

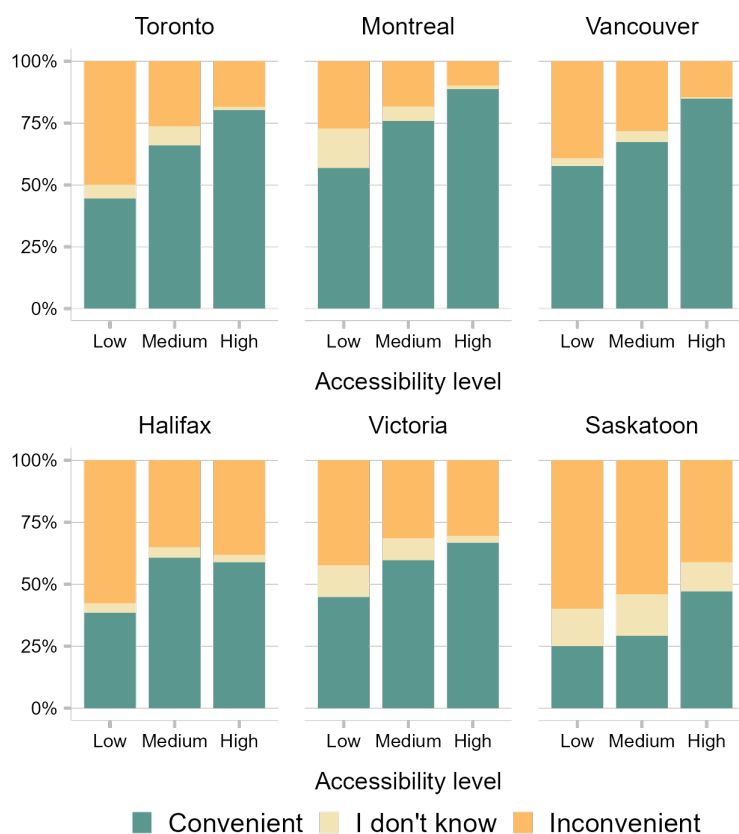
Can older Canadians conveniently access their destinations?

The Issue

In Canada, private vehicles are the main mode of transport for older adults, even as their age can force them to give up driving entirely, leading to decreased mobility and poor mental health outcomes. In the context of an aging population, transport planning should consider how it can better support older adults by providing adequate transport alternatives to driving. Drawing on the results from the Aging in Place survey, this policy brief looks at the relationship between public transport accessibility (the ease of reaching destinations using public transport) of respondents' home locations and how convenient they find public transport.

Findings

- The more accessible an older adult's neighborhood is, the more convenient they find public transport.
- In general, large cities have higher levels of accessibility than small cities. This is due to their more extensive public transport networks, as well as the greater amount of opportunities available since they are more populated.
- Older adults living in large cities find public transport convenient, even if they live in lower accessibility areas. This is not the case in small cities.
- Up to 41% of older adults living in highly accessible areas of small cities find public transport inconvenient.
- In small cities, older adults are slightly more unsure about the quality of the public transport service than in larger cities.



Perceptions of the convenience of public transport among older adults by level of accessibility of their home neighborhood.

Policy Recommendations

- » **Increase the number of opportunities near older adults' homes.** Doing so will cater to older adults' preference for shorter trips by reducing required travel time and make their trips more convenient.
- » **Extend the public transport network**, particularly in small cities, and adapt it so it responds to older adults' travel needs and desires better.
- » **Improve communications about public transport schedules and routes, especially in low accessibility areas.** This will reduce uncertainty older adults have regarding the convenience of taking public transport and may increase ridership.