

# *Tompkins County Workforce Development Board*

## **MINUTES**

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*Tuesday, May 21, 2024 | 121 E. Seneca Street, Ithaca, NY 14850*

**Present:** S. Pronti, K. Cerasaro, J. Cometti, D. Harrington, L. Holden, P. Levesque, R. Olson, K. Shanks-Booth, A. Tunison, S. Waight, C. Whitmore, Y. Wu, B. Nugent

**Excused:** K. Babuka, T. Bruer, S. Cerquone, K. Franzese, K. Kephart, C. Malcolm, H. McDaniel, S. Pennell, J. Tavares, T. Tarshus, D. Vreeland, C. Walter

**Staff:** C. Sponn, D. Achilles, S. Frost

**Guest:** S. Paczkowski, New York State Department of Labor; C. Harris, New York State Department of Labor; M. Smith, Tompkins County Teamsters; M. Ramos, United Way; D. Montanye, Tompkins County Equity Coalition

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Pronti, Board Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Mr. Pronti reminded all Board members at the next Board meeting on Tuesday, June 25 it is important to attend. The Board will need to have a quorum to approve the WIOA 2024-2025 Fiscal Budgets for Workforce Development and WIOA Service Providers.

### **Board Action Items**

#### **Approval of Minutes - April 23, 2024**

Due to lack of voting Board members present to achieve quorum the vote to approve minutes for April 23, 2024 were tabled until the next meeting Tuesday, June 25, 2024.

#### **Creating Equitable Solutions in Transportation with Dawn Montanye of the Tompkins County Equity Coalition**

Ms. Montanye's presentation is attached.

### **Workforce Development Director Update**

#### **WIOA Legislation Updates**

Mr. Sponn reported NYATEP had several meetings related to WIOA Reauthorization in the Senate. As far as the timeline, NYATEP was told there is a goal to have legislative language/text released by the end of May. That could lead to HELP Committee action in mid-to-late June. Senator Bernie Sanders' HELP Committee staff made it clear they do not support the training requirement that restricted spending.

### **Deputy Director of Career Center Interviews**

Mr. Sponn reported the Deputy Director of Career Center interviews will be next week. Mr. Sponn is scheduling interviews for 3 candidates.

### **Application for NDWG for Opioid Crisis**

Mr. Sponn reported Workforce Development applied for a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) opportunity with NYSDOL. The grant would provide funding for those impacted by the Opioid crisis and even those who know individuals impacted. Funding can go towards training funding and work experience opportunities. Currently there are no updates to a funding announcement.

### **CNY Build Collaborative Meetings**

Mr. Sponn reported Ms. Szabo of IAED is working to create Tompkins Build that will be structured similar to Syracuse Build for construction and trades. The CNY Build meetings include Mr. Sponn and Ms. Szabo for Tompkins County and other regional workforce areas from Central New York.

### **TCAT Leadership Meeting**

Mr. Sponn reported he met with the new General Manager of TCAT, Mr. Rosenbloom, and discussed the services the department offers. Mr. Sponn was also given a tour of TCAT and learned more about the challenges TCAT faces for hiring. TCAT will have a Meet the Employer event at the Career Center and connections at all levels from both organizations have been made so both sides can collaborate with one another.

### **Direct to Work Graduation**

Mr. Sponn reported that 6 individuals graduated from Direct to Work (DTW). For the final day, there was class in the morning, mock interviews, and a celebration party to end the day. Recruiting has already begun for the summer cohort. Applications close on July 12 with the cohort starting on July 29.

### **Southern Tier - Regional Business Services Team Meeting**

Mr. Sponn reported he will present on the Micron Consortium at the next Regional Business Services Team Meeting. The group currently meets quarterly.

### **Career Pathways Project Meeting**

Mr. Sponn reported the group met in May and partners discussed program updates and departmental news.

### **Fingerprinting Provider Update**

Mr. Sponn reported he found the appropriate contact at Staples to see if they were interested in being an IdentiGo fingerprinting site. Mr. Sponn was told Staples was interested and the previous general manager left the Ithaca location.

## **Youth Employment Resource Team**

Mr. Sponn reported the May meeting was held at Finger Lakes ReUse. The group was given a tour with Q&A throughout the tour. ReUse has several workforce programs including the summer youth employment program. The June meeting will be held at the Tompkins Workforce Development Board Office, and it will be a working meeting for a review of the draft of the internal and external resource directory being developed.

## **Career Center Update**

Mr. Cerasaro reported that Mr. Sponn pretty well covered all that the Career Center is doing.

Mr. Sponn reported that he is collaborating with Ms. Buggs, Workforce Development Board Executive Director from Cortland and Cayuga County on an Opportunity Fair for next year and having Tompkins County businesses participate.

Mr. Sponn reported that the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is under way for the Youth team and they are working to get more worksites in the rural areas.

Mr. Sponn reported that Ms. Sloan, Ms. Rusk, Ms. Achilles, and himself met with Ms. Rice, Workforce Development Board Executive Director from Niagara County to see how their OJT program works. Ms. Rice gave a lot of ideas and guidance on how to enhance the Workforce Development process.

Mr. Sponn reported that Mx. Frost is working on brochures, business cards, signage, job webpage outreach, and will be using the television at the Career Center to promote services that the Career Center offers.

Mr. Sponn reported that the Workforce Development team and community partners are organizing an event at Ithaca High School which is called the Disability and Transition Resource Fair on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 from 4:30 to 6:30 pm.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Executive Committee**

Mr. Pronti reported that the Executive Committee did not meet this month and will meet Tuesday, June 4, 2024.

### **One Stop Operations and Oversight Committee**

Mr. Sponn reported the One Stop Operations and Oversight Committee reviewed financials for Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Mr. Sponn reported that the Committee had Mr. Lyman, Business Services Representative from the New York State Department of Labor discuss his role at the Career Center. Mr. Lyman will be speaking at a future Board meeting. Mx. Frost also provided updates on Workforce Development's Communications work and future plans.

## **Youth Oversight Committee**

Ms. Shanks-Booth reported the Youth Oversight Committee did not meet this month. The Committee will be reviewing 2024 SYEP and youth financials.

## **Governance and Membership Committee**

Mr. Sponn reported that the Governance and Membership Committee did not meet this month. Mr. Sponn reported that expiring Board members terms for 9 members will be reappointed at the Tompkins County Legislature meeting Tuesday, June 4, 2024.

## **Disabilities Workforce Committee**

Mr. Tunison reported the Committee will meet Tuesday, June 11, 2024. Mr. Tunison reported the Committee has changed names and updated duties.

## **Unfinished Business**

Mr. Sponn reported that the Deputy Director of the Board interview process has completed and there were three finalists. Mr. Sponn reported that Ms. Achilles applied and was chosen as the new Deputy Director of the Board.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 09:40 a.m.

# Creating Equitable Solutions in Transportation

Results from the Tompkins County Transportation Equity Needs  
Assessment  
(TENA)

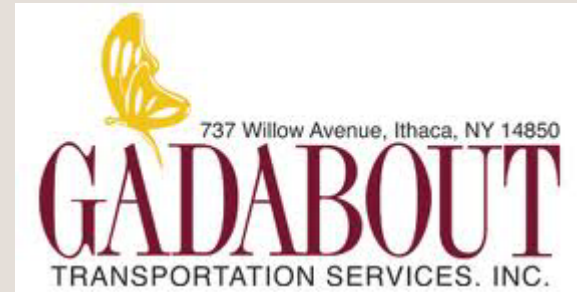
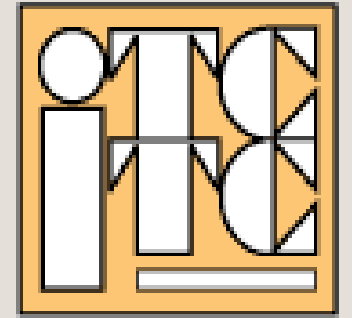
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Dawn Montanye

Way2Go

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Tompkins County

# Collaborators



# Tompkins County Transportation Equity Coalition

Formed in November of 2020

**The Mission:** through inclusive cross-sector partnerships, identify, advocate, and promote equitable policies and practices while addressing the systemic inequities that affect access to safe and efficient transportation.

## **Funding for Transportation Equity Needs Assessment**

NYSDOT 5311

FTA Research and Development

Tompkins County Special Community Mobility Grant

Park Foundation

NYSERDA

# Through Needs Assessment, better understand:

- Connectivity
- Strengths
- Barriers
- Solutions

Related to transportation and underserved communities' access to key services, opportunities, and amenities



# Who are Underserved?

Someone who identifies as and selected *any* of the following:

- < 17 years old Age 55 or older
- LGBTQI+
- Physical or mental disability or impairment
- Limited English proficiency
- Having a fixed/low/no income
- Without a car/restricted license
- Living in a rural area
- Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx
- Black, Indigenous, person of color (BIPOC)

**Low-Income:** 2022 annual household income of less than \$50,000.

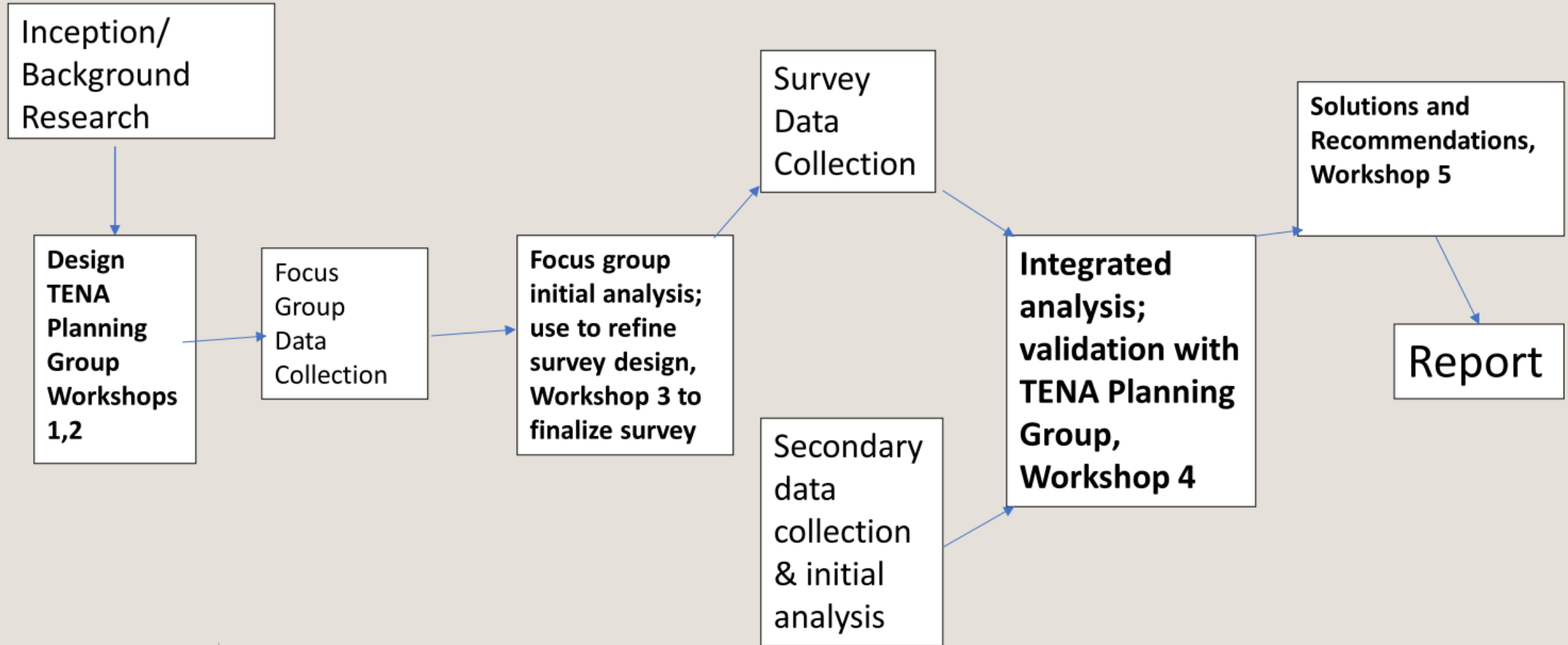
# Why do a needs assessment?

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- Build on lived experience
- Limited service-provider data
- Build on existing work, looking deeper and county-wide
- ID county-wide priorities and add to recommendations for policy makers and service providers

# The TENA Process

February 2022-March 2024



# Survey Development and Distribution

**TAKE THE  
TRANSPORTATION  
SURVEY**

The Tompkins County Transportation Equity Coalition is conducting a survey to understand your transportation needs and experiences and learn what changes might help you. Results of the survey will be presented and made available to the public by the end of the summer. Go to [Way2Go.org](http://Way2Go.org)

ENTER THE RAFFLE FOR A CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- ▶ TCAT PASS (MULTIRIDE)
- ▶ ITHACA CARSHARE CREDITS
- ▶ ITHACA BIKESHARE CREDITS
- ▶ \$100 WEGMANS GIFT CARD
- ▶ \$100 AMAZON GIFT CARD

SCAN QR CODE

TAKE THE SURVEY BY APRIL 30TH AT:  
[tinyurl.com/transpotompkins](http://tinyurl.com/transpotompkins)

Request a paper version in English, Spanish, or Chinese at [ng32@cornell.edu](mailto:ng32@cornell.edu) or (607) 272-2292 ext 162

15-20 MINUTES

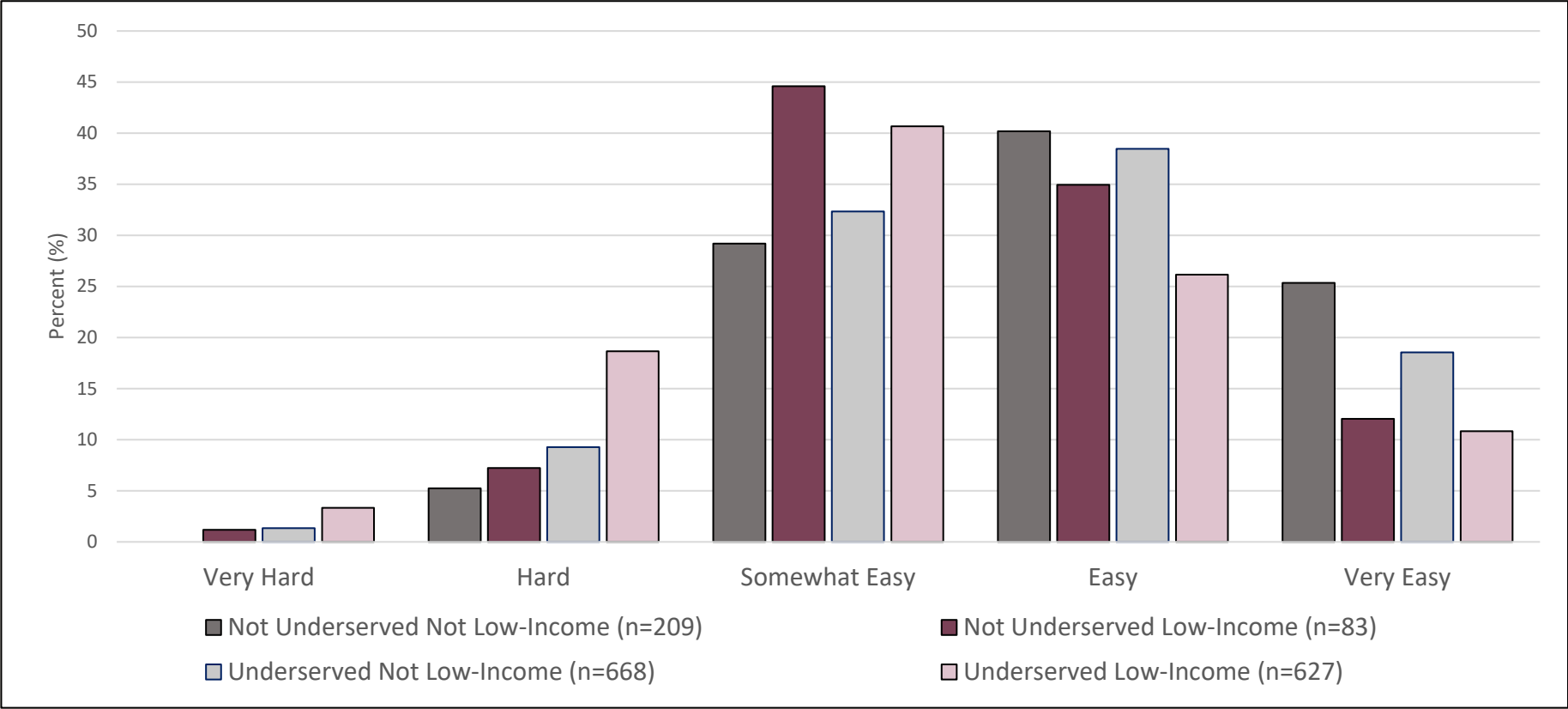
# Findings:

- 27 questions on survey
- 2,146 surveys analyzed
- 4 categories:
  - low income underserved,
  - low income not underserved,
  - not low income underserved,
  - not low income not underserved
- 83.3% identified as underserved
- **39.5% low income and underserved (of those who answered income question)**



# Connectivity

















































**Question:** In general, getting around Tompkins County for me is...



- For low-income people (regardless of underserved status) “Somewhat Easy” was most common.
- Over 20% of the low-income underserved respondents indicate that getting around the County is “hard” or “very hard”.
- “Easy” was the most frequent selection of respondents with incomes of \$50,000+ (regardless of underserved status).
- Although the transportation system seems to work for many people, there is another group that finds it hard or very hard to get around.

# Strengths

**Question:** Do any of these transportation options currently work well for you? (Choose all that apply)

What modes work well	Not Underserved		Underserved	
	Not Low-Income (n=209)	Low-Income (n=83)	Not Low-Income (n=663)	Low-Income (n=623)
Personal vehicle	 72.3	 55.4	 69.7	 41.3
Walking	 40.2	 32.5	 39.1	 39.3
Bus(TCAT)	 38.8	 47.0	 32.4	 44.0
Rideshare (Taxi/Uber/Lyft)	 14.8	 12.1	 16.7	 23.9
Biking/rolling	 19.6	 13.3	 15.2	 15.6
Bikeshare	 12.4	 10.8	 11.6	 15.6
Carshare	 12.4	 14.5	 10.9	 13.8
Gadabout/paratransit	 7.2	 12.1	 7.7	 12.7
Carpool	 5.3	 9.6	 9.1	 10.6
No transportation options work well for me	 1.9	 2.4	 2.9	 4.8
Other	 1.0	 0.0	 2.6	 4.0
Wheelchair/mobility device	 1.9	 2.4	 0.9	 2.9

- For low-income underserved respondents, “Bus (TCAT)” had the highest response at 44%.
- For the other three groups, “personal vehicle” was most commonly selected
- “Walking” had a significant response in all groups.
- When asked to elaborate, 195 respondents (36%) also discussed barriers associated with their chosen method. Almost half (43%, 83 responses) of those that mentioned barriers, discussed barriers within TCAT.

# Barriers

**Question:** Not including cost, what are the top 3 difficulties to getting around in Tompkins County for you?

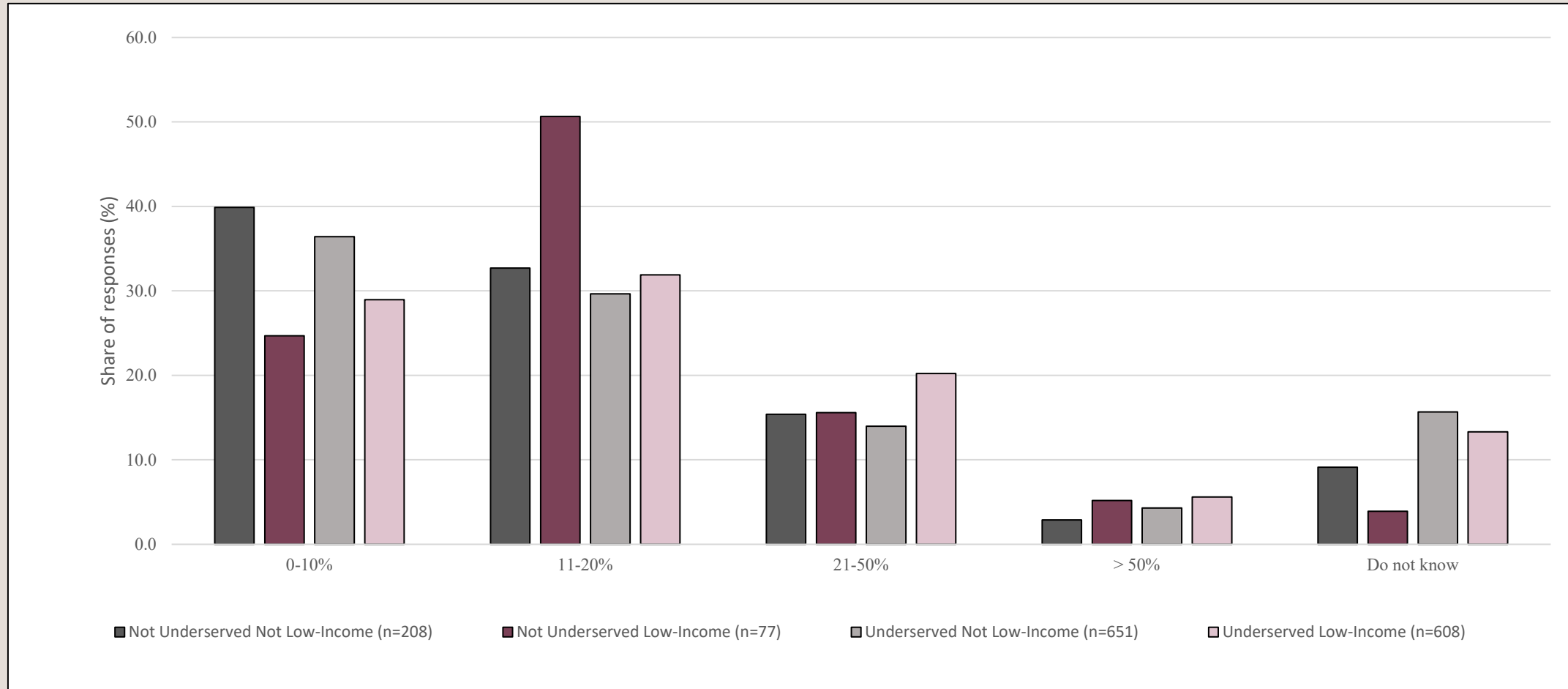
Top 3 difficulties in getting around Tompkins County	Not Underserved		Underserved	
	Not Low-Income (n=207)	Low-Income (n=82)	Not Low-Income (n=661)	Low-Income (n=621)
No buses when needed	34.3	<b>35.4</b>	<b>34.5</b>	<b>46.4</b>
Parking difficult	33.3	28.1	34.2	21.7
Too much traffic	<b>34.8</b>	35.4	27.2	22.7
Do not feel safe (non-car)	23.7	9.8	19.8	25.8
No car/can't drive	2.4	8.5	12.3	33.3
Transportation info	13.0	17.1	15.6	19.7
No difficulties	21.3	23.2	17.1	6.1
Other	9.7	12.2	12.9	11.8
Bad bus/ride experiences	10.6	12.2	10.6	13.0
COVID concerns	7.7	8.5	12.0	13.0
Experienced Discrimination	4.4	3.7	7.4	13.2
Difficult for the disabled/impaired	4.8	7.3	7.4	10.0
Language issues	5.8	6.1	5.1	11.8
Companion/service animal issues	7.7	6.1	5.5	9.7

- For low-income underserved, the top difficulty was ‘no buses when needed’, followed by “no car/can’t drive.”
- ‘Too much traffic’ was the top selection for respondents with incomes of \$50,000+ who were not in an underserved group.
- Notably, underserved, low-income respondents were almost twice as likely to report experiencing discrimination as their not underserved counterparts.



# Barriers to Transportation (cont.)

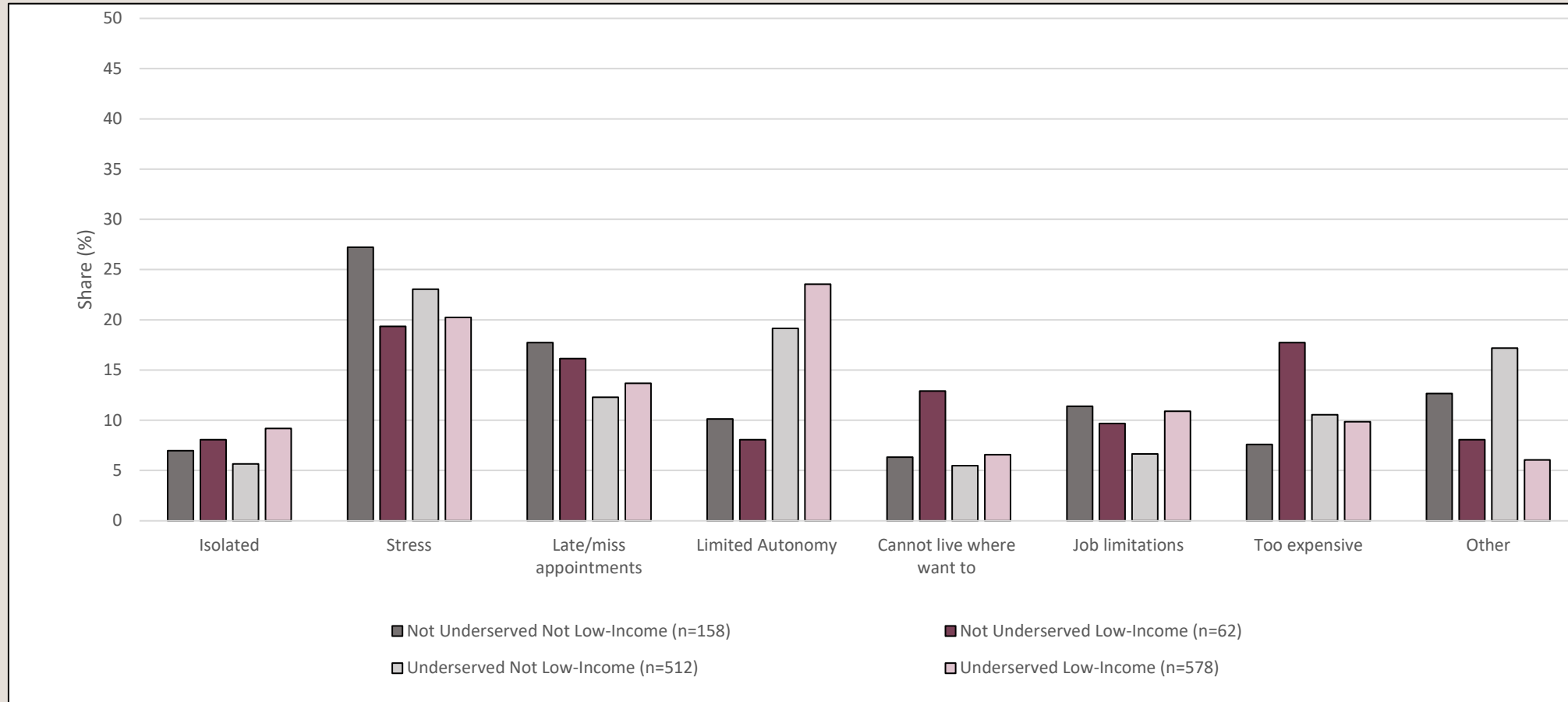
**Question:** Approximately, what percentage of your annual income do you spend on transportation in Tompkins County?



- The bulk of respondents spent 0-20% of their income on transportation.
- 15-20% of respondents in all categories spend 21%-50% of their income on transportation.

# Effects of Barriers

**Question:** What is the biggest effect these transportation difficulties have on your life?



- “Stress” was a significant response for all groups.
- “Limited autonomy” was an important response for both underserved groups;
- Low-income underserved also highlighted “late/miss appointments.”

# Impacts of Removing Barriers

**Question:** What are top 3 things it would do for you if your transportation needs were met?

What are top 3 things it would do for you if your transportation needs were met?	Not Underserved		Underserved	
	Not Low-Income (n=205)	Low-Income (n=82)	Not Low-Income (n=633)	Low-Income (n=623)
Less environmental pollution	43.4	41.5	39.8	21.7
Easier to Get Services	28.8	23.2	29.7	38.7
Saving money	28.3	41.5	32.4	29.2
Happier/less stress	23.9	18.3	25.9	29.1
Be on time	25.4	29.3	21.3	23.1
More socializing/sense of belonging/get to	17.1	19.5	19.3	24.6
More autonomy	12.2	14.6	15.5	27.0
Easier to get/maintain job	21.5	12.2	16.4	22.2
Feel Safe	24.9	22.0	18.0	18.1
Easier for non-drivers	13.2	7.3	21.5	18.9
Enjoy nature	16.1	17.1	13.9	16.7
Better health	16.6	12.2	12.3	12.7
Easier healthcare	4.4	3.7	11.1	17.3
Other	3.4	1.2	5.7	2.6

- “Easier to get services” was the most frequent response only for those of low income underserved group (38.7%) followed by “saving money” and “happier/less stress.”
- “Easier to get/maintain job” cited in 12-22% of those surveyed
- Low income, not-underserved participants cited saving money (41.5%) more often than all other groups.

# Solutions to Transportation Barriers

**Question:** What are the top 3 things that would make it easier for you to travel around Tompkins County?

Top 3 things that would make it easier for you to travel around Tompkins County?	Not Underserved		Underserved	
	Not Low-Income (n=164)	Low-Income (n=64)	Not Low-Income (n=548)	Low-Income (n=586)
Better bus service	41.5	50.0	40.0	37.2
Manage vehicles to reduce traffic	31.1	23.4	30.7	17.8
Dedicated/safe space for bikes	36.6	21.9	26.3	20.1
24-hour services	15.9	15.6	19.7	31.7
Transportation cheaper/free	21.3	25.0	16.2	31.6
Safe/dedicated space for walking	28.7	23.4	26.5	18.8
More transportation near housing	14.6	17.2	22.3	24.9
Better transportation information	8.5	15.6	16.2	12.6
Financial help with car/bike	7.9	12.5	7.9	19.1
Better for People With Difficulties	12.2	9.4	9.9	15.5
Shuttle reservation when needed	7.3	9.4	12.6	13.0
More housing near work	14.6	14.1	9.1	11.3
Better lighting	14.0	10.9	9.3	10.2
Better for people of different racial backgrounds	8.5	6.3	8.9	11.1
Limit parking to reduce traffic	14.0	15.6	8.0	7.5
Quality enforcement for rideshare (Uber, Lyft, Taxi)	11.0	7.8	6.8	9.9
Other	6.7	4.7	10.6	7.3
Better for people of different sexualities/gender identities	1.8	1.6	4.9	9.9
Info in other languages	3.1	12.5	4.9	7.2

# Solutions to Transportation Barriers (cont.)

**Question:** Choose the top 3 things that would make you use TCAT more if resources were available.

Top 3 things that would make you use TCAT more if resources were available:	Not Underserved		Underserved	
	Not Low-Income (n=206)	Low-Income (n=83)	Not Low-Income (n=661)	Low-Income (n=622)
More frequent buses	44.7	38.6	43.3	41.3
Stops closer to my location/destinations	24.8	14.5	33.6	30.7
Later buses	20.9	24.1	21.6	31.2
More weekend services	23.3	26.5	20.3	28.8
Faster trips	22.8	30.1	16.8	17.0
More comfortable	19.9	25.3	14.1	18.2
Earlier buses	20.4	20.5	13.0	18.8
Cross-county connections	12.6	15.7	16.8	16.6
Better paths/sidewalks/crossing	18.5	12.1	13.9	16.6
More trip planning information	13.6	9.6	14.8	16.4
More local service in a certain area	3.4	4.8	16.8	14.2
Better website	9.7	15.7	9.7	13.2
More customer service training for drivers	8.7	8.4	6.7	10.0
Nothing	10.2	3.6	12.4	4.0
Other	6.8	4.8	9.1	5.6
Staff on bus to help riders	4.4	8.4	4.7	7.7
Bus info in other languages	2.4	4.8	4.7	7.9

# Solutions/Recommendations :

## Most common recommendations for the five most prominent themes

<b>TCAT improvements</b>
Investment in/support for bus drivers (e.g. increased pay, better hours, additional training)
More/different funding sources for TCAT
More staffing and hiring
More times available
<b>Additional transportation services</b>
Carpool/rideshare
➤ Van/shuttle service
➤ Subsidized/volunteer rideshare
<b>Safe dedicated spaces for pedestrians</b>
Additional walking infrastructure
➤ Specific addition (signals, raised crossings, flashing beacons)
Improved walking infrastructure
➤ Safety/maintenance
<b>Safe dedicated spaces for bikes</b>
more bike lanes/infrastructure
➤ Bike lane network
improved road/lane quality
<b>Make transportation services cheaper or free</b>
Free TCAT passes
Subsidized costs (any mode)
More/more flexible low and extremely low-income assistance programs

# Next Steps for the Need Assessment

- Presentations to decision makers for use in budgeting and policy development
- Presentation to partners for program development
- Make available to transportation providers for use in budgeting and grant writing
- Integrate into Way2Go programming
  - Transportation Workforce Development-Energy Warriors Career Pathways
  - Explore Reviving *Supports for Health*
  - Expand Travel Training for people with developmental disabilities and their families; Multi-lingual.
- 6 month follow up to community by Transportation Equity Coalition on progress

# Questions?

Where do you see transportation access/barriers to transportation coming up in workforce development/hiring/retention

## Contact Information:

Dawn Montanye

[dm773@cornell.edu](mailto:dm773@cornell.edu)

607-272-2292

## Resources:

[way2go.org](http://way2go.org)

<http://way2gotompkins.org/>

<https://www.goithaca.org/>

2-1-1 Human Services Coalition

