

# Impact Delegation Small Group Discussions

Survey Results



Shaping the Future of Equitable Transit-Oriented  
Development (ETOD) in Pottstown, PA.

# Introduction

**Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD)** aims to leverage accessible transportation options to support inclusive and equitable growth in communities.



The purpose of the Mpact delegation discussions was to:



**Gather feedback**  
from Pottstown  
area residents



**Help shape the future of  
transit & development** in  
our community.

# Acknowledgements

Howard Brown,  
Pottstown Area Health &  
Wellness Foundation



RAIB



Department of Transportation  
Thriving Community Program



Meredith Sossman,  
MM&C Consulting

Special thanks to the  
MPACT Delegates

Twila Fisher,  
Hill School/Hobart's Run

# Process

Scholarships were awarded to Pottstown Area stakeholders to attend the **2024 Mpact Transit + Community Conference** with funding support from Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation and US Department of Transportation's Thriving Communities Program.



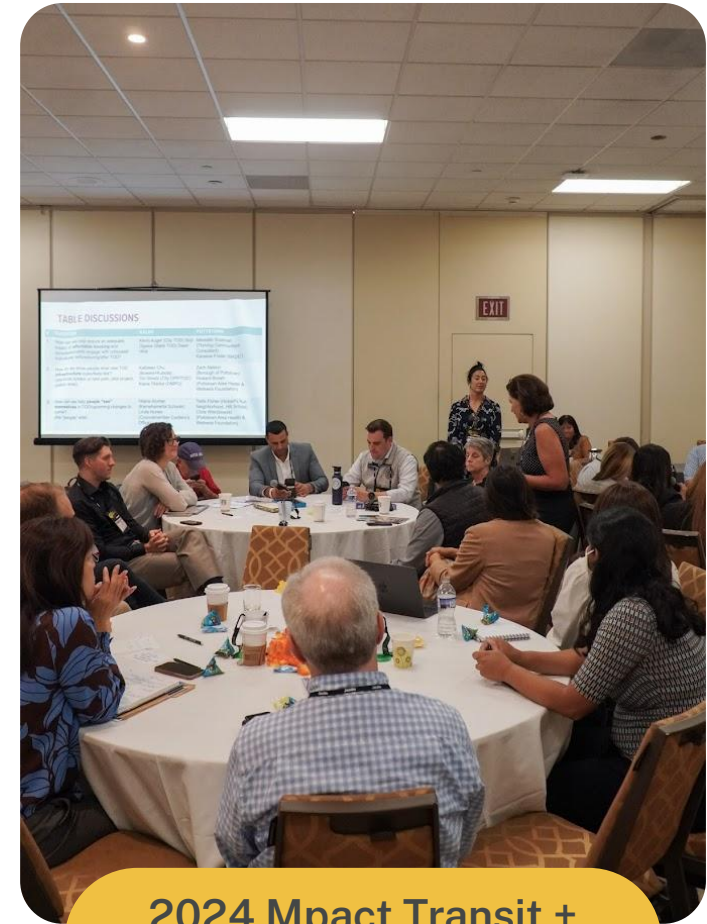
2024 Mpact Transit + Community Conference

A Pottstown Delegation of **81 community stakeholders** attended the conference in Philadelphia, PA from October 21–23, 2024.

# Process

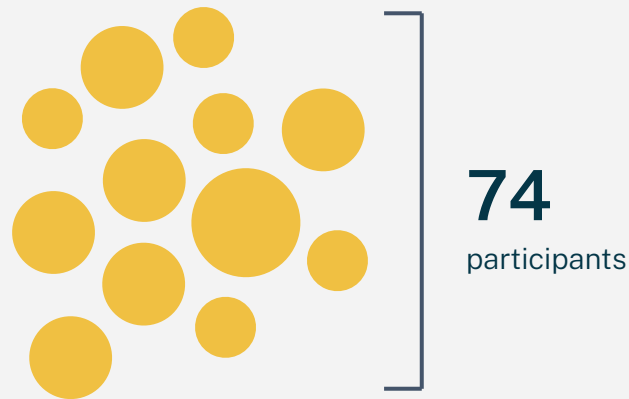
A **survey** was designed by the Foundation and Hill School/Hobart's Run, with direct feedback from attendees during the Mpact conference debrief.

Pottstown Delegates conducted **focus groups** to gather input from residents on challenges and solutions to equitable transit-oriented development (ETOD).



2024 Mpact Transit +  
Community Conference

# Focus Groups



**Twelve** focus groups were conducted.

Majority of these participants were **Pottstown residents**.

## Considerations:

- ETOD discussions are usually led by one facilitator.
- Facilitators expressed it was a lot of questions to cover; difficult conversation to have.



# ETOD Priorities

*What overall local/regional ETOD priorities do you feel are most important for the future of all residents and neighborhoods in the community? Please prioritize in order of greatest importance and need, with **1** being your most important and **7** being your least important.*

Average Rank *	ETOD Priorities
1.89	More & Better Mobility Services & Choices
2.78	Greater Economic Growth and Opportunity
3.22	Community Safety, Security, and Resilience
4.00	Quality Education & Training
4.33	More Housing Availability, Choices, and Affordability
5.11	Healthy Residents, Communities & Lifestyles
6.33	Accelerated Access to Affordable, Reliable Broadband/Internet

**Group 7:** discussed that the most important piece to making TOD equitable was **affordable, safe housing.**

# Public Transportation Improvement Preferences

*How would you rank potential public transportation improvements in your neighborhood that could benefit all residents, especially those from historically underserved communities, with **1** being your most preferred and **6** being your least preferred.*

Average Rank	Transportation Improvement Priorities
2.33	Increased Service Frequency
3.11	Pedestrian Friendly Walkways
3.33	Coordinated Schedules
3.44	Bike Integration with Transit Systems
4.44	Improved Locations of Connections
4.56	Improved Station Design

**Group 6:** prioritized making sidewalks accessible to those with disabilities.

# Public Transportation Challenges

*What are the current top challenges to using public transportation, with **1** being your top challenge and **4** being your lowest challenge?*



Average Rank	Challenge	Description
2.33	<b>Convenience</b>	Issues related to scheduling frequency, location of stops, and length of trips
3.11	<b>Safety</b>	Lack of police presence, lighting, and visibility
3.33	<b>Affordability</b>	The cost of public transport
3.44	<b>Accessibility</b>	Physical challenges that limit access

# Development to Support ETOD

*What types of development (housing, recreation, businesses, entertainment, green spaces, etc) would best support an equitable transit-oriented community in Pottstown?*

Types of Development	Groups Mentioned (#)
Companies that hire locally with good-paying jobs and benefits	7
Arts and entertainment venues where the community can gather	5
Dense housing (built up) & all levels of affordability high-rise multi-purpose buildings (retail, offices, parking & residents all in one)	5
High-rise condos that more people can own and residences with parking on the first floor and units above	5
Sports and recreation facilities to improve access to high-quality facilities for local youth and increase visitors	3
More parking – large space or high-rise garage for people to park	3
Conference center or large meeting space	2
Meadows and gardens – beautify the space, increase water absorption, edible or protected species gardens	2
Medical and healthcare facilities	2
Retail spaces for shopping	1
Riverfront attractions - watersports, waterfront access with restaurants and entertainment	1
High-rise buildings for multi-purpose (retail, business offices, parking and residents all in one)	0

# Factors Influencing Visits to Historic Train Station

Thinking about your activities on a daily or weekly basis, *what amenities would increase your frequency of visits to the area around the historic train station?*

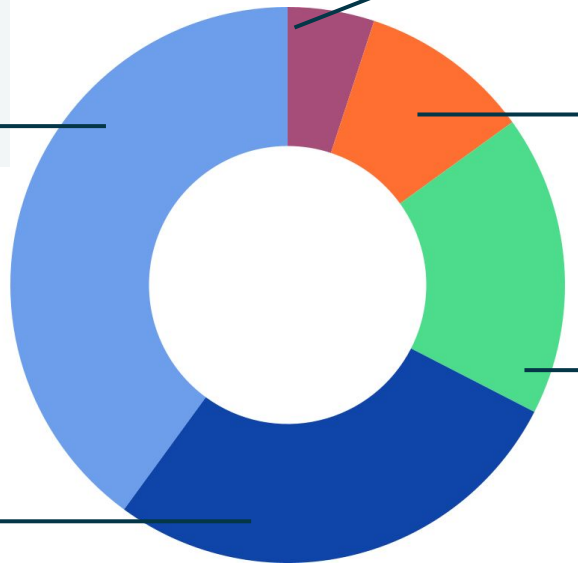
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Retail spaces for shopping	3
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Medical and healthcare facilities	2
More parking – large space or high-rise garage for people to park	2
Conference center or large meeting space	1
Dense housing (built up) & all levels of affordability high-rise multi-purpose buildings (retail, offices, parking & residents all in one)	1
High-rise buildings for multi-purpose (retail, business offices, parking and residents all in one)	1
High-rise condos that more people can own and residences with parking on the first floor and units above	0

# Barriers to Visiting Historic Train Station

*Is there anything that would inhibit you from frequenting any of the mentioned amenities around the historic train station?*

**37.2% Safety/Security**  
Concerns about safety, including crime, drug use, and specific incidents, are a major deterrent to using the train station amenities.

**25.6% Amenities/Services**  
The lack of essential amenities, such as restrooms, adequate seating, and open green spaces, along with concerns about business hours, significantly impacts usage.



**4.7% Cost**  
Affordability is a concern.

**9.3% Parking/Transportation**  
Parking availability and transportation issues, particularly limited and expensive parking, deter potential visitors.

**16.3% Accessibility**  
Accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including those using wheelchairs and white canes, is a substantial concern, with a lack of accessible pathways being a barrier.

# Factors to Encourage Use of Passenger Train

*If the passenger train service returned, what factors would encourage you to choose this form of transportation more frequently?*

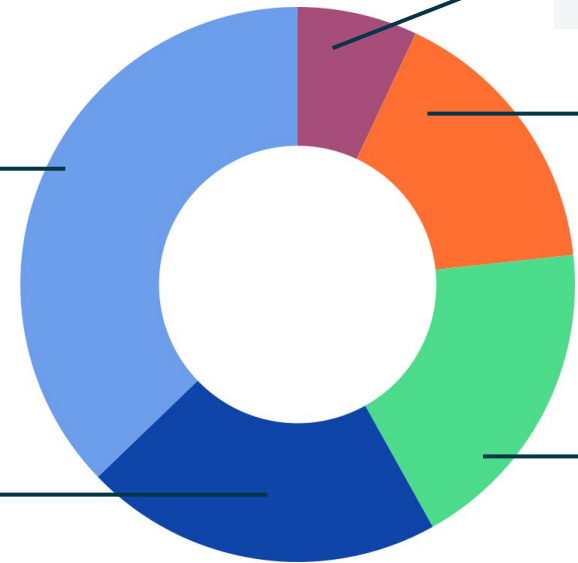
**37.2% Frequency/Service**  
Improvements in train service frequency, reliability, and convenient scheduling.

**7% Connectivity/Opportunities**  
Connecting to other townships and improving access to job opportunities and community events

**18.6% Accessibility/Convenience**  
Easy access to the station, convenient parking, and general accessibility are essential for encouraging ridership.

**20.9% Affordability/Cost**  
Need for affordable fares and potential discounts.

**16.3% Safety/Security**  
Improved lighting and security measures to address safety concerns.



# Displacement Intervention

*How can transit-oriented development in Pottstown ensure that current residents, particularly low-income residents, are not displaced?*

Types of Development	Groups Mentioned (#)
Home buyer programs with lower interest rates or down payment support for people who've rented for a long time	6
Property tax freezes so as property values rise, taxes stay the same for long-time residents (especially the elderly homeowners who are on fixed incomes)	5
Workforce training for higher paying jobs that will come with improved community infrastructure and better access to employment centers	5
Requirements for businesses that move into Pottstown to meet and stay within limits for hiring locally	4
Rent stabilization programs – keep rents stable only allowing increases for inflation	3
Small business and entrepreneurship support so current residents can either start their own business or improve the businesses they currently have with access to grants and/or flexible capital and low interest rates	2
Requirements for new construction projects to be awarded to local contractors who are either based in Pottstown or employ Pottstown residents	0

# Public Transportation Improvements

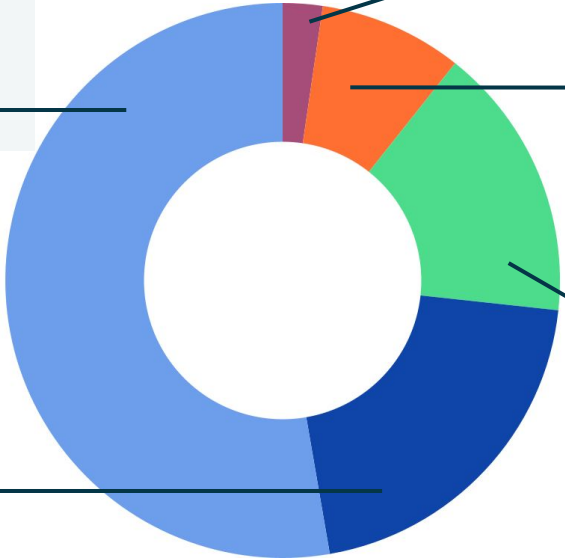
*What improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, wayfinding signage, or pedestrian areas around transit stops would make it easier for you to use public transportation?*

## 52.3% Pedestrian Accessibility/Safety

Emphasis on improving sidewalk conditions, crosswalk safety, and general accessibility for all pedestrians, including those with disabilities.

## 20.4% Bike Infrastructure

Improvements to bike lanes, including safety measures and bike parking.



## 2.3% Parking

Parking is the least mentioned, but still a concern.

## 6.8% Amenities/Services

Amenities like public restrooms and local businesses near transportation hubs is noted.

## 15.9% Information/Navigation

Clear and up-to-date information, including schedules, routes, and wayfinding signage, is considered crucial for effective transportation use.

# Conclusion

## Economic Growth and Local Employment:

Emphasis on importance of **creating local job opportunities** through the development of business centers and the encouragement of local hiring practices. Strong desire for **economic empowerment and sustainable growth** through support for small businesses and workforce training.

## Safety and Security Enhancements:

Safety concerns were frequently highlighted, with a focus on **improving lighting, increasing police presence, and enhancing the overall design of transit areas** to make them safer and more secure. This reflects a community-focused approach to ensure that transit spaces are welcoming and secure for all users.

## Affordable and Diverse Housing Options:

Affordable housing was a critical concern among Pottstown residents. Discussions centered around the need for **housing that is accessible and affordable at various income levels**, coupled with support mechanisms like **home buyer programs** to assist residents in securing affordable housing.

# Thank you!

## Questions?

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*Presentation prepared by Laura Long | 2025*

