

Langley LIP Transportation Forum Summary

Overview and Objectives

On January 25th, 2024, the Langley Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) hosted a forum on transportation. The event was organized by the LIP Project Team and moderated by Jody Johnson of PEERs Employment and Education Resources.

46 individuals representing 22 agencies and institutions attended. Amongst attendees were local dignitaries; City of Langley Councillor Rosemary Wallace, Langley Township Councillor Tim Baille and Member of Parliament, Tako van Popta.

Agencies and institutions represented:

1. City of Langley
2. Collège Éducacentre
3. Constituency Office of Megan Dykeman, MLA Langley East
4. COSCO
5. Encompass Support Services Society
6. Fraser Health
7. Fraser Valley Regional Library-Township of Langley
8. Inclusion Langley Society
9. ISSofBC
10. Langley City
11. Langley Community Services Society
12. Langley School District
13. Langley School District Foundation
14. Langley Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) SD #35
15. Langley Seniors Resource Centre
16. New Directions English Language School
17. Options Community Services
18. RonCares Society
19. Self Advocates In Langley
20. Township of Langley
21. United Churches of Langley
22. WorkBC Langley

The five main objectives for the event were to:

1. Learn about LIPs and their purpose and why the Langley LIP is taking on this issue
2. Gain an understanding of local demographics and the settlement barriers experienced by newcomers due to lack of transportation
3. Identify and discuss current transportation issues in Langley
4. Learn what is underway to address these issues
5. Discuss and explore additional actions / activities for the Langley LIP to take on to address these issues

The three-hour event included **five main elements**:

1. **A brief demographic presentation** including settlement barriers experienced by newcomers due to a lack of transportation.

2. **A presentation from Minister Coulter, Minister of State for Infrastructure and Transit** regarding current transportation issues and initiatives underway.
3. **A comprehensive overview of Surrey / Langley Skytrain plans** presented by Alexis Pavlich, Associate Project Director, Surrey Langley SkyTrain Project from the Transportation Investment Corporation.
4. **A Panel Discussion** – using a set of guiding questions shared with the panelist prior to the forum, panelists shared information regarding local transportation issues and current initiatives and actions being taken within Langley. The panel included:
 - Paul Cordeiro, Manager, Transportation Engineering, Township of Langley
 - Aubrey Jensen, Manager for Strategic and Social Planning, Township of Langley
 - Dena Kae Beno, Social Planner, City of Langley
 - David Pollock, Director of Engineering, Parks and Environment, City of Langley
 - Michael Chang, Board Member, Langley Seniors Resource Society
 - Iha Hayer, District Vice Principal for Enhanced Student Services and Children in Care
 - Ron Bergen, Member of Multiple Community Tables, Ron Cares Society
5. **Small group discussions** – following the panel presentation, all attendees participated in small, guided groups discussions to brainstorm and share ideas on what activities, actions and advocacy the Langley LIP could take on to address the transportation issues faced by newcomers to Langley. Notetakers at each table collected key points. These have been themed and included below.

Key Facts, Figures and Issues Impacting Transportation for Newcomers

To begin the session the moderator provided a few facts as follows.

- The City of Langley is 10 square kilometers, and the Township is **316 square kms – the same size as Surrey**, Vancouver in comparison 115 square kms and Maple Ridge 267 square kms.
- The combined population of the City and Township of Langley is expected to grow to 420,000 by 2050. Much of this growth will be due to immigration. To learn more about the demographics of Langley, read: [Langley and Immigration, Growing Together.](#)
- New immigrants experience unique challenges regarding access to transportation. Some of these challenges include:
 - Limited funds to purchase vehicles
 - No credit to borrow to purchase vehicles
 - No network to “ride share”
- This lack of transportation limits access:
 - To settlement and other services

- To employment
- To participation in activities which impacts building connections and a sense of belonging

Summary of the Small Group Discussions

1. Based on what you've heard today and from your perspective and experience, what do you think are the biggest transportation challenges for immigrants to Langley?

- Public awareness (information on fares, zoning, schedules, transit locations)
- Knowledge of transportation system
- Availability of housing options near transit
- Language barriers
- Safety and security
- Accessibility for rural areas and essential services (work, healthcare, schools)
- Belongingness
- Lack of connectivity and comprehensiveness of the transit system (rideshare, active transportation, buses, SkyTrain)
- Bus service wait times

2. What, if any, transportation support does your organization offer immigrants?

- LCSS – offers small book map to clients that use the bus to access its services
- School District #35 – Settlement Workers in Schools team helps families understand and navigate the transportation system
- LCSS, French Programme, WorkBC, Encompass and ISSofBC – all provide bus / transit passes
- United Churches of Langley – helped fund transportation for two families, whose vehicles broke down on the highway
- Langley City – links its Official Community Plan with its Transportation Plan and key strategies to support connectivity to trail networks, walking, bicycles, and other services

3. Beyond what you heard from the panel, are you aware of any other initiatives or planning that is underway to address this issue?

- Fundraising efforts to enhance shuttle services
- Some schools in Aldergrove have initiated car pooling
- Private companies are being involved to help
- In 2021, TransLink began offering free ridership for children 12 and under
- Employees using shuttle buses to get to work
- TransLink's program with businesses for ride share / match benefits

- New SkyTrain station to have washrooms
- Langley City will host a resource and referral initiative throughout the year with a specific focus each month (transportation will be one of those key areas of focus); this will include design labs to focus on generating community solutions to issues.
- Implementing safety and accessibility requirements in transit hubs, stations, stops, and connecting corridors and thinking about the diverse sensory and abilities.
- Mental health services to be more accessible by transit (researcher is calling for this approach to reduce policing needs)
- All municipalities are now required to have accessibility committees in the global sense not just physical accessibility.
- Infrastructure Canada: Reaching Home is funding the design and launch of Coordinated Access-Homelessness Management Information System as a requirement for communities and agencies who receive funding. Langley will be one of the first communities to activate coordinated access and it will go live early 2024. This will support individuals and families who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness with access to referrals to housing, health, community services, and other support. The system will also generate data that will support local communities and its tables and organizations to inform planning, funding, and response strategies (e.g. reducing barriers to transportation, other support or information needs). The system is based on a digital platform and will incorporate a resource directory for all municipalities across Metro Vancouver region. For more information, connect with Dena Kae Beno, Social Planning Manager, Langley City.
- Langley City is participating in the CA-HMIS launch as part of its Mayor and Council endorsed shared outcome approach to support vulnerable residents with access to services.

4. Are you aware of any promising practices from other communities that might be adopted by Langley to address this issue?

- Delta students have access to free transit throughout their school years
- Seniors' bus in Delta that is being looked at as a prototype for the Langley Seniors' bus
- Abbotsford Community Van Initiative (Megan Capp, Archway Community Services)
- Churches offer volunteer drivers
- Sensitivity training to support understanding of cultural considerations to enhance access, inclusion, and comfort in utilizing the transportation system and to reduce barriers. Training should be required for all new hires and employees in the public sector.

5. Improvements to the public transit in Langley are underway but will take time. What should or can be done in the interim to support the transportation needs of our newest residents?

- Funding for bus tickets to get to the services that they need

- Cater to growth affected areas first
- Help improve bike lanes and sidewalks
- Make developers more socially responsible to build better sidewalks
- Increase Bus Rapid Transit and shuttle service frequency during busy times
- Increase time allowances on bus / train tickets to help people move around freely
- Ride share cars: Modo / Evolette
- More taxi savers and accessibility
- Developing information about the economic value of investing in transit and alternative transportation options to support workforce and social participation opportunities, to alleviate stressors on families and individuals who rely on transit
- Support discussion to include life skills, health, culture and isolation factors and how this impacts access and utilization of transit
- Foster conversations and community learning opportunities to reduce apprehension about accessing and navigating transportation (how do we support our neighbours to participate and get to know their new community?)

6. Do you have any final thoughts, ideas, or suggestions regarding this topic? Any suggestions for next steps or actions that the Langley Local Immigration Partnership could take?

- More attention to mobility needs (i.e. handy darts) and language barriers
- More public awareness regarding access to information challenges
- Fixed bus schedules and better schedules for rural areas
- More options for where to get compass cards
- Reconsider / expedite the timeline for improvements
- Keep advocating on issues related to safety, security, accessibility and frequency
- Washrooms at all SkyTrain exchanges
- Ways in\to support finding information and resources (in multiple languages, QR codes, Beacon Technology)
- Phone data may not be affordable for some individuals which makes digital information non-accessible
- Include equity in all forms in the discussion (transportation, digital, social, etc.)

For more information about the Langley LIP and its work, visit www.langleylip.ca, follow the LLIP on [Facebook](#), [X](#) and [Instagram](#) or contact Ana Marie Panczel at apanczel@lcss.ca.