

# Municipal Government Representatives

November 18, 2019

## Attendance

1. Elaine Capes, Dufferin County Equity Collaborative
2. Tim Stiles, Federation of Canadian Municipalities
3. Ben Chobater, Kamloops
4. Bonnie Pacaud, Fair Fares
5. Colleen Huston, Fair Fares
6. Don Kattler, BC Community Poverty Reduction Initiative
7. Terry Chambers, Simcoe Muskoka
8. Stephen Lyn, City of Windsor
9. Jill Zacharias, City of Revelstoke
10. 2 unidentified callers
11. Elle Richards, Vibrant Communities
12. Hannah MacDonald, Vibrant Communities

## What are effective strategies to get the issue on the agenda?

- Fair Fares
  - A group of citizens, community organizers and people on low income to work toward affordable, accessible transit.
- [The Social Wellbeing Policy](#)
- Building Community Through Stories
  - We work primarily through stories
  - We aim to be the bridge between people living in poverty, agencies, city administration, and elected officials. We are not affiliated with agencies, entirely grassroots however some of our members work for organizations.
  - Our meetings are open to all. People come from all walks of life including those with lived experience, as their stories are very important
- How to keep the work going
  - The groups are small, grassroots organizations, and the work takes time, so it's important to celebrate the baby steps.
  - It's important to hand over the work to the community, especially longer-term work, because there is so much work to be done, its important to spread the work
  - Monitor the city council website to stay on top of what's going on at council
  - We have lots of different allies that we share our information with, as it is so important for all of us to be on the same page
  - It's important to build a respectful relationship with the city in order to have a seat at the table.
  - We have used post-cards as a tool, mass mail out, engagement packages and tools to get the community involved, to get those community members involved at council by turning these stories into data collection.
- Our Story Tellers

- Get city councillors attention by letting them know that these community members are their constituents.
- Agencies are very important, as they provide a more macro view of the situation than community members may.
- All our story tellers are municipal leaders.
- Ways to collect stories of impact
  - Post cards tied to postal codes so that councillors know who in their constituency is affected
  - Colouring books to involve children or folks with low-literacy
  - We have done surveys in the past and utilized the City survey conducted by Calgary Neighbourhood Services as they share their quarterly data base numbers with us.
- Building Relationships
  - It's important to stay issue focused. It's easy to get off track or move to things that are easier. If you have a specific ask, it's important to stay issue focused
  - Remain action oriented.
  - Spend time getting to know City Councillors and MLAs
  - Building relationships with all levels of government policies impact the effectiveness of the program
  - Try to align your message with existing Provincial and City goals
  - Monitor the City's Council and committee meetings and agendas for opportunities to present
  - Work with the community
  - Create networks and relationships across the communities and province

## Discussion

- Is there pushback from the city that the sliding scale to transportation is losing revenue
  - Yes – one of our biggest challenges is that they measure the cost of the sliding scale by adding up the revenue lost based on pass sales and two annual counts per year. Our transit system tries to do two accurate ridership counts due however getting ridership numbers has its challenges due to no turnstiles at LRT stations, a free fare zone downtown and no tap on tap off system or smartcard...(we hope to be moving towards a smart card in the near future). Transit identifies it as a revenue gap. We speak to Council by reframing it as, customer living on low-income would not be able to purchase a full price transit pass, so it's not revenue loss, it's the cost of the low-income transit pass gained.
  - We talk about how to more effectively make the economic argument, but always end up talking about the social argument, social investment.

## Closing Announcements

- Next Call: December 17 at 1pm (this likely will be rescheduled due to the time of year)
  - Topic – engaging in the business sector over the long term