



Rural Summit 2024

Transportation, Transit, and Infrastructure Workshop

November 2nd, 2024



Introduction - Welcome to Rural Summit 2024

- Clarke Kelly, Councillor for Ward 5 West Carleton-March



Theme: Transportation, Transit, and Infrastructure

- 3 words that cover many very important aspects of rural life and the core services of any municipality



So, what exactly does Transportation, Transit, and Infrastructure cover? What are we talking about today?

Some of the key areas included in this theme:

- Road maintenance and upgrades
- Ditches, culverts, drainage, and stormwater
- Winter road maintenance
- Traffic and parking issues
- Pedestrian infrastructure & active transportation
- Truck traffic
- Traffic control devices
- Public Transit & Para Transpo
- Other capital investments and assets



What We Heard

- Top issues identified so far through the Rural Summit Survey and Rural Summit Workshops



Roads and Maintenance - What We Heard:

1. Poor Road Conditions: Residents frequently express dissatisfaction with the general condition of roads. Common complaints are potholes, inadequate maintenance, and surfaces that are not well-kept, including road shoulders.

2. Requests for Action: Residents are asking for more proactive planning and maintenance, including better coordination between road repairs and other infrastructure work, such as culvert replacement. They also seek more transparency and communication from the City regarding road maintenance schedules and priorities.



Roads and Maintenance - What We Heard:

3. Maintenance Issues: There is a strong call for improved and more consistent road maintenance. Residents are particularly concerned about the lack of attention to rural roads, which they feel are neglected compared to urban areas.

4. Necessity for infrastructure upgrades: including road widening, better intersection designs, and improved shoulders to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. There is also concern about the impact of large trucks on rural roads, which disproportionately contributes to the deteriorating road conditions.

5. Lack of roadside maintenance: crumbling edges and erosion, debris, and vegetation overgrowth.



Ditches, Drainage, and Stormwater - What We Heard:

- 1. Overgrown Ditches:** Residents have raised concerns about roadside ditches becoming overgrown, which may obstruct proper water flow and create visibility issues for drivers.
- 2. Lack of Ditch Maintenance:** There are complaints that ditch maintenance in residential areas is not being adequately performed. In some cases, ditches are not flowing as they should be due to a lack of upkeep.
- 3. Standing Water:** Standing water in ditches was highlighted as an ongoing issue that residents are concerned about and are seeking greater attention and investment from the City.



Ditches, Drainage, and Stormwater - What We Heard:

4. Impact on Roads and Properties: Poor drainage is linked to damage to roads and properties, with residents highlighting the need for a more comprehensive approach to managing water flow, especially during heavy rains or snowmelt.

5. Ditching and Drainage Plans: Residents are asking for clarity and communication regarding future ditching plans across all rural areas. They want to know how these plans will be executed and how they can get their local ditches cleared.



Pedestrian Safety & Active Transportation – What We Heard

- 1. Pedestrian Safety Concerns:** Residents express significant concerns about pedestrian safety, particularly due to speeding vehicles and the lack of proper sidewalks or pedestrian pathways. This is especially problematic in areas with heavy traffic or where large vehicles, such as trucks, frequently pass through.
- 2. Infrastructure Improvements:** There is a strong demand for improved infrastructure to support active transportation and pedestrian safety. This includes requests for more sidewalks, cycling paths, and paved shoulders, particularly in areas where these are currently lacking.



Pedestrian Safety & Active Transportation – What We Heard:

3.Connectivity and Accessibility: Consultations highlight the need for better connectivity between different parts of rural communities. Residents express a desire for continuous sidewalks and trails that connect neighbourhoods, schools, and community centers, making it easier and safer for people to walk or bike instead of relying on cars. They emphasized the importance of making rural communities more walkable and bike- friendly.

4.Active Transportation Integration: There is also a desire for integrating cycling with broader active transportation initiatives. This includes better connectivity between cycling paths and walking trails, as well as ensuring that cycling routes are part of the planning for new developments.



Pedestrian Safety & Active Transportation – What We Heard:

5. Pedestrian Infrastructure: Consultations and discussions indicated that the criteria used to determine infrastructure work needs to be adjusted for rural communities to account for their unique conditions, including the creation of a separate set of rural criteria for infrastructure like crosswalks and sidewalks



Public Transportation and Para Transpo - What We Heard:

- 1. Lack of Public Transit Options:** One of the primary concerns is the significant lack of public transit services in rural areas. Residents express frustration over the difficulty in accessing transportation, particularly for those without personal vehicles, such as youth, seniors, and low-income individuals.
- 2. Impact on Rural Communities:** The absence of reliable public transit negatively impacts various aspects of rural life, including access to employment, education, and essential services. It also hinders rural tourism since visitors find it difficult to reach these areas without adequate transportation options.



Public Transportation and ParaTranspo - What We Heard:

- 1. ParaTranspo Services:** There are specific calls for improving ParaTranspo services in rural areas to help residents with mobility issues, particularly seniors and people with disabilities.
- 2. Challenges with Accessibility:** The lack of ParaTranspo service makes it difficult for rural residents to access essential services, attend medical appointments, or participate in community activities, further isolating them from urban amenities.
- 3. Need for Innovative Solutions:** Residents suggest the implementation of innovative transportation solutions tailored to rural needs. These include ideas such as on-demand transportation services (similar to Uber or Lyft), shuttle buses, or dedicated public transit routes that could better serve the rural population.



Next Steps and Proposed Solutions and Mechanisms for Change:

- 1. Create a dedicated & stand-alone rural programs & services list which would:**
 - Eliminate the rural/urban competition for infrastructure project prioritization
 - Create adjusted and separate warrant evaluation criteria for rural infrastructure projects
 - Create a separate rural programs list for warranted signals. Dedicated warranted signals list to identify rural-specific project investments annually.



Next Steps and Proposed Solutions and Mechanisms for Change:

2. Staff commitment to focus on road maintenance and repair.

To increase road renewal efforts in rural areas staff will:

- undertake a review of current road design standards and apply a rural lens and tool kit for infrastructure in the rural area.
- consult Rural Councillors on the proposed design for all road renewal projects to ensure the new designs are suitable for all road users, including farm and heavy equipment.



Next Steps and Proposed Solutions and Mechanisms for Change:

3. Councillors, supported by the Mayor, will propose to double the budget for ditching and drainage maintenance for 2025.

Staff to develop a plan for ditch infrastructure to address the safety hazards posed by noxious plants and standing water in rural ditches. This plan would focus on improving maintenance and creating clear protocols for managing ditch conditions.

