Burlington.

Who we are

Mildred Nash, Chair

Jennifer Gelinas, Vice Chair

Patricia O'Brien

Myrna Saltman

Eileen Sickler

John Strauss

David Van Camp

TMM Precinct 3

Planning Dept

TMM Precinct 2

TMM Precinct 2

TMM Precinct 4

Resident

TMM Precinct 7

What we did



Looked at work the professionals have done
Over a dozen studies performed over the past 5 years.



Interviewed local and regional stakeholders
Wide range of regional experts, government officials, and private citizens.



Surveyed the public
10-question web survey.
Over 300 responses.

What the professionals said

Lack of coordination

"... a lack of coordination between agencies continues to be a barrier with regards to improved access to desired destinations."

Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Transportation access is a success driver

"It is becoming harder for businesses to attract younger workers (millennials); they want to live and work in urbanized and mixed-use areas with transit."

North Suburban Mobility Study

Seniors need more transportation options

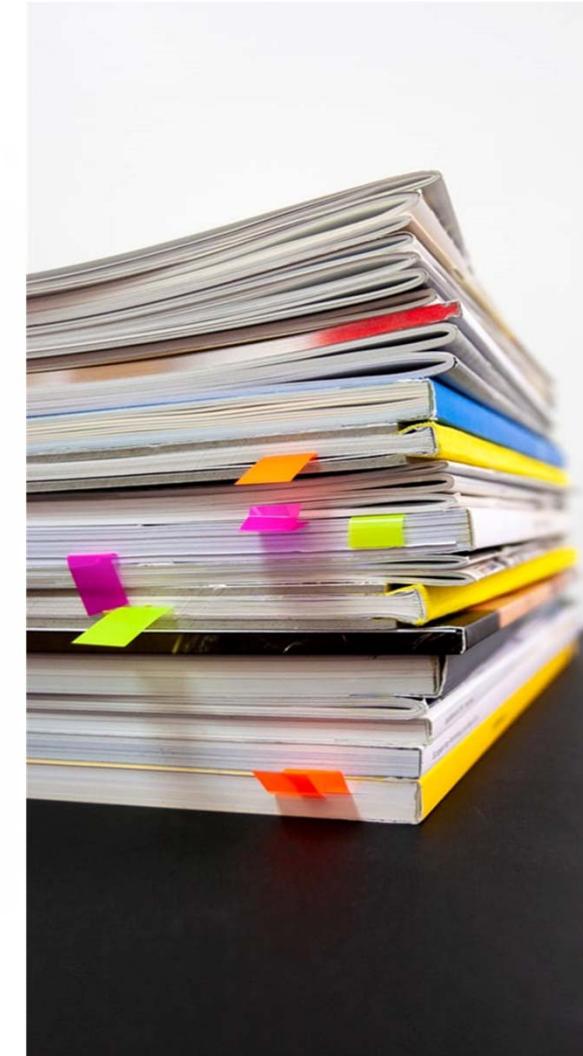
"... transportation providers in the Boston region will increasingly have to plan for the transportation needs of seniors and people with disabilities as they make up an increasing share of the region's population."

Boston MPO

... so do young people

"In the same way that older adults are more likely to ride transit than the general population, so are young adults and youth aged 10 to 24 who either cannot drive or do not own a vehicle ..."

North Suburban Mobility Study



What various stakeholders said



Over a dozen interviews



Many are
looking for a
safe bike ride



No safe places to walk

Infrastructure is a problem

Poor communication is rampant

Young people are missing out

Little contact with regional transit experts

We are a disconnected town



Underlying
frustration

Sidewalks came up big, again



Burlington road design
is a challenge

What the public said

Our web survey gathered over 300 responses from people of all ages.
95% of the participants live in Burlington.

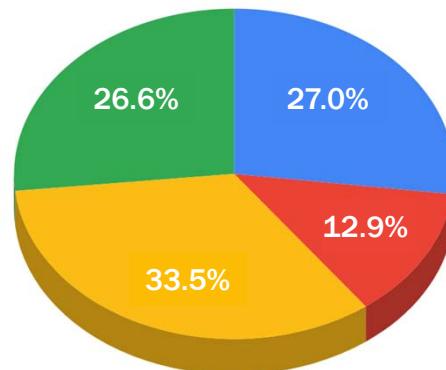
Popular alternatives to automobiles

Walking	67%
Ride service (Uber/Lyft)	28%
Bike	27%
Bus	21%

Looking for connections

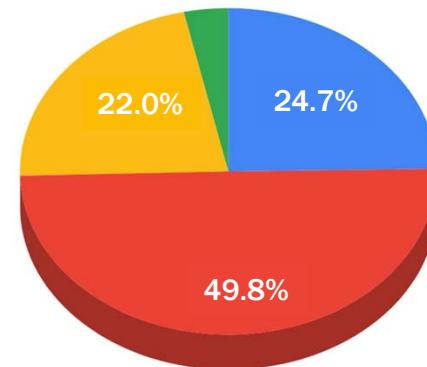
Just over 53% expressed interest in connecting to nearby transit hubs.

- Somewhat interested
- No opinion
- Not interested
- Very interested



Willing to pay to ride

Nearly half of the respondents would pay up to \$5 for a ride.



- \$5-10
- Up to \$5
- I'd only ride for free
- Over \$10

Where people want to go

Shopping	79%
Work	32%
Dining	71%
Medical visits	58%

Conclusions

No coordinated transportation strategy

Lack of single champion for transportation issues leads to confusion and stagnation.

No viable alternative to the automobile

Not safe to walk. Not safe to bike. Not safe for our health or our planet.

Minimal cooperation with other towns and regional transit experts

Going it alone means that Burlington misses out. We are not taken seriously.

Burlington is leaving transportation money on the table

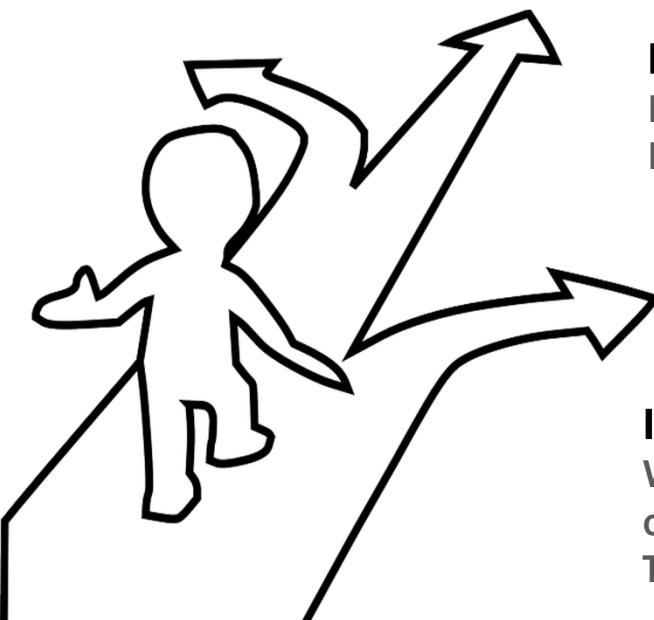
No coordinated action on the Safe Routes to School Program.
Failure to follow through on the Complete Streets Program.

Burlington is putting itself at a competitive disadvantage

The life sciences that we covet place a high value on transportation amenities.
We have little to offer.

It's simply not fair

We've created an environment where you must own a car in order to be a full citizen of Burlington with access to all that the town has to offer.
That doesn't seem right.



What we recommend

Participate in the Safe Routes to School Program

Protect our kids. Access the resources offered by this federally-funded program now.

Implement a cross-departmental transportation strategy

Build on the work already done for the Master Plan.

Put existing transportation assets to better use

Leverage assets currently controlled by the Town and Burlington School District.

The Select Board should report progress and a strategy at September Town Meeting 2021.

Establish a standing Town Meeting Transportation Committee

Town Meeting has a role in Burlington's transportation future.

Such a committee would be a focal point.

Name a senior-level Transportation Coordinator to manage Burlington's transportation strategy

One person with one job.

Spread the word. End the confusion. Start making progress.



Now what?

Don't let it end here.

**The greater Burlington
community should
continue this work.**

**The Select Board should
become the focus to
act on all our
recommendations.**



**We encourage our fellow Town Meeting Members to take
the actions necessary to form a standing
Transportation Committee.**